

Introduction to Food Security

Part 2: Talking Circle



Ages 15 - 18

Approximate Instructional Time:

60 minutes

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the concept of a *Talking Circle* and engage in one. The purpose of this particular *Talking Circle* will be to discuss and reflect upon the topic of food insecurity by answering a variety of questions.

Talking or Sharing Circles stem from the traditions and customs of Indigenous cultures. They provide a space for individuals to come together, express their thoughts, and gain a deeper understanding of each other's perspectives - all the while respecting individuals' differences.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

- Continue to develop their definitions and understanding of food insecurity.
- Describe the practice of engaging in a Talking Circle while participating in a positive manner.
- Listen to understand and learn about the root causes of food insecurity.
- Practice and enhance problem-solving skills by identifying solutions to address food insecurity.

Materials:

- Teacher computer with access to the internet (for playing relevant YouTube videos)
- Device to project videos (projector & smartboard or television) OR whiteboard & whiteboard marker
- iPads or other smartphones with a camera for filming (1 per group)
- Copies of Appendices documents:
 - *Food Insecurity KWL Chart* (Appendix 1, 1 copy per student)
- Talking Stick (stick, rock, or any other object that can be passed easily from student to student)

LESSON

Activate:

- Play the following video titled 'Food Insecurity in Manitoba: Part 2 Causes' (5:45):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAAXCxXbt0c>
- Have students answer the following question with the help of a KWL chart:
 - What is food insecurity?

- Have students begin to fill out a KWL chart such as the one in Appendix 1. At this point in the lesson, have them fill out the K and W sections (what they already “Know” about food insecurity and what they “Want” to know about it). The “Learned” section should be filled out at the end of this lesson.

Acquire:

- Explain to students that Sharing or Talking Circles come from Indigenous culture. They allow open, respectful interaction among individuals on important issues. The goal is not to reach consensus, but rather to discover shared meanings and experiences while respecting differences.
- The rules are simple:
 - Students gather in a circle and pass a designated object (a “Talking Stick” which can be a stick, rock or other object) for speaking rights.
 - students may either choose to answer when it is their turn with the Talking Stick or pass it on to the next student.
 - students should be encouraged to listen without interruption when it is not their turn to share.
 - The circle is meant to be confidential - what is said in the circle should stay in the circle.
- Pose questions for students to respond to, in groups. Write the questions on the board or project them. Questions may include the following:
 - What does it mean to be food insecure?
 - As a student, how might it feel not knowing where your next meal is coming from? How might this affect your ability to concentrate on school or participate in other activities?
 - What are some reasons that some people don't have enough food, and what can be done to help them?
 - Can you think of any stereotypes or misconceptions about people experiencing food insecurity? How might these misconceptions make it difficult for them to receive the help they need?
 - How does the weather and climate change affect the food we have to eat, and why is this important in terms of food production and the availability of food?
 - What impact do you think COVID-19 has had on people’s ability to access healthy food?
 - If you could change your community (by adding sidewalks, improving bus transportation etc.) what changes would you make? In other words, what might help to improve access (or availability of) healthy food in your community?

Apply:

- If you are Indigenous, you can thank your ancestors for this practice. If you are not Indigenous, you can start by thanking your Indigenous neighbours for providing you with this practice.
- Have students get into Talking Circles (groups of 4-5) and provide them with a Talking Stick (a stick, rock or other object).
- Students should use the written or projected questions on the board as a guide for their Talking Circles. Students may either choose to answer or “pass”.
- Once the Talking Circle has come to a close, have students fill in the “Learned” (what did I Learn?) section of their KWL Charts.

Additional Resources:

- For a detailed description on practicing a Talking Circle in the classroom, you can visit the following video titled ‘GEDSB Talking Circle’ (7:11):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHNNQ10VvD0>
- For a shortened description on practicing Sharing Circles, visit the following video titled ‘What is a Sharing Circle?’ (1:11):
<https://youtu.be/3T5v-qo8Xyc?si=WK5TRml0THI3lcfz>

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Food Insecurity KWL Chart