



Food and Farming Unit

Lesson 2: Why in the 21st century do millions of people still suffer from hunger each day?

Key Ideas:

- There are millions of people that have a poor diet which leads to **malnutrition** and then to poor growth in children and an increased risk of illness in all age groups.
- In many countries, the risk of famine and **starvation** remains very high.
- Food security** is a basic human right but few governments are willing to guarantee that people have a good diet with sufficient food to stay healthy.

Starter activity:

The **food security** Wordle (*Presentation 5*) could be used as a starter introducing students to some of the complex language in this topic. The Wordle can be shown on an IWB with students coming up and choosing a word which they then explain to the rest of the class. If student ability is such that they understand the majority of the words, they could choose any three and then explain how they might be linked to each other. It is important at this stage that students understand the basic difference between **malnutrition** (undernourishment) and **starvation** (lack of sufficient food) as this is a core part of this work.

Another option might be to take this quote and discuss or write their initial thoughts:

. "A hungry world is a dangerous world," said the head of the UN's World Food Program. "Without food, people have only three options: They riot, they emigrate or they die. None of these are acceptable options."

Main activity:

This is a vast topic and it is difficult, if not impossible, to do it justice in a single lesson. At a basic level, it is important to enable students to understand the patterns and the scale of the problem. Once this is done, it is possible to outline some of the interlinked causes. Beyond this, there is an infinite amount of work that can be done as you investigate the individual causes and some possible solutions.

Activity 1 – where is the problem of undernourishment worse? The Excel spreadsheet [undernourishment by country](#) provides data which can be manipulated and mapped to provide a picture of differences between continents and within continents. You can download the [Mapmaker software](#) or use the online [GeoCommons software](#) to create choropleth maps illustrating this data. Alternatively print out the maps of [South America](#), [Africa](#) and [Asia](#) provided here and get the students to create their own choropleth maps by hand.

Students should query the fact that data is unavailable for a number of countries and what this might mean.

Activity 2 – these two videos provide an excellent overview of the issues and many of the causes of hunger. A summary of the basic causes is shown in the Word document [Why are people hungry?](#)

[Inside Story - Hunger on the rise \(Pt 1\)](#)

[Inside Story - Hunger on the rise \(Pt 2\)](#)

The students could use the videos, the Word document and other sources to provide a poster which gives an overview of the causes, a flow chart which shows some of the links between the causes or they could record a two-minute appeal which outlines in audio form the nature and underlying causes of the problem.

One of the key news items in the last year has been the rapidly increasing price of food around the world. Although there is some debate as to the importance of this factor in causing hunger, there is little doubt that it has made the problems worse. The Word document [The Impact of Changes in Food Prices](#) provides a task which asks students to think about the impact of changing food prices. This could be done as a homework exercise, an assessment or as a follow-up lesson. If done as a follow-up lesson, there is further detailed data available in the Excel resource [Food Prices](#).

Plenary:

'Food for thought' (pun intended) – *there is general agreement that there is more than enough food in the world to feed all the world's population and keep them healthy.*

If you were offered three wishes by the genie in the bottle that allowed you to make sure everyone had enough food, what would you wish for? (This could also be extended into a homework task.)