

SHOULD WE LABEL GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS?

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, how it is improving the health of people in the Philippines, while also causing controversy.

- Researchers have reportedly discovered new ways to add nutrients to rice, which tap directly into concerns over genetically modified food (GMO's).
- Vitamin A deficiency is a huge killer of malnourished children and pregnant women in the third world, as vegetables and other foods containing it are scarce or hard to come by.
- "Golden rice", the new rice being developed by researchers, stands separate to other rice forms and 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.
- Rice developers claim they have no profit motive, and are doing their work to benefit humankind.

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

NPR | July 14, 2016 | Radio Piece

2:28 minutes

Congress has passed a bill that will require food companies to disclose GMOs — but without necessarily using a GMO label on 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.
- Labeling is helpful to consumers because it provides them with the information they need to ensure that their values are reflected in their food dollar.
- 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.

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.

- 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.

USDA UNVEILS PROTOTYPES FOR GMO FOOD LABELS, AND THEY'RE...CONFUSING

NPR | May 19, 2018 | Audio

3:13 minutes

A Weekend Edition clip about the ethics of labeling foods that contain GMOs as “bio-engineered.”

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture has released prototypes of the new label for foods that contain genetically modified ingredients (GMOs). The labels say, “BE” for bio-engineered in the shape of a sun or a green and yellow circle.
- The legal director for the Center for Food Safety George Kimbrell has criticized the prototypes for looking “pro-biotech” and says that they are essentially propaganda for the industry by using the term bio-engineered, one consumers are not familiar with, rather than GMO.
- In 2016, Congress passed a bill requiring labels on foods that contain GMO ingredients.
- While 90% of corn grown in the U.S. is genetically engineered, the National Corn Growers Association is supportive of Congress’s ruling because it will provide a national standard. Nathan Fields, director of the National Corn Growers Association, says that he does not expect labels to negatively affect the industry.
- Glenn Stone, an anthropology professor, rejects the notion that people make decisions about what to eat simply based on safety. Stone believes this fight is about “clashing visions of agriculture.”

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
- Crop
- Protein
- Nutrient
- Disclose
- Consumer

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:

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.



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.

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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