

# SHOULD GMOS BE LABELED?

**THIS ACTIVITY SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 90 MINUTES. IF STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO REVIEW MEDIA FOR HOMEWORK, IN-CLASS TIME SHOULD BE 45 TO 60 MINUTES.**

## INVESTIGATE

Read, watch, and listen to the three media resources on the [Thinkalong module](#). Students can use the Investigate graphic organizer to summarize each piece of media and record new information. Below are summaries of the three pieces of media curated in the Thinkalong module.

### **CAN NEW RICE IMPROVE HEALTH IN THE PHILIPPINES?**

PBS NewsHour | September 17, 2014 | Video

8:25 minutes

A video about a genetically-modified strain of rice that's improving the health of people in the Philippines, but is also causing controversy.

- Researchers have reportedly discovered new ways to add nutrients to rice, which tap directly into concerns over genetically-modified food (GMOs).
- Vitamin A deficiency is a huge killer of malnourished children and pregnant women in underdeveloped countries, as vegetables and other foods containing it are scarce or hard to come by.
- "Golden rice," the new rice being developed by researchers is potent with Vitamin A amongst other benefits.
- Protests have resulted from implementing the new rice into the diets of the Filipino people, with private citizens destroying crop fields in 2014 because the rice is genetically modified.
- Rice developers claim they have no profit motive, and are doing their work to benefit humankind.

### **WHY SOME GMO FOODS DON'T HAVE GENETICALLY MODIFIED DNA**

NPR | January 21, 2015 | Article

475 words

An article describing how genetic testing is only a small part of the work that goes into certifying a product as Non-GMO.

- Processing often degrades a GMO ingredient to the point of making its DNA – or anything else that's genetically modified, like proteins — undetectable in the finished product.
- In the U.S., genetically engineered plants and animals are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency on a case-by-case basis.
- Large companies are dominating the economic landscape and controlling the intellectual property around seeds.

### **CONGRESS JUST PASSED A GMO LABELING BILL. NOBODY'S SUPER HAPPY ABOUT IT**

NPR | July 14, 2016 | Audio

2:28 minutes

*Using public media — video, audio and digital reports — about newsworthy topics, these classroom-based exercises help students to think critically about media messages, develop informed opinions, and practice how to take a stand.*

- Congress has passed a bill that will require food companies to disclose GMOs — but without necessarily using a GMO label on the packaging. Companies would have several disclosure options, including using a QR code on packaging that customers could then scan with a smartphone to learn more.
- Proponents say that labeling is helpful to consumers because it provides them with important information about their food.
- Food companies and farm groups, meanwhile, are convinced that pro-labeling groups are trying to use labels to drive consumers away from GMOs — a tactic that worked in Europe.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration say labeling isn't necessary because GMO foods aren't any different than regular ones.
- The law leaves many details of the new labeling plan up to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including whether refined products like soy oil or sugar from beets will need to be labeled. While they are made from GMO crops, the final product doesn't contain any genetically modified material, such as proteins or DNA.

---

## KEY WORDS

Look out for these important keywords in the news stories. Discuss the definitions with your classroom and see how they affect the understanding of the story.

- GMO
- DNA
- Labeling
- Gene
- Protein

## CONTEMPLATE

Students will use media literacy questions to critically engage with news by thinking about its purpose, searching for bias and discussing missing perspectives. They will answer the 5 Key Questions of Media Literacy created by the Center for Media Literacy, which are:

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently than me?
4. What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

A graphic organizer is included in this guide and the Thinkalong website to help students answer these five questions about each piece of media.

## DEBATE

Students will engage their peers in an evidence-based debate using the media they just analyzed. Use the debate tool on the module webpage to help form an evidence-based response to the debate question.

In addition to rich in-class discussions, teachers can also connect with other classrooms through the Thinkalong website. [Sign up here](#) to be connected.

*Using public media — video, audio and digital reports — about newsworthy topics, these classroom-based exercises help students to think critically about media messages, develop informed opinions, and practice how to take a stand.*

# LET'S INVESTIGATE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Use this worksheet to help you investigate the media sources in the Thinkalong module.



## SUMMARIZE THE TOPIC

## KEY VOCABULARY

## MEDIA RESOURCE 1

TITLE

DATE PUBLISHED

## MAIN IDEAS

## MEDIA RESOURCE 2

TITLE

DATE PUBLISHED

MAIN IDEAS

## MEDIA RESOURCE 3

TITLE

DATE PUBLISHED

MAIN IDEAS

# CONTEMPLATE YOUR SOURCES

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

After watching the media in the module, answer the questions below.

1. AUTHORSHIP: Who created this message?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3

2. FORMAT: What creative techniques are being used to grab my attention?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3

3. AUDIENCE: How might different people understand this message differently than me?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3

4. CONTENT: What values and points of view are represented? What's left out of this message?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3

5. PURPOSE: Why is this message being sent?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3



# CREATE YOUR ARGUMENT

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Create strong arguments for both sides from the resources in the Thinkalong module.



DEBATE QUESTION	
PRO ARGUMENT	CON ARGUMENT
REASONING	REASONING
EVIDENCE	EVIDENCE