

Food

Not Famine

THIS ACTIVITY helps the participants understand the difference between hunger and famine and why hunger is such a problem in the world.

TIME REQUIRED 60 MINUTES
INTENDED FOR GRADES 6-8

MATERIALS NEEDED

- » food from all around the world (Be sure the countries of origin are indicated on the labels, and include some fair-trade goods. Try to get a range of foods that young people like. Display the food items in an area of the room that is easily accessible.)
- » a large map of the world
- » sheets of newsprint, one for each small group of four or five
- » markers, one for each small group of four or five
- » a roll of masking tape

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Activity Steps

BEGIN BY POSING the following questions and inviting the participants to share their answers in pairs:

- » What have you had to eat so far today?
- » What did you enjoy most?
- » If you had to survive on just one of the things you ate today, what would it be?

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LAY THE MAP out flat and invite the participants to gather around it. Invite a few participants to take a food item, say what it is and where it comes from, and then place it on the correct

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country on the map. When all the food items have been placed on the map, discuss the following questions:

- » How did these foods get to our stores and onto our tables?
- » What else do we need to eat for a healthy diet?

NOTE THAT FOOD is a basic part of our lives, but that there can be lots of problems in our society and across the world associated with getting food, preparing it, and eating it. Discuss with the participants the following question:

- » What problems or difficulties with food do people have in our country?

The participants might mention obesity, standard of food served in schools, pressure to be thin, eating disorders, lack of knowledge about healthy diets, advertising and availability of junk food, and so on. Be sure the discussion is sensitive to people in the group who may be affected by any of these issues. Then ask the following questions:

- » What food problems do you think people in developing countries have?
- » The food in our supermarkets comes from all over the world. Why doesn't it get to people who really need it?
- » If enough food is produced to feed everyone in the world, why are some people still hungry?

Be sure to include the following points in the discussion:

- » Crops fail because of drought or poor agricultural skills.
- » People don't have enough money to buy food.
- » Issues like war and HIV and AIDS affect food production.
- » It's too expensive to transport food from areas of surplus to areas of need.

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ASK THE PARTICIPANTS if they know the difference between hunger and famine. Allow for a few responses, and then offer the following key points:

- » Famine is when a large percentage of the people in a region or country have a severe shortage of food. But there doesn't have to be a famine for people to go hungry.
- » Hunger can cause malnutrition and stunted growth; it leaves people weak, susceptible to disease, and often unable to work.

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INTRODUCE THE TERM FOOD SECURITY BY NOTING THE FOLLOWING:

- » If a community has food security, it means everyone has access to enough nutritious food for their needs. Food security involves:
 - » availability (making sure there's enough food for everyone in the community).

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- » access (ensuring that everyone, including older people, children, and women, has access to enough food).
- » consumption (using the food to provide healthy meals).
- » building up of assets (having something to fall back on in times of stress so people don't go hungry again, such as stores of food, savings, and work skills).
- » How can we ensure that people have enough to eat?
- » The major issue is having the right food, in the right place, at the right time, all the time.
- » This means eradicating famine and eliminating hunger.
- » The goal is food security.

DISCUSS WITH the participants what can be done about hunger and famine in the world. Be sure the discussion includes these ideas:

- » Vulnerable people in a community (older people, children, and women) should be a priority in food distribution.
- » Increasing agricultural skills will mean that people will be able to grow sustainable crops suited to their climate.
- » Food aid is necessary in emergencies, but it is not the only solution. The old adage “Give someone a fish and they eat for a day; teach them how to fish and they eat for a lifetime” applies here!
- » Any measures to alleviate poverty will help more people out of hunger.
- » If people are given skills to earn a living, they will be able to buy food.
- » Addressing issues such as conflict, and HIV and AIDS will have an effect and reduce hunger.
- » Supporting fair prices for farmers will mean farmers will be able to earn enough to support their families.
- » Trade justice will enable farmers in poor countries to sell their goods on the global market.

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DIVIDE THE LARGE GROUP into small groups of four or five. Provide each small group with a sheet of newsprint and a marker. Ask the groups to discuss and then write their own recipes for sorting out hunger. They need to decide what the essential ingredients are and then think of a creative way of combining them to show how to tackle hunger. Share the following example:

- » Take a generous helping of food aid and sprinkle evenly across the bowl. Add six large table-spoons of sustainable agriculture and a regular supply of water and mix gently until well combined. . . .

Allow several minutes for the small groups to complete this task.

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WHEN THE SMALL GROUPS are finished, ask them to share their recipes with the large group and then post them on one of the walls in the room.

NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- » We can respond to the issue of hunger in two basic ways: by being more informed, and by raising money for organizations such as World Vision to use to help people who suffer from hunger and famine.
- » One way to fundraise is through World Vision's 30 Hour Famine, which combines both responses in sponsoring people to go without food for a day. The feelings of hunger that people experience by participating in the "famine" are minimal compared to the long-term effects hunger has on a community, but it will help them to understand better what it's like to be hungry.

Discuss other ways the participants can fundraise. If the ideas are food-related, all the better! Some ideas might include having a bake sale and giving the profits to World Vision, or having everyone give up sweets for a week and then donating the money that would have been spent on those items.

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NOTE THAT a third response to the issue of hunger is to choose carefully what we eat so that it benefits rather than harms people in developing countries. Show the group the fair-trade symbol from one of the food items used in step 2. Talk about the way fair-trade benefits farmers. Then discuss ways the young people could promote fair-trade within their local community.

CONCLUDE BY INVITING the participants to select one action they can commit to over the next few weeks to help respond to the issue of hunger.

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About World Vision

WORLD VISION IS a Christian relief, development, and advocacy organization dedicated to helping children and their families break free from poverty. Our work is motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ. We see a world where each child experiences “fullness of life” as described in John 10:10. And we know this can be achieved only by addressing the problems of poverty and injustice in a holistic way. That’s how World Vision is unique: We bring nearly sixty years of experience in three key areas needed to help children and families thrive: emergency relief, long-term development, and advocacy. And we bring *all* of our skills across many areas of expertise to each community we work in, enabling us to care for children’s physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

WORLD VISION RESOURCES educates Christians about global poverty, inspires them to social justice, and equips them with innovative resources to make a difference in the world. By developing biblically-based materials for educators and ministry leaders on the causes and consequences of global poverty, World Vision Resources supports the organizational mandate to move the church in the United States to more fully embrace its biblical responsibility to serve the poor.



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