Student sheet   Name_____

Title: Inside the Meatrix

Introduction: Technology, especially video technology has a powerful ability to influence people's thinking. In this activity, you will view the skillful use of video designed to influence people's choices about food. You will identify the parts of the videos that are exaggerated and investigate the ideas that are presented as fact. You do not need to make any changes in what you eat, this is designed to make you think and learn to investigate the claims of others.

Procedures:

1. As you may know, one of the ways energy moves through ecosystems is as food. Humans are an important part of the food web because we make choices in what to grow and eat that other animals cannot. How do our food choices affect farmers?

2. We are going to focus on a food web that provides bacon and pork chops for humans. Begin by adding circles in this food web to show what pigs eat. You can use the "pork for kids" website to find out what information about their diet and how they live according to the National Pork Board.

    http://www.pork4kids.com/PopUpPages/685/TakeAFarmTour.aspx
    Go to "visit a farm" then "take a farm tour"
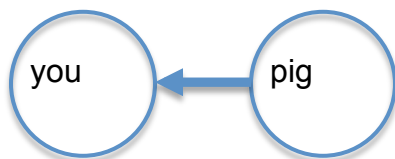
3.   Describe the living conditions of pigs raised on the farm described in this presentation:

4. What motivation might the National Pork Board have when it created this website?

5. Go to this website and scroll down to:

    http://www.sustainabletable.org/issues/feed/

    Read the first two paragraphs and then scroll down to pigs and read about how the "Sustainable Table" thinks they should eat. Go back and add more circles to the food web with the new information you find.

6. What might account for the difference between what the National Pork Board thinks pigs eat and the Sustainable Table?

7. Watch "The Meatrix" at this URL: http://www.themeatrix.com/

8.   Describe the living conditions of pigs described in "The Meatrix".

9.   What accounts for the differences between the views of the National Pork Board and the makers of the Meatrix?

10. View "The Meatrix" and the "Pork4kids" videos again. Selecting two statements from each to research on the Internet.
    Internet sites to use:
    http://www.nal.usda.gov/awic/pubs/97issue1.htm
    http://www.newfarm.org/depts/pig_page/better_hogs/index.shtml
    http://www.bu.edu/sjmag/scimag2005/features/hogfarm.htm
    http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/09/24/tech/main4473425.shtml?source=RSSattr=SciTech_4473425
    http://www.sustainabletable.org/issues/factoryfarming/
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FBKeYXgm_w
    http://www.watersheds.org/farm/pigfarm.htm
    http://www.realtruth.org/news/071207-001-health.html
    http://www.firstresearch.com/Industry-Research/Hog-and-Pig-Farming.html

Data

Facts presented in the Meatrix	Information found on the Internet
1.	
2.	

Facts presented in the Pork4kids	Information found on the Internet
1.	
2.	

1. Fill in your data table as you go and share information with your partner. Be prepared to share with the class when you are done.

2. Make a poster, flyer or brochure to take a stand on the issue of animal living conditions. Your poster or brochure can only contain factual information that a scientist might collect. Create a slogan that makes your message memorable.

Analysis:

1. We have learned to grow animals faster and cheaper. What moral dilemma does this cause for some people?

2. What facts from the Meatrix were incorrect based on the rest of your research?

3. What facts from Pork4kids were incorrect based on the rest of your research?

4. Do you think there is a problem with how pork is produced in the U.S.?

5. What kinds of solutions to this problem is in your power to change?

Conclusion: How would you have voted on the legislation proposed by the Humane Society?

Scoring Guide:

1. Students view required websites…………….………….…….4
2. Students write thoughtful honest replies to questions…………..….4
3. Data tables are completed as research takes place ..………….....4
4. Product is complete with:
    a. Title or Topic statement……………….………………..2
    b. Pictures…………………….………………………….2
    c. Factual information…………………….………………4
    d. A slogan reflecting position taken by students……………..2
5. Analysis questions are complete and reflect understanding……...4