

Lesson Overview

Grade Level(s)	11th and 12th
Subject(s)	Civics
Lesson Summary	In this series of lessons, students will analyze reporting on school lunches around the world and in the United States to evaluate the impacts of school lunches on public health. The notion of public health includes not only nutritional benefits, but also other health benefits. After being introduced to the mission of the Pulitzer Center, and articles on school lunch programs in India and Illinois, students will evaluate the politics of school lunch in the United States using a cost-benefit analysis. Students delve into the critical components of a successful school lunch program by ranking essential criteria such as nutritional value, food safety, variety, accessibility, and sustainability. Through class discussion and debate, students prioritize these elements based on their perceived importance for student health and well-being. Armed with this knowledge, students collaborate to create a compelling public service announcement that highlights the most crucial aspects of school lunch and advocates for improvements within their school or community. The PSA will serve as a platform for students to raise awareness about the significance of school nutrition and inspire positive change. Alternatively, students will create a survey to gather data about perceptions and beliefs about lunch in their school community to inform stakeholders. Students will determine who the stakeholders are that impact school lunch and share their research with them.
Standards	Food Education Standards 7. We can advocate for food choices, and changes that impact ourselves, our community and our world. Food Education Standard 4: 4. Food behaviors are influenced by external and internal factors. NCSS Standard #5 Individual, Groups, and Institutions Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions. NCSS Standard #6 Power, Governance, and Institutions Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create, interact with, and change structures of power, authority, and governance.

	12.G5c (New York State) Successful implementation of government policy often requires cooperation between many levels of government, as well as the cooperation of other public and private institutions. Conflicts between different levels of government sometimes emerge due to different goals, ideas, and resources regarding the creation and implementation of policy
Focus Pulitzer Center news story/stories	“School-Lunch Program Provides Unexpected Benefits for Rural Indian Women” by Rhitu Chatterjee for NPR “Power Lunch: India’s Mid-Day Meal Program (Animation)” by Rhitu Chatterjee and Mathilde Dratwa “Illinois Students Struggle To Find Halal Food” by Tasmiha Khan for <i>Borderless</i>

Lesson Plan

Lesson Objectives
Day 1: Students will be able to evaluate the economic impact of school lunch programs on individuals, schools, and communities by using a cost-benefit analysis. Day 2: Students will create effective public service announcements (PSAs) about the federal school lunch program in their community or conduct action research about school lunch in their local community.
Focus Pulitzer Center News Story/Stories
“School-Lunch Program Provides Unexpected Benefits for Rural Indian Women” by Rhitu Chatterjee for <i>NPR</i> “Power Lunch: India’s Mid-Day Meal Program (Animation)” by Rhitu Chatterjee and Mathilde Dratwa “Illinois Students Struggle To Find Halal Food” by Tasmiha Khan for <i>Borderless</i>
Introducing the Lesson
Day 1: In this lesson, students will complete an analysis of a school lunch program of India. Students will not only evaluate the financial costs of the program against the benefits, but look deeper into how school lunch connects to the nutritional, emotional, environmental, social, and cultural needs of students. To conclude, students will complete a cost-benefit analysis and evaluate whether the benefit of the program is worth the cost Day 2: Students delve into the critical components of a successful school lunch program by ranking essential criteria such as nutritional value, food safety, variety, accessibility, and sustainability. Through class discussion and debate, students prioritize these elements based on their perceived importance for student health and well-being. Armed with this knowledge, students collaborate to create a compelling public service announcement that highlights the most crucial aspects of school lunch and advocates for improvements within their school or community. The PSA will serve as a platform for students to raise awareness about the significance of school nutrition and inspire positive change. Alternatively, students will create a survey to gather data about perceptions and beliefs about school lunch in their school community to inform stakeholders.

Warm-up

Day 1: Students will examine the images of school lunches in their community from the last several weeks and the world. Students will write on chart paper to share responses to the following prompt:

- How do school lunches meet the needs of students? Go beyond just nutritional needs, and think about everything a student needs to be successful in school and how a school lunch may meet their needs.

Day 2: Introduce students to Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Preparing to Engage with the Focus Resources

Day 1: Introduce the concept of cost-benefit analysis: a systematic approach to evaluating the pros and cons of a decision. Explain that today's lesson will focus on applying cost-benefit analysis to school lunch programs, including the introduction of the term utilitarianism. Teachers will chart the benefits of school lunches as students brainstorm their benefits on chart paper. Students should be encouraged to think holistically about school lunch, including the social, cultural, and academic benefits, not just nutritional.

Exploring the Resources

Students respond to the following questions as they review the three focus articles for the lesson:

“[School-Lunch Program Provides Unexpected Benefits for Rural Indian Women](#)” by Rhitu Chatterjee for NPR

1. How does Saroj evolve as a result of the school lunch program?
2. The article highlights the prevalence of domestic violence and gender inequality in rural India. Discuss the societal factors that contribute to these issues and how they impact women's lives.
3. The Mid Day Meal Scheme has played a significant role in empowering women like Saroj. Analyze the effectiveness of this program in addressing poverty and gender disparities in rural India.
4. Explore the cultural and traditional norms that constrain women in rural India. How does Saroj's story challenge these norms and pave the way for social change?
5. Imagine yourself in Saroj's position. How would you have responded to the challenges and obstacles she faced? What steps would you have taken to break free from the oppressive societal structures?
6. What are the different ways that the lunch program aims to support the health of students?

“[Power Lunch: India's Mid-Day Meal Program \(Animation\)](#)” by Rhitu Chatterjee and Mathilde Dratwa

1. How does the video corroborate what you have read?
2. How do the initiatives outlined compare to school lunch initiatives in your school and community?
3. Which system is healthier and why?

[Illinois School Lunch Article](#), “[Illinois Students Struggle To Find Halal Food](#)” by Tasmiha Khan for *Borderless*

1. How does the lack of halal food options in public schools impact the religious freedom and dietary needs of Muslim students? What ethical considerations should schools and districts take into account when making decisions about food service offerings?
2. How does the availability of halal food options in schools relate to broader issues of equity and inclusion? What steps can schools take to create a more inclusive and equitable food environment for all students?
3. How might the lack of halal food options in schools affect the nutritional and mental health of Muslim students? What are the potential long-term health consequences of not being able to access culturally appropriate and nutritious food?
4. How does the availability of halal food options in schools contribute to the cultural identity and sense of belonging of Muslim students? How can schools create a food environment that celebrates and respects the diverse cultures of its students?
5. What role can students, parents, and community members play in advocating for increased halal food options in public schools? What are the potential policy changes that could facilitate broader access to halal food in schools?
6. How do the challenges explored in this article connect to challenges you see with school lunches in your community?

Processing the Resources

Day 1: Students in preassigned groups will be asked to complete research on the Costs and Benefits of various categories of school lunch in India: nutritional benefits/costs, educational benefits/costs, social benefits/costs, and economic benefits/costs. They will then share out.

Cost-Benefit Research

Researching Costs

What category were you assigned for costs?	Where did you find this information in your research?
What costs did you find when conducting research?	How do you know the information you found is reliable?

Researching Benefits

What category were you assigned for benefits?	Where did you find this information in your research?
What benefits did you find when conducting research?	How do you know the information you found is reliable?

Day 2:

1. Research on School Lunch
 - a. Divide students into groups.
 - b. Assign each group a specific aspect of school lunch to research. Aspects may include nutrition, cost, accessibility, waste, etc.
 - c. Provide students with resources such as government websites, news articles, and school district data to support their research.
 - d. Have groups share their findings with the class.
2. Brainstorming and Target Audience
 - a. As a class, brainstorm issues related to school lunch based on the group research.
 - b. Discuss the target audience for the PSAs or Surveys they will use to connect their research to audiences who can most use that information (students, parents, school administrators, community members).
 - c. If students decide to come up with a survey, provide examples of strongly designed surveys
3. Scriptwriting or Survey Writing
 - a. Students write scripts or surveys for their PSAs, focusing on a clear message and strong calls to action or questions
 - b. Review the importance of concise language and effective storytelling.
 - c. Allocate time for peer-to-peer feedback on scripts
4. Production of PSA or Survey Writing
 - a. Students produce their PSAs using available technology.
 - b. Provide guidance on filming techniques, sound quality, and editing, if needed
 - c. Encourage students to experiment with different visual styles and storytelling approaches based on model PSAs.

Performance Task(s)

Day 1

- 1. Facilitate a class discussion on the findings of the cost-benefit analyses.
 - a. Ask students to share their conclusions about the overall value of school lunch programs. How does the school lunch program contribute to students' health?
 - b. Discuss the challenges of quantifying costs and benefits, especially intangible ones.
 - c. Explore potential solutions to address identified problems or improve the program.
- 2. Complete a Four Corners Activity with students responding to the following prompt: Do the benefits of school lunch in both the United States and abroad outweigh the costs?
 - a. Allow students to move to the corner of the room (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) that most aligns to their opinion.
 - b. Allow students to share their opinions in a whole-class setting.

Day 2

- 1. Students create their PSAs or surveys. This [rubric](#) can be used to evaluate the PSAs.

Assessment

Day 1: Students will be asked to evaluate the cost-benefits of India's school lunch program in anticipation of examining our local community in the next lesson.

Day 2: Final Reflection: Written reflection on public service announcement collaboration and the overall significance and importance of school lunch in American politics.