

The Lunchbox

A Third Level Creative Inquiry



Introduction

The Lunchbox tells the tale of a lonely housewife who tries to revive her floundering marriage by preparing a special lunch for her husband. Unfortunately, the delivery goes to the wrong person and ends up in the hands of an equally lonely widower. Curious about her husband's lack of response to the lunch she prepared, she adds a note to the next day's lunchbox, and thus begins an unusual friendship in which she and the widower communicate their joys and sorrows without ever meeting in person. The lunches prepared and eaten each day ignite a bond between the two that enables them both to find happiness within their own lives.

Through this public screening we invite your audience to analyse what food means to them. The screening will allow time for thought and reflection for people on their own food choices and traditions and also serve as an opportunity for group discussions on the social and bonding affect that food can have on families, friends and communities.

The way you choose to show the film will depend on the size, time restraints and age of the audience. The idea is that this is a flexible resource that can be adapted and used as suits your audiences' needs with suggested inquiries that can be developed at later events or on the screening day itself.

The Screening

Before the film – Wee chats

Informal chats between your audience members at the start of your screening can encourage an atmosphere conducive to relaxed discussion and help people engage more fully in the ideas and issues presented in the film. Here are six conversation starters to choose from.

- 1) Food Memories-** Ask the audience to share with their shoulder partners some of their food memories. Some prompts you could use are;
When was the last time you shared a special meal with someone?
Where was it? What did you eat? What did you talk about? How did it make you feel?
- 2) Tiffin Tin -** In the film a tiffin tin is delivered to Saajan every day with a note from Ila in it. As the audience arrive pass round some tiffin tins or lunch boxes with a selection of questions/statements about lunches in it. The audience can reflect on the questions or discuss their answers with shoulder partners.
- 3) “A Banana for lunch?” Saajan-** In ‘The Lunchbox’ one of the characters is shocked by the fact that so many people only have a banana for lunch. Invite the audience to think about what they usually have for lunch. Do you think a banana for lunch is a good lunch? Why? Why not?
<http://www.ethicalconsumer.org/commentanalysis/corporatewatch/chiquita.aspx>
Video Bonita: Ugly Bananas
<http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainable-development-education/food-and-the-environment/one-planet-picnic/videos/>
- 4) Photo Activity-** Leave a photo on each person’s chairs and invite the audience to discuss what they see. Who is in the photo? What are they eating? What is the mood of the people in the picture? (See resources)
- 5) Indian Feast-** Invite the audience to bring an Indian dish to the screening. Provide recipes of some of the dishes mentioned in the film (see resources) or invite a local restaurant to support your event. If it is not possible to have dishes for the showing then provide a number of Indian spices for the audience to smell and pictures of Indian food. When the audience arrive ask them to write on post it notes how the

smells in the room make them feel and stick up on a big board. Discuss the impact food can have on emotions.

<http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/indian>

6) Sustainable Development Goals Activity

The 17 SDGs can be placed on chairs, or a slide of them put on the screen. Run 'before and after the film' discussion about goals that people think will be/were addressed in the film. Any surprises?

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

During/after the film

Lines of Inquiry

Some of these suggested lines of inquiry can be presented for individuals to reflect upon as they watch the film and/or used as a basis for group discussions at the end. Some could be activities for another time.

- 1) Food Traditions**- Ila says "*Grandma wrote all her recipes*" in a book. Have you ever asked your relatives if you have any such books in your family? Try to cook some of the recipes if you do. Explore why the recipes are important to the family and the memories they create when people eat or smell them. Perhaps you could create a recipe book from the heart with all the special recipes from the class.

- 2) Lifestyle**- "*Life is very busy these days. There are too many people and everyone wants what the other has.*" Saajan
Do you agree with this statement? How might the way we live today affect our food choices and the way we source and prepare our food?

- 3) Food Rituals**- In 'The Lunchbox' we see the ritual opening of the lunch tin by Saajan every day. As the film progresses we see him sharing the lunch with Shaikh and their delight in the smells that infuse the air when the lunch tin is opened. What is your favourite food smell?
Who/what/where does it remind you of? How does it make you feel?

Many of us have rituals we engage in when eating either due to personal preference, family traditions or religious duties. Do you have any food rituals? Why are food rituals important in Scotland and in the wider world? How do they strengthen our relationship with one another and food?

<http://education.nationalgeographic.co.uk/activity/culture-and-food-and-ritual-oh-my/>

4) Food Magic- “Anyone can make food but you need magic” Shaikh

Have you ever been impressed by someone else’s cooking? Have you ever impressed others by your own cooking?

Invite friends and family in to cook or share their recipes with the class to share the ‘magic.’

5) Food and Relationships – In ‘The Lunchbox’ we see the relationships

between;

Ila and Rajiv

Ila and her aunt

Ila and Saajan

Ila and her mother

Ila’s mother and father

Saajan and Shaikh

Shaikh and his wife

Work colleagues in Saajan’s office.

Explore the different kinds of relationships we see. What do we learn about the individuals involved in these relationships? Are these relationships strengthened by the food they share?

Have you ever felt closer to someone as a result of sharing a meal with them? Explore how eating together can strengthen bonds

6) Food waste. –Do you think if we put more thought and preparation into our meals we would waste less? How can a bit of planning reduce food waste? This site offers a meal plans option to help organise your shopping by how many people you are feeding (1,2 or 4), and shows the budget as well as options for types of meal.

<http://resourcefulcook.com/mealplans/browse/forone>

7) My Perfect Lunch – Provide a sheet for pupils to draw or write about their perfect lunch. What is your perfect lunch? Who would prepare it? Where would you like to eat the lunch and who would you choose to share it with?

<http://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/Sheet.aspx?siteId=20§ionId=85&contentId=692>

8) 'Dabbawala' System - The 'dabbawala' system ensures the delivery of hot home cooked meals to workers in their offices around Mumbai feeding 250,00 people a day. Do you think a similar system might work in Scotland? What could be the benefits of this system to Scottish people's health and happiness? Can you foresee any problems with the scheme in Scotland? Can you design a lunch system that would make Scotland a healthier nation?

9) Isolated Eating-At the start of 'The Lunchbox' we see Saajan eating his lunch alone. Do you prefer to eat alone or share your meal times with others? What are the benefits of sharing mealtimes with friends and family? Think of the social aspect, opportunities to try new food, relaxation and enjoyment shared eating can bring, also the potential for shared eating to create a healthy attitude towards food that can impact on future eating habits.

http://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/nutrition_articles.asp?id=439

10) Happiness "*In Bhutan everyone is happy*" Ila

Do you think this is true? What makes you happy?

Does food play any part in making you happy? Why? Why not?

Do you think Ila and her daughter will find happiness in Bhutan?

<http://www.pri.org/stories/2014-04-16/what-harvard-learned-studying-indias-lunchbox-delivery-system>

11) Final Thoughts -What do you think happens at the end of the film? Does it matter if Ila and Sajaan end up together? For you what was the essence of the film?

Key Challenge

Host an Intergenerational One Planet Picnic.

Plan, prepare and share a sustainable lunch with your family and friends.

For generations family and friends have sat down to enjoy meals together. The number of families who do this regularly is dwindling due to family and work commitments, social media and lifestyle choices. The intergenerational picnic is a chance to think about food and sustainability whilst enjoying wonderful food with family and friends.

The picnic can be an opportunity to share dishes that have been passed down through the generations and introduce new dishes to family and friends. Go to the Keep Scotland Beautiful One Planet picnic site to get inspiration for your celebration and to register your event.

<http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainable-development-education/food-and-the-environment/one-planet-picnic/>

Things you might like to consider;

- Where will I get my recipe ideas from?
- What kind of food do my family and friends really enjoy?
- How will I invite people to the picnic?
- Where can I source locally grown, seasonal, organic products?
- How can we make the preparation of the dishes enjoyable?
- How can my family and friends share the methods they used to cook the dishes?
- How will I serve my dish?
- How will I keep food packaging to a minimum at the picnic?

- How will I keep food waste to a minimum at the picnic?
- Who will I invite to share the picnic?
- Where will we eat the picnic? Inside or outside?
- What will we cook the food on?
- Can I use any products that myself or my family and friends have grown?
- How will I know if my family and friends have enjoyed the picnic?
- What was the best thing about the food experience we shared together?
- How did I feel when preparing and eating the dishes with family and friends?
- Would I change anything next time to make the picnic even better?

Key Learning Focus

To think about food and sustainability whilst sharing fabulous food with family and friends.

Further possible ideas that may be explored through the challenge;

- How can preparing and sharing food be an expression of love?
- How can sharing a meal strengthen relationships?
- Can what and how I eat affect my health and happiness?
- Can my food choices be respectful / disrespectful of others? How? Why?
- How does what I eat in day to day life impact on my local environment?
- How does what I eat in day to day life impact on the global environment?
- Do I know where my food comes from and how much it costs?
- What food grows in Scotland and when?
- How much food do I need? How can I reduce waste food?
- Am I conscious of the amount of food packaging on the products I buy?
- How can I make food choices where packaging is at a minimum?
- Do I try to eat locally produced food?
- What or who influences my eating habits?

Taking Learning Further

- Explore other mutually beneficial Intergenerational activities you could host in your school. Perhaps you could invite parents and grandparents in to help with the growing and cooking of food in the school.
- Plant seeds that can be grown in the school grounds and used in a future One Planet Picnic. Think carefully about the kind of food that you might want to make for the picnic and the season in which you will be hosting your next picnic event.
- Create a school cook book with recipes and food memories. Sell the book as an enterprise project to raise funds to buy seeds to grow food in your school garden or to purchase cooking equipment for the school.
- Compare and contrast life in India and Scotland exploring Indian culture and society.
<http://resources.woodlandsjunior.kent.sch.uk/homework/india/general.htm>
<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/countries/india.html>
<http://primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/india/index.htm>
- Explore different ways of shopping. Is there a farmer's market or farm shop near you? Your school might co-ordinate online shopping direct from the producer so they only harvest what is ordered.
<http://thefoodassembly.com/en#buy>

Learner's Reflection on their Learning

Here are some questions you can use after your screening to encourage your audience to reflect on what they have seen and heard and what they might like to do next.

What parts did you decide on for yourself?

How was responsibility for the activity shared?

How does your work reflect the part of Scotland you live/come from?

Did you have to change direction or go back over your work?
How did you share and enjoy each other's work?

There are some suggested questions below to help with this reflection.

Q: Where did you get inspiration for your lunch menu?

Q: Who did you liaise with during this activity?

Q: When do you notice things around you that remind you of what you have learned? When else could you use what you have learnt?

Q: "The wrong train can get you to the right station." Did you have to rethink your initial plans to get to your final destination?

Q: Have you shared your work with Friends? Family? People from different generations?

Looking out for learning

Head

I have reflected on my own family's food traditions and the importance of them in my life.

I have explored how food practices and preferences are influenced by factors such as food sources, finance, culture and religion.

I can compare and contrast others' food practices and preferences with my own food experiences.

I can identify and see the benefits of seasonal and locally sourced food.

I can use planning for a meal or week of meals to reduce food waste.

Heart

I understand what a person eats is an individual's choice.

I can empathise with people whose lives are affected by the actions of others.

I can see how food can be an expression of love, respect and care.

I know how to act justly and respect others' opinions.

I can show my love for others by creating a special meal.

I can stand up for what I believe in.

Hands

I can research food traditions in different societies.

I can plan, prepare and enjoy a lunch with my family and friends.

I can visit my local food producers and make informed decisions about what I see.

I can find seasonal products to make tasty food.

I can plant, grow and nurture crops that can be eaten by my school.

CfE Experiences and Outcomes

Social Subjects

I can explain the similarities and differences between the lifestyles, values and attitudes of people in the past by comparing Scotland with a society in Europe or elsewhere.

SOC 3-04a

I can use my knowledge of current social, political or economic issues to interpret evidence and present an informed view.

SOC-3-16a

Technology

I can practise and apply a range of preparation techniques and processes to make a variety of items showing imagination and creativity, and recognising the need to conserve resources.

TCH 3-10a

I have gained confidence and dexterity in the use of ingredients and equipment and can apply specialist skills in preparing food.

TCH 3-10c

By using problem solving strategies and showing creativity in a design challenge, I can plan, develop make and evaluate food or textile items which meet needs at home or in the world of work.

TCH 3-11a

Religious and Moral Education

I can demonstrate my developing understanding of moral values through participating in events and projects which make a positive difference to others.

RME 3-05b

Health and Wellbeing

By taking part in practical food activities and taking account of current healthy eating advice, I can prepare healthy foods to meet identified needs.

HWB 3-30a

Having explored a range of issues which may affect food choices, I can discuss how this could impact on an individual's health.

HWB 3-34a

I understand the importance of being cared for and caring for others in relationships, and can explain why.

HWB 3-44a

Prior Knowledge

Religious and Moral Education

I can share my developing views about values such as fairness and equality and love, caring, sharing and human rights.

RME 2-05b

I can explain why different people think that values such as honesty, respect and compassion are important, and I show respect for others.

RME 2-09c

Social Subjects

Through exploring ethical trading, I can understand how people's basic needs are the same around the world, discussing why some societies are more able to meet these needs than others.

SOC 2-20a

Health and Wellbeing

Through exploration and discussion, I can understand that food practices and preferences are influenced by factors such as food sources, finance, culture and religion.

HWB 2-34a

Through exploration and discussion, I can understand that food practices and preferences are influenced by factors such as food sources, finance, culture and religion.

HWB 2-34a

When preparing and cooking a variety of foods, I am aware of the journeys which foods make from source to consumer, their seasonality, their local availability and their sustainability.

HWB 2-35a

Resources

Mumbai's Models of Service Excellence by [Stefan Thomke](#) From the November 2012 Issue Harvard Business Review (conducted the study of dabbawalas)
<https://hbr.org/2012/11/mumbais-models-of-service-excellence>

What Harvard learned by studying India's lunchbox delivery system
PRI April 16, 2014
<http://www.pri.org/stories/2014-04-16/what-harvard-learned-studying-indias-lunchbox-delivery-system>

One Planet Picnic
<http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainable-development-education/food-and-the-environment/one-planet-picnic/>

Blog opinions of the film ending
<https://www.quora.com/What-do-you-think-was-the-exact-ending-of-the-movie-The-Lunchbox>

Sustainable Development Goals
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

Photos Family meals
http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=photos+of+families+eating&client=safari&rls=en&prmd=ivns&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiD-o2j-efKAhUH_R4KHXM4CfcQsAQIFA

Photos Eating alone
<http://tinyurl.com/gowpfs9>
<http://tinyurl.com/z8bt8nk>
<http://tinyurl.com/zvozgwa>
<http://tinyurl.com/hvjr3pr>
<http://tinyurl.com/jog8oce>
<http://tinyurl.com/iflybku>
<http://tinyurl.com/zb7nkzk>
<http://tinyurl.com/hakv6dk>
<http://tinyurl.com/zxecryd>
<http://tinyurl.com/jy9x6oq>
<http://tinyurl.com/zcy4ajl>
<http://tinyurl.com/hrcetsm>

Indian Society Research Resources

<http://resources.woodlandsjunior.kent.sch.uk/homework/india/general.htm>

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/countries/india.html>

<http://primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/india/index.htm>

Food Resources

<http://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/Sheet.aspx?siteId=20§ionId=85&contentId=692>

<http://resourcefulcook.com/mealplans>

<http://www.chiquitabananas.com/Worlds-Favorite-Fruit/index-banana-nutrition-facts.aspx>

<http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/indian>

<http://www.foodnetwork.co.uk/recipe/scottish-seasonal-recipes-february-keyword.html?search=scottish-seasonal-recipes-february§ion=recipes>

Social Eating

http://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/nutrition_articles.asp?id=439