

SHOULD THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REQUIRE HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCHES?

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.

FOOD FIGHT: POLITICAL FIGHT SIMMERS OVER SCHOOL LUNCH MENU CHANGES

PBS NewsHour | May 29, 2014 | Video

9:26 minutes

A 2014 PBS NewsHour segment that discusses the pushback on regulations set in 2010 that require schools to use more wholesome ingredients in school lunches.

- The 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act required schools to include more whole grains and fresh fruit in school lunches and puts limits on fat, sodium, and sugar in items served to children in school.
- Pushback comes as a Republican Congressman from Alabama argued that the initiative is not appealing to kids, who don't like the meals, and isn't cost-effective for public schools. He proposed a 1-year waiver to the conditions in the Act.
- Opponents of the initiative argue that the standards set forth in 2010 are inflexible and students don't like items like whole grain tortillas, biscuits, and pasta, which tend to clash with cultural norms in regions of the country.
- Proponents of the initiative say they are working with the USDA and local food programs to help schools find better products and recipes to engage students. They advocate for student involvement in the process, using taste-tests and nutritional education to make sure that students understand health risks associated with eating high-fat, high-sodium foods.
- Programs like farm-to-school initiatives often give students a different opportunity for nutritional education and helps involve them in the process.

A MATTER OF TASTE: WHY CONGRESS MAY BACK OFF NEW SCHOOL LUNCH STANDARDS

NPR | May 9, 2016 | Audio

3:57 minutes

A radio story that shows how one school in Nebraska has implemented the 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act.

- Norris High School in Nebraska offers a healthy school lunch, including a salad bar, and all-you-can-eat fruits and vegetables.
- The district's Superintendent John Skretta says that the readily-available fruits and vegetables promote the right calories – and school-aged children consume about half their daily calories in school.

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.

- Not all students are happy about the changes – some kids made videos making fun of their new lunches, and there were reports that food was being discarded instead of eaten.
- Studies show that kids are eating better and all schools have implemented changes, but some schools have seen a drop in kids buying school lunch – which means more are bringing their own or grabbing fast food.
- The School Nutrition Association wants more flexibility in the rules to help keep students buying lunch and contributing to the school's food budget.
- The CDC says 9 out of 10 kids have too much sodium in their diets.
- While students consume a good portion of their calories in school, school lunches are still competing against what students eat at home, and that makes it hard to get students to accept changes to what they eat in school.

GOVERNMENT RELAXES NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

PBS NewsHour | May 1, 2017 | Text

596 Words

A news item from the Associated Press that talks about a delay in new requirements of the 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act.

- The Trump administration rolled back rules of the initiative, specifically lowering the amount of sodium in school lunches. It also allows waivers for regulations on whole grains. Schools can also serve 1% milk instead of nonfat.
- Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue says that if kids don't like the food, it ends up in the trash, which undermines the intent of the program.
- While some bash the regulations, others champion them, saying that they see a positive impact on students.
- The healthy school meals have been in place for five years, and schools have gotten used to them – and that includes kids who now have a taste for healthier foods.
- Schools still have trouble finding replacements that have more than half whole grains, part of the regulations in the 2010 initiative.
- The new rules change would also halt a rollback of sodium in elementary school lunches, a move criticized by health advocates who say the current sodium levels are “dangerously high.”

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.

- Whole grain
- Sodium
- Regulation

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?

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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.

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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