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| About this Lesson |
| In this lesson, students compose a letter to the editor expressing ideas, concerns and opinions they have about food bank use in Canada. |

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| **Grade Level** | **Course(s)/subject(s)** | **Learning Goal(s)** | **Suggested**  **Timing** |
| 8 | Language, grades 1–8 (2006) | At the end of this lesson, students will:   * describe how current events related to finances affect their family’s lives * identify various factors that affect income * reflect on their role as active citizens | 80–100 minutes |

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| Curriculum Links |
| Language, grades 1–8 (2006)  Writing  1.3 Gather information to support ideas for writing, using a variety of strategies and a wide range of print and electronic sources.  1.4 Sort and classify ideas and information for their writing in a variety of ways that allow them to manipulate information and see different combinations and relationships in their data.  2.1 Write complex texts of a variety of lengths using a wide range of forms.  2.8 Produce revised draft pieces of writing to meet identified criteria based on the expectations.  3.7 Use a wide range of appropriate elements of effective presentation in the finished product, including print, script, different fonts, graphics and layout.  3.8 Produce pieces of published work to meet identified criteria based on the expectations. |

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| Inquiry Question |
| What are the positive and negative consequences of having food banks in Canada? |

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| Materials List |
| * Computer lab * Sample letter to the editor from a local newspaper * Pencils * Research Graphic Organizer (Appendix A) * Food Bank Rubric (Appendix B) |

| **Timing**  (Mins.) | **Lesson Sequence** | **Assessment for and as Learning Opportunities** (self/peer/teacher) |
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| MINDS ON | | |
| 10–20 minutes | WHOLE CLASS  Brainstorm  As a class, brainstorm all the possible things a family might have to do if they were not able to afford to buy enough food to eat (be aware that for some students this is a very real situation).  Encourage students to come up with as many answers as possible. Write the responses on chart paper.  Invite students to sort responses into categories  (e.g., short-term vs. long-term solutions; or  more effective vs. less effective solutions).  Three corners  Write the following headings on paper and post in the classroom: “Very surprised,” “Somewhat surprised” and “Not surprised.” | Observation/Notes |

| **Timing**  (Mins.) | **Lesson Sequence** | **Assessment for and as Learning Opportunities** (self/peer/teacher) |
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| MINDS ON (cont’d.) | | |
|  | After each fact is read, have students move to the heading that best describes their responses to the following facts as they are read aloud:   * The first Canadian food bank was established in 1981 as a temporary relief measure for people facing economic hardship. * 87% of Canadian food bank users live in rental housing (60% paying market rent and 27% in social housing), while 6% report owning their homes. * In 2010, 31% of food banks did not have enough food to meet people’s needs. * In 2011, 851,014 people in Canada had to turn to food banks. * In 2011, children made up 37.9% of people using food banks.   Ask students to reflect on their reactions to these facts. Write their responses on chart paper. During this process, address any misconceptions that arise.  After each fact is read, encourage students to discuss with each other for a couple of seconds why they chose the heading for that fact. Then encourage students to share their reasoning for why they chose each. |  |
|  | | Context for Learning   * an understanding of the fact that not everyone in Canada has enough food to eat * an understanding of unequal wealth distribution, that some people do not have as much wealth as others * understanding of how to write well-structured paragraphs |  |

| **Timing**  (Mins.) | **Lesson Sequence** | **Assessment for and as Learning Opportunities** (self/peer/teacher) |
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| ACTION | | |
| 60–80 minutes | INDIVIDUAL  **Letter to the Editor**  Explain that students will conduct their own research about food banks and hunger issues in Canada and that after researching they will write a letter to the editor of a local paper. Provide students with a copy of the rubric and a recent letter to the editor from a local newspaper. Have students identify the structure of the letter, circling and labelling key parts (salutation, introduction, body, closing).  Tell the students that they are going to conduct Internet research using a Graphic Research Organizer (Appendix A) to find out (provide sample websites for basic research)…   * Who visits food banks? * Why those who visit food banks in Canada do not have enough money for food? * What supports are available for people who are having difficulty meeting their food needs? * Where the nearest food banks are located? * How can we help those who need funds for food?   When students have found the necessary information, they are to write a letter to the editor outlining their opinion and ideas about the issues they have explored. Students should be encouraged to identify the single most important factor they feel needs to be addressed to help others who are struggling financially. | Research Graphic Organizer (Appendix A) |

| **Timing**  (Mins.) | **Lesson Sequence** | **Assessment for and as Learning Opportunities** (self/peer/teacher) |
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| CONSOLIDATION/DEBRIEF | | |
| 5–10 minutes | WHOLE CLASS  Post the completed letters on a bulletin board. Invite students to look at their work as a class, and to identify the suggestions offered. Discuss the suggestions, similarities and differences among letters and rank frequencies.  Check for Understanding  Ask students to reflect on the following critical questions:   1. How do you know that your solutions will help? Have you thought of alternative solutions? 2. Who do you feel is responsible for helping those who are unable to afford food? 3. How can letters to the editor of a newspaper help or hinder a cause? Why? 4. What are some of the possible reasons that prevent people from overcoming financial hardship? | Letter to the editor  Food Bank Rubric (Appendix B) |

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| Research Graphic Organizer  **APPENDIX A** |
| Research Questions  Who visits food banks (e.g., children, elderly, people on social assistance, etc.)?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Source(s):  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  List possible reasons that prevent people from being able to afford food.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Source(s):  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  What supports are available for people who are having difficulty meeting their food needs? How can we help those who are in need of funds for food?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Source(s):  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Food Bank Rubric |
| Student name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Category | Level 1  (50%–59%) | Level 2  (60%–69%) | Level 3  (70%–79%) | Level 4  (80%–100%) | | Writing: gathering information | Student gathered minimal information on the issue. | Student gathered some of the necessary information on the issue. | Student gathered most of the necessary information on the issue. | Student expertly gathered the necessary information on the issue. | | Writing:  sorting and classifying ideas | Student demonstrates limited ability to sort and classify ideas and information for their letter to the editor. | Student demonstrates some ability to sort and classify ideas and information for their letter to the editor. | Student demonstrates considerable ability to classify ideas and information for their letter to the editor. | Student demonstrates a high degree of ability to sort and classify ideas and information for their letter to the editor. | | Writing: communicating to an audience | Student communicates the results of their inquiry through a letter to the editor with limited effectiveness. | Student communicates the results of their inquiry through a letter to the editor with some effectiveness. | Student communicates the results of their inquiry through a letter to the editor with considerable effectiveness. | Student communicates the results of their inquiry through a letter to the editor with a high degree of effectiveness. |   Comments: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Mark: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Parent initials: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

**APPENDIX B**