



NOURISH: FOOD + COMMUNITY

NOURISH VIEWING GUIDE

SYNOPSIS OF NOURISH FILM

Nourish opens with the question, “What’s the story of your food?” Responses to this question are woven throughout the video as it shows our food’s connections to a global community, the path our food takes from seed to table, and how our food choices can affect our health as well as people and places around the world. Through interviews with food experts such as Michael Pollan, Anna Lappé, and Bryant Terry, and with a variety of youth voices, the video suggests ways students can help create a better food system for themselves, other people, and the environment.





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The video includes the following chapters:

CONNECTIONS This chapter introduces the idea that all of our food involves a story, which often reveals a connection to the global community. It shows how some of our food is grown by local farmers and how some comes from producers halfway around the world. It suggests that, depending on what we eat, our food can either support local economies and preserve open space, or cause species loss and other problems.

SEED TO TABLE This chapter follows the path of two different crops—corn and tomato—from seed to a meal. Commodity corn, which is used as animal feed and in food additives, is the largest crop in the United States. The video shows how commodity corn is grown as a monocrop and requires chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and lots of processing to become food products. An heirloom tomato is a variety whose seeds have been saved and passed down through generations. In the video, the heirloom tomato is grown organically, sold at a farmers' market close to the farm, and prepared by young people as part of a meal.

VOTE WITH YOUR FORK In this chapter, author Michael Pollan explains how the Western diet of processed foods was invented over the last 50 to 75 years and has created many health and environmental problems. He suggests that the food choices we make every day express what matters to us, and that through better choices, we can improve both our health and the environment.

BE THE DIFFERENCE This chapter offers concrete ways that individuals can help transform our food system, such as asking questions about the source of food, finding out what grows locally, checking food labels, and joining an organization working on food issues.

RUN TIME 26 minutes

SHOWING THE VIDEO

1. Introduce the video by telling students its title and asking them what they think the term “nourish” means. When something is described as “nourishing,” what comes to mind? Does nourishment always come from food? What else can provide nourishment?



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2. Give students copies of the Nourish Notes student pages included in this Viewing Guide to complete as they watch the video. Let them know that *Nourish* is a documentary film hosted and narrated by actress Cameron Diaz.
3. Show the video. Depending on your schedule and objectives, you may show the entire video at once, stop after individual video chapters for discussion, or screen the chapters over several days.
4. In pairs, groups, or as a whole class, have students share some of their responses on the Nourish Notes page. Use the answer key on page 8 to check for accuracy and understanding.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Selecting from the following questions, lead a class discussion about the video and the topics raised.

CONNECTIONS

- The video shows food connections between people in different countries. What are some of the ways our food is linked to people and places around the globe?
- If you were to eat only foods grown less than 150 miles from our town—like Café 150 in the video—what foods would you be able to eat? What foods would you be unable to eat? How would the seasons affect your diet?
- As food expert Anna Lappé points out in the video, since 1950 the world has lost 90 percent of the big fish living in the oceans—including species of tuna, cod, and halibut. What might this fact mean for people or for the health of ocean life?
- The video describes how the Norwegian government is building a seed bank to store seeds of all the world's known crops. Why are they taking on this enormous task? Are there other things you think we should consider storing for future generations?
- Do you grow any of your own food? Have you ever been to a farmers' market? Do you buy food from a CSA (community supported agriculture)? What are benefits and disadvantages of eating foods grown close to where you live?



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SEED TO TABLE

- What differences were shown between the paths from seed to table for commodity corn and the heirloom tomato? Were there any similarities?
- What is a monocrop? What are the advantages and disadvantages of monocrop farming?
- In the video, Michael Pollan says that a burger, fries, and soda are the exact same food at one level. What does he mean by this?
- What are some of the health effects of eating fast foods? Will knowing these effects change what you choose to eat? Why or why not?
- Chef Bryant Terry says in the video that it might be worth spending 30 cents more for a pound of heirloom tomatoes, rather than cheaper monocrop tomatoes found in most grocery stores. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your reasoning.

VOTE WITH YOUR FORK

- Michael Pollan says that “Food is not just fuel. Food is about family, food is about community, food is about identity. And we nourish all those things when we eat well.” What does he mean? Give examples of how food nourishes family, community, and identity.
- How does the modern Western diet differ from more traditional cultures’ diets? What are the health and environmental consequences of the Western diet?
- How do both eating foods grown closer to home and eating fewer processed foods affect the health of the environment?
- What does it mean to “vote with your fork”? What kinds of things are you voting for now through what you eat? Are you willing to change your vote by changing the food you eat? Why or why not?



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BE THE DIFFERENCE

- *Nourish* suggests several ways that you can be a part of a global movement for good food. What were some of the ideas? What other ideas do you have?
- The video opens with the question, “What’s the story of your food?” What might individuals do to answer this question about the things they eat? How might knowing the answer to this question make a difference?

ASSESSMENT

Show the 3-minute short film “Nourish Means...” on the *Nourish* DVD, and have students write a short paragraph about one way their own idea of nourishment has expanded from watching the video.

Name _____

Date _____

NOURISH NOTES

CONNECTIONS

Draw a line that connects a location to one of its food stories.

NORWAY

URBAN FARMING

CHICAGO

FAIR TRADE COCOA

TOKYO

SEED BANK

BROOKLYN (NEW YORK)

FOOD FROM 150-MILE RADIUS

GHANA

INTERNATIONAL FRUIT SALAD

CALIFORNIA

THREATENED FISH

SEED TO TABLE

Jot down words for each crop—commodity corn and heirloom tomato—that describe how it is grown.



COMMODITY CORN



HEIRLOOM TOMATO

VOTE WITH YOUR FORK

What does each of the following statistics represent?

- a. 50 to 75 years _____
- b. 4 out of 10 leading killers _____
- c. 300 calories _____
- d. 3 times per day _____

BE THE DIFFERENCE

jot down examples of ways that people can help change our food system so that we all have good food:

- a. Teach and Learn _____
- b. Grow Your Own _____
- c. Create Community _____
- d. Change the Menu _____
- e. Shop Wisely _____
- f. Take a Stand _____



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NOURISH NOTES—ANSWER KEY

CONNECTIONS

Norway—Seed bank; Chicago—International fruit salad; Tokyo—Threatened fish; Brooklyn (New York)—Urban farming; Ghana—Fair trade cocoa; California—Food from 150-mile radius

SEED TO TABLE

Possible answers: Commodity corn—industrial farm, monocrop, pests, pesticides, chemical fertilizers, runoff. Heirloom tomato—organic, manure, close to customers

VOTE WITH YOUR FORK

a. How long ago the so-called Western diet was invented; b. Number of chronic diseases linked to food; c. How many more calories per day people eat today compared to pre-1980; d. Number of times per day we can “vote” to change the food system.

BE THE DIFFERENCE

- a. Ask questions about your food, find out what grows in your area, or talk to family about food choices.
- b. Start a garden, or grow herbs or vegetables at home.
- c. Make a meal with others, or meet the people who grow your food.
- d. Ask for more local and organic options, or eat more vegetables, grains, and fruits.
- e. Select organic or fair trade products, or check ingredients of foods.
- f. Join an organization working on food issues, or learn how government policies affect food.



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ABOUT THE CENTER FOR ECOLITERACY

The Center for Ecoliteracy is dedicated to education for sustainable living. Through its initiative Smart by Nature™, the Center offers expertise, inspiration, and resources to the sustainability movement in K–12 education, including the book *Smart by Nature: Schooling for Sustainability*, which showcases inspiring stories about school communities across the nation. The Center offers a seminar program, consulting services, curriculum development, and a publishing imprint that produces *Big Ideas: Linking Food, Culture, Health, and the Environment*, a conceptual framework for integrated learning, and the Rethinking School Lunch Guide, a downloadable planning framework that offers creative solutions. Learn more at www.ecoliteracy.org

ABOUT WORLDBLINK

WorldLink is an Emmy Award-winning media and design group dedicated to education for sustainability. WorldLink produces PBS television programming, digital media, museum exhibitions, curriculum resources, professional development seminars, and youth summits to engage and inspire a new generation of change agents. Recent national initiatives include Power Shift: Energy + Sustainability and Nourish: Food + Community. The purpose of Nourish is to open a meaningful conversation about our food system that moves people from understanding to action. Learn more at www.goworldlink.org and www.nourishlife.org.



nourish

food + community

What's the story of your food?

A WORLDBLINK INITIATIVE

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