

**SEEDS Foundation**  
**(Created by L. Willet)**  
**Lesson 1**  
**Sustainability and Food**  
**Grade 3**



**Purpose:** The purpose of this lesson is to introduce the concept of sustainability in general, and specifically in conjunction with our diet and the production and procurement of food in our homes, community, province and country.

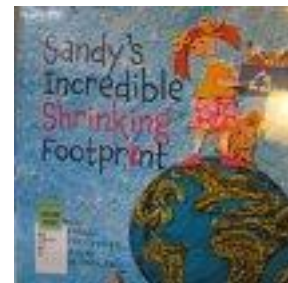
**Objectives:**

1. In small learning community groups students will research online, in the library and use other found sources to collect facts and pose questions regarding sustainability and diet (each group should have at least 3 facts and 3 things they want to learn after the research has been completed for the day). 3-4 students per group will work well for this.
  
2. Categorize the information as a class in order for groups to decide where to focus their learning throughout this unit

**Pre-Assessment:** In their groups, students will discuss what they already know about sustainability and responsible living, and pose questions to one another about things they don't know and are interested in concerning sustainability and how it relates to what ends up in their lunch bag. This will determine the path of research each learning community intends on taking.

**Set Induction:**

1. Read "Sandy's Incredible Shrinking Footprint" By Femida Handy and Carole Carpenter (or another book that sparks conversation on sustainability), and discuss the notion of taking responsibility for our actions and stewardship of the earth.
  
2. Explain what it means to belong to a learning community (in preparation for successful group work throughout this unit). Discuss what attributes make up such a community and create with the class a rubric for assessing the process of their research and study surrounding sustainability and food. Although of course a learning community and its function can vary, for these purposes, a learning community should have:
  - a) Supportive and shared leadership
  - b) Collective creativity
  - c) Shared values and vision
  - d) Supportive conditions
  - e) Shared personal practice



These attributes can double as defined assessment pieces within the rubric, the degree of success and proof of learning being qualities on a scale to be determined

with the students. Either group the students based on what criteria you see fit, or allow the students to group or have a say in the grouping.

**Procedure:**

1. After reading the story, pose some questions to the class: “How is the way we live today different from how we lived in the past? From other cultures?” “In what regard are our actions sustainable? Unsustainable?” “How did last night’s dinner get on our plates?” “What does our food footprint consist of?” “How big are our Food Footprints?”
2. Have students to break into their learning groups, and dispatch them to find out more about sustainability and what we eat by organizing a 3 centres where each group has time at: the computer lab (or computer area in the classroom), library, and sifting through the other resources you have collected relating to sustainability and food.
3. Have the students record all of the integral information, ideas and questions they come up with throughout this process.
4. Coming back together, have the students group the kinds of information they have found and the questions they have come up with categorically on either the smart board, whiteboard etc.  
[Groups may include but are not limited to: the way the food is grown, how the food is transported, how the food is prepared and perhaps wrapped for sale, the way the food is cooked, how different kinds of techniques can affect health, animal treatment, etc.]
5. Have the students go back into their groups to decide where they will take their focus next and delve into deeper inquiry. Encourage each group to focus on a unique category or intriguing question.

**Conclusion:** Have students save categorization of ideas if on smart board, or take photos to document if on white board, and encourage students to keep thinking and talking about sustainability and food, as this is only the beginning of their journey and their inquiry.

**Materials:** Computer lab or in class computers, library, any resources you may have or can acquire on sustainability and food, smart board or white board and dry erase markers, “Sandy’s Incredible Shrinking Footprint” or other inspiring/ conversation-sparking story on sustainability.

**Assessment:**

1. For group work and research outcomes, the creation of a rubric will aid in assessing student achievement
2. Formative assessment throughout the process

3. Group and student participation will be assessed in the contribution they make in the categorization of information learned and questions posed

**Citation:**

Handy, Femida & Carpenter, Carole. (2010) *Sandy's Incredible Shrinking Footprint*. Toronto: Second Story Press.

Hord, Shirley M. (1997) Professional Learning Communities: What are they and why are they important? *Issues...For Change*, 6(1), 1-8.