

KS3 and KS4: Lesson plan



Background

This lesson plan focuses on malnutrition as a major health problem, especially in developing countries, although it is important to note that it also occurs in so-called rich countries.

The lesson focuses on the many factors that can lead to malnutrition and the ways in which it can be prevented. It is important to make a distinction between starvation – an extreme feature of famine, an acute disaster – and malnutrition, which is a chronic and everyday feature for the lives of millions of children in the developing world.

Malnutrition basically means 'bad nourishment'. While some children do not get enough of the right kind of food, other children get too much of the wrong food – an increasing problem in richer countries. The main focus of this lesson is on children not getting enough of the right food. In developing countries, malnutrition is the cause of one in three deaths of under-fives each year, in addition to blighting the well-being and life chances of millions more.

It is also important to note that, although hunger is most prevalent in developing countries, it occurs all over the world, even in the richer Western countries.

Lesson outline

- Explain the meaning of malnutrition
- True/False quiz about malnutrition
- Students fill in posters about causes and solutions to malnutrition
- Read, research and watch video about South Sudan
- Prepare presentation on malnutrition and what UNICEF is doing

Purpose

This lesson will:

- increase pupils' understanding of the issue of hunger
- encourage critical thinking
- encourage students to think about solutions to both global and domestic malnutrition
- encourage students to take action both in their local communities and as global citizens



Curriculum

This lesson relates to the National Curriculum in the following ways:

In PSHEE, it will help pupils:

- understand aspects of a healthy lifestyle and well-being in a wider, global context, and help them consider how they can reflect on their own values and how they make a positive contribution to society
- look at the ways in which different media portray health and social issues, and whether they present a balanced or partial view of issues
- understand that resources can be allocated in different ways and that these economic choices affect individuals, communities and the sustainability of the environment.



It will also contribute to the geography and RE curricula.

Preparation

- Photocopy Resource Sheet 1 so that there is one copy for each pair of students.
- Take 8 sheets of flipchart paper (or other large poster-sized sheets of paper) and write one of the following issues or challenges at the top of each sheet:
Poverty, Natural disasters, Climate change, Conflict, Land use and farming practices, Economic crisis, Lack of education, Displaced people
- Before the lesson, arrange the room so that there are eight tables and place one poster on each table.
- Photocopy Resource Sheet 2. There should be at least one copy per group (eight groups), but if possible make more copies so that it is easier for all students to see the sheet.

Learn

Explain that in this lesson they are going to be learning about malnutrition. Ask the class if anyone can say what that is. Give an explanation and have a short discussion about it. Make sure the class has a basic understanding of what malnutrition is.

Hand out copies of Resource Sheet 1. Ask the students to work in pairs to decide if the statements on the sheet are true or false. When they have completed this exercise, go through the answers using the information below to give fuller explanations.

1. African countries have the highest levels of malnutrition.

True: According to the World Health Organization, Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Mozambique all have rates of malnutrition above 35 per cent. That is, more than one in three people in these countries is malnourished.

However, one in three of the world's malnourished children lives in India. This is partly because India has such a large population.



2. There isn't enough food in the world to feed everyone.

False: There is enough food in the world to feed everyone. Yet one billion people go to bed hungry every night and over two million children die from malnutrition each year. A combination of poverty, natural disasters, climate change, conflict, land use and farming practices, and economic crisis has contributed to increasing levels of hunger and malnutrition.

3. Malnutrition can make people, especially children, more vulnerable to illnesses and infections.

True: Malnutrition can make people more vulnerable to certain illnesses, such as tuberculosis (TB) while some illnesses (HIV, for instance) can also cause malnutrition.

4. One in eight people go hungry every day.

True: Of the 7 billion people in the world, 870 million are hungry. This is equivalent to the population of North America and Europe combined. They do not get enough food to be healthy and lead an active life. Hunger and malnutrition are the number one risk to health worldwide.

5. Malnutrition is something that only happens in developing countries

False: According to a report published in 2009, 3 million people in the UK are either malnourished or at risk of malnutrition. This is sometimes referred to as 'over-nourished'.

Divide the class into 8 groups. Give each group a different coloured pen and a copy (copies) of Resource Sheet 2. Give the students 5 minutes to read Resource Sheet 2.

Think

1. Assign each group to one of the tables on which the pre-prepared poster has been placed. Tell the students they have 3 minutes to write as much as they can linking the title on the poster to hunger and malnutrition. They should also write what they think can be done about the problem under each heading. Resource sheet 2 will help them do this but they will need to put the causes and solutions on the correct poster and they should be encouraged to come up with their own words and their own ideas.

2. After three minutes, tell the groups to move to the next table moving in a clockwise direction. You might want to use a whistle to indicate when it is time for the groups to move on to give a sense of urgency.

3. Go through the students' ideas with them, asking others in the class to comment.

4. Now ask students to read Resource Sheet 3. This is a case study from South Sudan. Ask the students to find out as much as they can about South Sudan by using the library or the Internet. If possible also ask the students to watch the video at www.unicef.org.uk/d4csouthsudan (this 5 minute film was made before South Sudan became independent and was still part of Sudan. Please note that it contains references to violence. You should view this video before showing it to your class).



5. From the information they have collected, the work they have already done on nutrition and the information in the case study ask them to write a short explanation about why children in South Sudan suffer from malnutrition and what they think can be done to help the situation. They could focus on these questions:

- What do you think governments in the developed world can and should do?
- What can governments in countries where malnutrition is rife do?
- What can development workers do?
- What can you do?

Act

Ask students to create a presentation or film that can be presented to other classes or as an assembly to explain what contributes to malnutrition and what UNICEF is doing to help.



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