

UNIT THREE: GRADES 6 - 8

LESSON ONE: Learning about Hunger



The GOALS of this lesson are to:

- understand the extent of the hunger problem in Massachusetts (SOCIAL STUDIES)
- understand the meaning and use of statistics documenting the hunger problem in the state (MATH)
- learn about the network of nonprofit organizations that respond to the hunger problem (SOCIAL STUDIES)

This lesson has three components: a **DISCUSSION** of the Hunger IQ Test to better learn about hunger; an **ACTIVITY** which reinforces the lessons about hunger; and a **RESEARCH PROJECT** which will teach students about the role that local nonprofit organizations play in responding to hunger.

DISCUSSION

Distribute a written copy of the Hunger IQ Test (Appendix E) and have students take the test. (Alternatively, you can have the class take the test as a group.) Assure the class that they will not be graded on whether they get the correct answers to the quiz. Discuss the answers to the quiz, especially where students were surprised by the correct answers. Put particular emphasis on challenging some of the stereotypes about hunger and emphasize that hunger results from circumstances which could happen to any individual or family, including their own.

Discuss what can be done to respond to the hunger problem documented in the Hunger IQ Test. Talk about the responsibility that each individual in society has to make his/her community a better one, and how undertaking this responsibility not only helps the community, but makes each person who helps the community feel good about him/herself.

ACTIVITY

Choose one or more of the following activities which reinforce the lessons of the Hunger IQ Test.

Have students administer the Hunger IQ Test to others, such as their parents, other kids in school, their neighbors. At the next class, have students report on which questions were answered incorrectly most often. What does that tell the class about common misconceptions about hunger?

Have the students do math exercises that help them to get a feel for the magnitude of the hunger problem, using the numbers provided in the Hunger IQ Test. For example, if there are 14,000,000 emergency meals served every year to the 600,000 hungry people in Massachusetts, how many emergency meals does each person get, on average? (About 23, leaving a lot of meals that the hungry person needs to get from another source.)

Ask the students to come up with other ways to measure the extent of the hunger problem.

NOTES



RESEARCH PROJECT

Have students (or student teams) research efforts to help the hungry in their community. You may want to divide up the assignments: what is done at the federal, state and local levels. Have students be prepared to report back their findings during the final lesson as a basis for discussing what the class might want to do about hunger.