

Climate Change, Food Insecurity and Conflict: Making Connections

Carlos Bedoya, Scarsdale High School, Social Studies (Public Policy) 12th Grade, 55 minute period

Introduction: This lesson challenges students to think critically about the relationship between climate change, food insecurity, and conflict including the role climate change may or may not play in facilitating both food insecurity and conflict on a global stage.

Geographic Connections: D2.Geo.9.9-12. Evaluate the influence of long-term climate variability on human migration and settlement patterns, resource use, and land uses at local-to-global scales.

Vocabulary: Food Insecurity, Conflict, Climate Departure

Content Standards:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2](#)

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7](#)

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Essential (Compelling) Question: What, if any, is the relationship between climate change, food insecurity and conflict?

Placement of Lesson within Broader Curriculum/Context: This lesson introduces a unit that will explore the ramifications of the growing food security crisis in the world due to climate change and explore the political, social, and economic consequences and effects such crises create for both governments and individuals.

Learner Background: Students will have prior knowledge on Industrial Agricultural methods and distribution and the environmental and economic issues created by this process. Students will also have knowledge concerning the economic impact of food production for developing nations and the challenges involved with feeding large populations of people. Students will also possess basic knowledge concerning world history, up to and including the French and Russian revolutions, two topics studied in 10th grade.

Objectives for Lesson:

- Students will be able to clearly define and explain the concepts of food security/insecurity and conflict.

- Students will be able to identify the political, social and economic consequences of food insecurity for individuals and governments.
- Students will understand the concept of climate departure and how it will affect different geographic locations
- Students will be able to utilize their understandings of food insecurity and conflict towards a specific case study on this topic

Integration of 21st century skills: Analytical thinking, map reading, data analysis, group collaboration.

Assessment: Formative: Exit slips, graphic organizers, homework assignment on readings

Materials/Resources: NY Times article

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/28/world/africa/sudan-tribal-clashes-inflict-heavy-toll.html>), WWF website, Arab Spatial Website, computer, SmartBoard, graphic organizer, map handout

Lesson Development/Instructional Strategies:

1. Students will be sitting in their normally assigned heterogeneous groups of 4. As a “Do Now”, students will read the NY times article handed out to them on conflict in Sudan and begin answering the questions asked on each bullet point (define conflict, according to the article, what caused conflict in Sudan, list major factors that cause and contribute to conflict). Students should write their responses down in their notebooks. **(5 minutes)**
2. Students will be given a short opportunity to share their responses with their group members before sharing out to the whole class. Solicit first various definitions for conflict, modifying the definition as necessary as more responses are given. The definition should include the recognition that conflict ultimately consists of a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, and goal. Second, most political scientists recognize that conflict usually is measured by violence, in certain instances, the amount of death (10 or more). Next, solicit students to share their ideas concerning what causes conflict. List the ideas on the board. **(7 minutes)**
3. See if any students listed food or some food related issue to causing conflict. Pursue this idea further, otherwise, transition to the next slide and ask “does food cause conflict?” Allow students to think-pair-share then ask for some responses. **(3 minutes)**
4. Explain that conflict over food often results from *food insecurity*. Allow students to copy the definition of food insecurity *then* discuss its significance and ask if there are any questions so far. **(3 minutes)**
5. Have students copy the graphic organizer concerning causes of food security in their notebooks. Allow students to work in their groups to fill out as many causes as they can. After 5

minutes, solicit responses and create a master version of the graphic organizer on the board (**10 minutes**)

6. Next, have student evaluate the responses and categorize them by asking: “how many of these factors are political? Social? Allow student to identify and share. Finish with the question of *environmental*. Begin a discussion about how environmental changes impact the food supply, and how that may or may not contribute to food insecurity (**3 minutes**)

7. Hand out the environmental graphic organizer and have students fill it out in their groups. Have students share their writing with the class and create a master version that includes the appropriate and pertinent information. (**8 minutes**)

8. Transition to the next slide and ask if these issues happened here in the us now, would be we be prepared to handle them. Allow students to offer their thoughts (**2 minutes**)

9. Next ask if students think food security is a contributor to conflict around the world, and if so why? Press students analyze how climate change is affecting food security, and thus conflict, and as such, who is responsible and what can be done? (**3 minutes**)

10. Transition to the next slide and ask students whether or not some countries may be better able to mitigate food insecurity, climate change, and thus minimize conflict. Ask students what countries may be least able to mitigate these events. Move to the next slide and have students view the maps and answer the question regarding what they can infer regarding climate change, food security, and conflict. Have student answer the ‘exit slip’ for collection (summative assessment). (**6 minutes**)

11. Explain the homework assignment for tomorrow which will utilize the arapspatial.org website so students can look at data and begin their case study into climate change, food insecurity, and conflict in an African country. (**5 minutes**)

Students Needing Differentiated Instruction:

Students will work in heterogeneous groups so that students may assist their peers and rephrase/collaborate on content. In addition, visual media (maps, images) will be used in addition to text to help differentiate. Also, the ordering of questions and the use of normative questions will facilitate opportunities for lower level students to contribute as well as for higher-level students to bring in prior and outside knowledge to offer more developed answers that can enhance the classroom discussion. Directions are also written down on the board and there are checks for understanding throughout the lesson