

Anne Frank: Nutrition - Anne Frank and Me

Summary

Quotation: 'In the twenty one months that we've spent here we have been through a good many 'food cycles'...periods in which one has nothing else to eat but one particular dish or kind of vegetable. We had nothing but endive for a long time, day in, day out, endive with sand, endive without sand, stew with endive, boiled or 'en casserole;' then it was spinach, and after that followed kohlrabi, salsify, cucumbers, tomatoes, sauerkraut, etc., each according to the season.' -Anne Frank (April 3, 1944)

Time Frame

4 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Pairs

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning

Materials

Computer hardware and software, including a diet analysis program such as MACDINE II or Nutritionist III

Older programs such as MECC Elementary Volume 13 may be available in schools but are no longer current.

Optional: VCR and monitor for news clips showing current information on nutrition issues related to feeding the homeless in the U.S., or international stories from Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, etc., newspaper and or/ magazine articles for these issues.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will compare/contrast past and present discrimination.

Instructional Procedures

See preface material from 'Anne Frank in the World, 1929 - 1945 Teacher Workbook.'

Read the quotation and/or other sections about food in the Secret Annex from Anne Frank's Diary.

Ask students to predict some of the possible consequences of this situation. Have them brainstorm a list of diseases or conditions related to nutrition or food deficiencies. They will probably know anorexia, bulimia, osteoporosis and may add rickets or scurvy. Expand their ideas so that at least these twelve different diseases/conditions are listed: anemia, anorexia nervosa, beriberi, bulimia, diarrhea, goiter, kwashiorkor, malnutrition, osteoporosis, pellagra, rickets, scurvy.

Assign students the task of tracking their food intake over the next three days. They should list the types of foods and beverages and estimate the amounts eaten each day for meals and snacks.

Divide the class into pairs or small groups and have students research one of the twelve conditions listed above. Be sure that all are covered. Students will present oral reports to the class, addressing such issues as:

- What causes this disease/condition? What are the symptoms?
- Could this condition have affected the residents of the Secret Annex?? Civilians in war-torn Europe? Prisoners in the concentration camps?
- Where is this disease/condition present in the world today? Who suffers from it? Why?
- What treatments are available to alleviate or eliminate it?

e. Do you think this disease/condition will ever be eliminated? Why or why not?

Each group should also prepare three questions the classmates can answer after hearing the report. These questions can be compiled into a 'final exam.' If students have time or want to expand the discussion, suggest these topics: How does the body react to periods of stress and lack of food? What are some possible foods that would be best to keep the body healthy in a situation like that? While students are researching their reports, they can take turns using a computer program to analyze their own diets. They can prepare charts showing the nutritional content of the three day period they logged at the beginning of the lesson. Later, they may list foods they could add to their own diets to assure nutritional balance and avoid deficiency conditions.

Closure: Have students display their food charts (without names) arranged along a continuum from 'most nutritionally balanced' to 'needs better balance.'

Revisit the quote from Anne Frank. Did Anne seem upset with the 'food cycles' or her diet in the Annex? How would students have liked the diet she had? Would things be different today if people had to go into hiding?

Have students compare nutrition related concerns in the United States with those in other parts of the world. In addition to deficiency issues, students may want to include conditions such as lead poisoning, salmonella poisoning, and others.

Extensions

Have students view the videotapes and discuss the impact of food deprivation on humans. Use newspaper and magazine articles to supply additional examples. Have math students compute class totals for total calories and nutrient percentages for each of the three days and prepare charts.

Compare class averages with the current nutritional guidelines.

Have physical education or health students measure food intake and energy output through exercise and prepare posters that show how much exercise is needed to 'work off' given amounts of food.

Authors

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