



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2021 Volume III: Democracy and Inequality: Challenges and Possible Solutions

Can They Escape from Hot Cheetos & Takis? Black Appetite, White Food: Examining Issues of Race, Democracy, and Place

Guide for Curriculum Unit 21.03.04, published September 2021

by Debra D. Jenkins

When school lunch provided to the students of Hearne Elementary is confronted with disdain and groans, it is primarily those foods on the higher end of the nutritional spectrum. Why do students turn their noses up at the healthier food options? Why is there hesitancy or refusal to consider trying new foods? Is there a possibility that due to the lack of whole foods and farmer's markets in their town they are limited in their knowledge of the tastes of these food choices, or is it because of their race and class they are not provided healthier food options as a community? This unit will explore if 4th-grade students who live in Hearne, is their community a food desert compared to schools from surrounding areas. It will also raise the question of if not given equitable access to foods that could boost their learning and development is fair in a democracy.

Conversations and readings taken from the seminar led by Ian Shapiro, writing standards will be addressed when they compose an opinion essay on why they are deserving of whole fresh foods at fair prices.

(Developed for Reading and Writing, grade 4; recommended for Reading and Writing, grade 4)

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