

HUNGRY TO HELP

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Objective: Students will build empathy for people experiencing hunger and will make an action plan to fight hunger in their communities.

Time Required: 45 minutes

Materials: paper plates; art supplies (markers, colored pencils); whiteboard or chart paper; sample paper plate drawing; container

Activity Introduction:

1. Hand out paper plates and art supplies. Invite students to draw their favorite dinner on a paper plate.

2. Once done, **share** your own paper plate drawing featuring a dinner you enjoy, and invite students to share what they drew.

3. Discuss the following questions with the class:

- How would you feel if you didn't have dinner tonight?
- How does being hungry make you feel?
- Is it easy or difficult to focus when you're hungry?
- How would you feel if you were not able to have enough food?
- How much do you think a day's worth of food costs?
- What would happen if you didn't have enough money to afford food?

4. Explain that when people don't have enough to eat, this problem is called hunger.

5. Show a visual example to help students understand the proportion of children in the United States who struggle with hunger (one in six). Possibilities include filling

one-sixth of a jar with pennies or marbles, filling one-sixth of a clear bottle with liquid, or shading one-sixth of a shape on the whiteboard. City-specific stats can be found at map.feedingamerica.org.

6. Explain that not everyone has enough to eat. Hold up six fingers and tell students that one in six kids do not have enough to eat. Similar to step 5, feel free to use city-specific data found at map.feedingamerica.org. Discuss the following facts with the class:

- Families who do not have enough to eat may not be able to afford the types of meals you included in your drawings.
- People face hunger for many different reasons, and it isn't something that defines a person.



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7. Ask students where their parents get food from, and then explain to students what food pantries, food drives, and collection boxes are. Ask if any students have ever been to a food bank or volunteered at one. Explain how they work and how they help people who struggle with hunger. Explain that having healthy food to eat is important, and there are things we can do to help.

8. Brainstorm with the class: What can we do to help children who don't have enough to eat? Write students' answers on chart paper to be displayed next to their paper plate drawing. Explain other strategies that students do not mention, and add these to the list as well.

Summer Activity:

9. Emphasize that practicing empathy—our ability to understand situations different from ours—is an ongoing exercise and is an important tool for us to help fight hunger.

10. Ask students which three action steps on the chart paper they would like to participate in over the summer. Have students share their plans with a partner or with the class. For older students, have them write down their plans to share with their families.

11. Hand out the *Hungry to Help* Family Action Plan and instruct students to discuss their action plans with their families.

12. Explain that students will write a summer journal entry about their experience or share photographs (as a photo collage) of the actions they take with their families to fight hunger.

13. Email parents to share the digital Family Action Plan and invite them to work with their children to help other families who are dealing with hunger. If possible, speak with students' teachers for next year about the summer assignment!

Do you think that someone in your classroom is struggling with hunger? Feeding America can help. Please direct parents to the Need Help section of feedingamerica.org to get information on how to find food in their community.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT HUNGER

- **42 million people** are food insecure in America.

- **What is the definition of food insecurity?** Food insecurity describes a household's inability to provide enough food for every person to have an active, healthy life. In the United States, currently 1 in 8 people struggles with hunger.

- **Who goes hungry?** Hunger can affect people from all walks of life. Many Americans are one job loss or medical crisis away from food insecurity—but some people, including children and seniors, may be at greater risk of hunger.

- **America has more than enough food to feed everyone.** But our abundance is accompanied by

tremendous waste. More than 72 billion pounds of food go to waste each year. \$218 billion worth of food is thrown away each year.

- **4 billion meals** are distributed through the Feeding America food bank network each year.

- **What is the difference between a food bank and a food pantry?** A food bank collects and stores

large quantities of donated food. Food pantries distribute the food to people in their community struggling with hunger. Visit feedingamerica.org to find your local food bank.

- The **most commonly requested** food bank donations include peanut butter, tuna, soup/chili/stew, canned foods, and macaroni and cheese.