

## LESSON TWO: Research Lesson on Societal Changes in Food/Eating Habits



### The GOALS of this lesson are to:

- develop an awareness of how obtaining enough food to eat has always been a challenge for people in America (SOCIAL STUDIES)
- increase awareness of how historical changes have impacted how people get enough food (SOCIAL STUDIES)
- increase awareness among children about how the prevalence and causes of hunger have changed over time in this country (SOCIAL STUDIES, HISTORY)
- conduct and report on the results of a group research effort to look at societal changes in food/eating habits (RESEARCH, WRITING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS)

This lesson has two components: a research **PROJECT** which should be assigned to small groups in advance of the lesson; and a **DISCUSSION** of what each group learned, and what the class as a whole learned from the project.



### RESEARCH PROJECT

*Assignment:* Give this assignment a week or two in advance of the lesson. You will want to allow class time to do the research prior to this lesson.

Divide the class into small groups, so that you have at least one group researching each of the following time periods in American History: Colonial times, Civil War Era, Industrial Age, present day. Have the groups address the following questions:

- How did people get food during this time?
- How much did people raise or grow their own food? Where else did they get their food from?
- What were the major food challenges in this era (transportation, crop failures, war)?
- How much hunger was there during this time? How did the country respond?

Have each group prepare a written report of what they learned. Have them also prepare to present their findings back to the class, with different members of the small groups presenting different parts of the research.



### DISCUSSION

Have each small group report their findings back to the full class, beginning with Colonial times and working up to the present day. After all of the reports have been presented, discuss:

- What was the same and what was different about how people obtained food at different times in our country's history?
- Has our country gotten better at feeding the hungry?
- What problems might there be in obtaining enough food to feed everyone in the future?

## NOTES

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Assign different roles to the members of each small group (i.e. farmer, store owner, innkeeper, factory worker) and have them present an oral report (and/or prepare a written report) on how they get food, what they eat, and their role (if any) in feeding others.