

Activity #4

Food: What I Like to Eat, Where it Comes From, and What it Costs (Focus Topic: Subsistence/Food)

TEACHERS' CORNER

The economics of urban and rural Alaskan communities differ significantly, depending on many variables: the availability and kinds of work, differing employers, investment possibilities, natural resources, cost of living, transportation costs, distance from business and health centers, etc. Activities 4, 5, and 6 deal with the culture and economy of the location in which your students live. They build on the idea that where we live impacts what we know and how we live.

In these activities, students will compare the costs of a variety of items and investigate job opportunities available in their home communities in their Sister School's community. Completing the cost comparison activities will require a trip to the grocery store or gas station. Students may also need to ask their parents questions to get information about the costs of household utilities and cost of equipment used for subsistence activities. Students will also interview adults and peers about job opportunities in their community.

These final three activities should expand students' insight into the relative costs of life in urban and rural Alaska. Questions that might be addressed during class discussions include:

- *Where is it more expensive to live, and why?*
- *Where are there more employment opportunities?*
- *What is the relationship between education and economic opportunity?*
- *What's the connection in Alaska between English language proficiency and economic opportunity?*
- *How does the cost of transportation effect prices in communities?*
- *Do goods move by truck, ship or air, and what storage facilities are available once goods are moved?*
- *What factors did you consider when you guessed what something might cost in your sister community?*
- *After guessing the costs in your sister community, how accurate were your estimations?*
- *What is the relative availability of fresh/frozen goods in the two communities?*
- *Does the demand determine the cost?*
- *What is Power Cost Equalization and why was it established?*

Instructional Goals:

- Students will investigate cultural differences in eating habits, both among members of their own class and between their community and that of their sister school.
- Students will use research skills to gather information about food costs.
- Students will use mathematical skills to collect and average cost data.
- Students will use estimation skills to estimate costs in their sister community.
- Students will use inductive logic to investigate the reasons for cost differences.

Alaska Content Standards addressed in Activity #4:

Mathematics

- A.** A student should understand mathematical facts, concepts, principles, and theories.
- 3) Perform basic arithmetic functions, make reasoned estimates, and select and use appropriate methods or tools for computation or estimation
 - 6) Collect, organize, analyze, interpret, represent, and formulate questions about data and make reasonable and useful predictions
- D.** A student should be able to use logic and reason to solve mathematical problems
- 5) Use inductive reasoning to recognize patterns and form mathematical propositions

Geography

- B.** A student should be able to utilize, analyze, and explain information about the human and physical features of places and regions.
- 3) Relate how people create similarities and differences among places
- E.** A student should understand and be able to evaluate how humans and physical environments interact.
- 1) Understand how resources have been developed and used

Government and Citizenship

- F.** A student should understand the economics of the United States and the state and their relationships to the global economy
- 2) Be aware that economic systems determine how resources are used to produce and distribute goods and services
 - 3) Compare alternative economic systems
 - 4) Understand the role of price in resource allocation

Technology

- A.** A student should be able to operate technology-based tools.
- 2) Use technological tools for learning, communications, and productivity

Library/Information Literacy

- A.** A student should understand and use research processes necessary to locate, evaluate and communicate information and ideas
- 1) State a problem, question or information needed
- D.** A student should be aware of the freedom to seek information and possess the confidence to pursue information needs beyond immediately available sources
- 3) Access information on local, state, national and world cultures and issues

Materials Needed for Activity #4:

- Flip charts or butcher paper and markers
- Strips of red, green and blue paper
- Scotch tape
- Copies of the Food Costs chart for all students

Prerequisite Student Skills:

- Basic mathematical skills expected of students at this grade level
- Knowledge of and access to community food resources, such as grocery stores and restaurants
- Understanding of subsistence and the role it plays as a source of family food

- Willingness to take risks in guessing and estimating, based on limited prior knowledge

Activities for Research Ambassadors:

- The RA in charge of this topic will plan ways of presenting information about his/her classmates' food habits and favorite foods to the students in the sister site. This could include taking the class menu and samples of favorite foods that might not be common in the sister site.
- The RA in charge of this topic will take the average class data from the Food Cost chart to the sister site, research actual costs there, and report back on the information gathered

Teachers are to email the completed menu assignment to your sister school and share the Sister School menu with the home class. The Food Cost Chart need not be sent, as it will be completed by the Research Ambassador during the trip.

PLEASE FAX YOUR COMPLETED LESSON ASSESSMENT TO YOUR SISTER SCHOOL COORDINATOR. SEE FOLLOWING PAGE.

Student Activity #4

Food: What I Like to Eat, Where it Comes From, and What it Costs **(Focus Topic: Subsistence/Food)**

Food is an important part of everyone's life! In this activity we are going to look at our own favorite foods, where they come from, who prepares them, what they cost, and what our family's eating routines are like. We'll find out how these are similar and different from the eating habits in the homes of our Sister School families.

Step One: Family food habits are an important part of the family culture. As a class, discuss your own family eating habits. Here are some questions to guide your discussion:

- Who makes the food in your family? Does one family member do all the cooking, do various people take turns, or does everyone fix their own food?
- Is breakfast prepared for you while you get ready for school, do you fix your own, do you prepare breakfast for younger brothers or sisters, or do you skip breakfast and just rush out the door for school?
- Does your family sit down together for dinner? Or is everyone going in different directions and you just get a bowl of stew off the stove or dry fish off the rack whenever you get hungry, or a frozen dinner out of the refrigerator and sit down and eat it in front of the TV?
- Do you go out to eat often, or almost always eat at home?
- Is dinner a time for family conversation, when parents ask about how things went at school? Is mealtime a time you look forward to, or a time when arguments break out? Or is it everyone on his or her own whenever they want to eat?
- When you have a family of your own, will you change the way your family eats or keep things the same?

After the group discussion, write a brief summary of the similarities and differences between the eating habits in the families of your class. What kinds of eating habits do you think your Sister School families will have? You do not need to share this activity with your sister school, but the RAs will want to report back as to whether your predictions matched what they experienced. One RA will be in charge of doing a presentation to your Sister School about your eating styles, seeing how correct your predictions were, and reporting back to you when the group returns home.

Step Two: Pretend that you are creating a menu like in a restaurant. Put three large pieces of chart paper on the board, with "Breakfast" at the top of the first in red, "Lunch" on the second in green, "Dinner" on the third in blue. Give each student six strips of paper, two red, two green, two blue. Have them write on the red ones the two things they most often eat before going to school in the morning. If they almost always eat the same thing, they only need to fill out one red strip. On the green ones they write what they most often eat for lunch, and on the blue ones, what they most often eat for dinner. When they are finished, students take scotch tape and tape their food strips on the appropriate chart.

Decide what are the most common choices for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Combine similar or same food choices into categories. For example, if three students said "hamburger" and two said

“cheeseburger” the group could be combined into a group of five for burger. Then type up the most popular menu items, with the most represented items listed first on the list.

Step Three: Select the first 3-5 (the most commonly selected items) from the breakfast, lunch, and dinner list. Cut up as many small pieces of paper as there are students in your class. Mark B1, B2, B3 etc. Each student draws a piece of paper and they will research the cost of that breakfast. Do the same with the lunches and dinners. Students then go out into the community and research what their three meals would cost if they bought them in a restaurant near their home. If the meal is based on subsistence food your family has caught or gathered or grown and prepared, and cannot be bought in a store, list “subsistence” as the price. Bring the papers back into class and calculate the average cost of each of the menu items, by averaging the cost each student who drew B1 found, doing the same for B2, etc. Mark these average costs on your group menu. Then type up the menu and send it to your Sister School. When you receive their menu, compare and contrast it with your menu and costs.

Step Four: A Grocery shopping guessing game is a fun way to look at the cost of living in your town and the town of your Sister School. Take the following shopping list and go to your local grocery store. Mark down the price of each item in the first column. In the second column, mark down your guess of what you think the same item would cost in your sister community. Collect each student’s sheet and average the responses and mark the average actual costs and the average of the guesses of the Sister School costs. Give this to the Research Ambassadors in charge of this topic.

Step Five: (Done by Research Ambassador in charge of this topic) While you are in your Sister School community take your list to the local grocery store and write down the actual cost of the items. Report this information to your home class during your final presentation, then lead a discussion focusing on the following questions:

- How do prices compare in the two locations?
- Why are there differences, if there are differences?
- What were the differences in the variety of goods available in the grocery stores in the two locations?
- What role does subsistence play in the food of your sister school families?
- Is hunting and fishing seen as a sport, something you do just for fun, or is it more like going to work – a way of providing the food the family needs?
- What parts of the animal or fish are used for food or other uses (clothing, arts & crafts, etc.)? Which parts of the animal/fish are not used or thrown away?

Food Costs

Food Items	Your Community <small>(to be completed by <u>all</u> students)</small>	Sister Community Estimate <small>(to be completed by students <i>not</i> traveling)</small>	Sister Community Actual <small>(to be completed by <i>traveling</i> students only)</small>
1 gallon of 2% milk			
1 dozen large grade A eggs			
1 pound of lean, ground beef			
1 pound of large, baking potatoes			
1 pound of fresh or frozen salmon (note type-silver, king, red, etc.)			
1 pound tomatoes			
1 pound navel oranges			
1 large can of Crisco			
1 pound of butter			
1 large bag of Fritos			
1 pound of salmon strips			
1 pound bag of Chips Ahoy cookies			

If your family does subsistence hunting and fishing, approximately how many pounds of your family's food comes from subsistence hunting and fishing? _____

Using \$5.00 per pound, how much would this food cost if your family had to buy that food?
\$ _____

If your family does subsistence hunting and fishing, list the equipment (tools, four wheelers, boats, nets, guns, etc.) your family uses to go hunting and fishing? _____

Approximately how much do these items cost? List each and its cost:
