

EPISODE THREE

FOOD

TEACHER'S NOTES



Age Suitability 8-12 years (2nd – 6th Class)

Focus:

In this episode, we turn our attention to food and its impact on the environment. While food is essential for survival, its production is responsible for a significant portion of global greenhouse gas emissions, and certain farming practices are harmful to the environment. Additionally, food waste is a major issue, with one-third of all food produced going to waste worldwide.

Sustainable food involves making choices that are better for the planet, animals, and people. This includes buying only what we need, selecting locally grown, seasonal foods with minimal packaging, and reducing our consumption of high-impact items like meat and dairy.

In Episode 3, we learn about exciting innovations like vertical farms, robot pollinators, and lab-grown meat. The Researchers and Disruptors then share their inventive ideas to create greener food systems and cut down on waste, offering hope for a more sustainable future.

Points for Discussion:

- What foods do you like/ dislike?
- Why do we need food?
- What is sustainable food?
- What percentage of food is wasted globally?
- What does it mean when we say a food has a high/ low carbon footprint?
- How does buying locally grown food help the environment?
- Why is it important to buy only the amount of food we need?
- How could people be encouraged to buy less and waste less?
- Which of the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) do you think has the biggest impact, and why?
- Which do you think is a bigger problem: waste on Earth or space debris? Why?

Teaching materials written by Claire Romito

H O P S K I P
STUDIOS



Coimisiún
na Meán

Produced with funding from



SCAN HERE
FOR RTE KIDS PLAYER



Points for Discussion (CONTINUED)

- What are some ways to reduce food waste at home or in school?
- How can food packaging impact the environment?
- Would you eat meat or fish that was grown in a lab or muffins made from insect flour?
- What are the advantages and challenges of using inventions like vertical farms, 3D printed food, and lab-grown meat?
- What would happen to the environment if everyone wasted less food? How might this change the world in the future?

Suggested Activities:

- Food Waste Diary – Students could keep a food waste diary for one week at home or in school. They can note down any food they throw away and why. At the end of the week, discuss the findings and brainstorm ways to reduce food waste.
- Local Food Investigation - Organise a visit to a local farmer's market or invite a local farmer or food producer to the classroom as a guest speaker. Have students investigate which foods are grown locally and when they are in season. Follow up by creating posters or presentations on the benefits of eating locally grown food.
- Create a Sustainable Menu - Divide the class into groups and challenge them to design a menu for a sustainable meal. Encourage them to consider locally sourced ingredients, minimal packaging ingredients, and ways of reducing food waste such as using up leftovers. Have each group explain their choices and how their meal benefits the environment.
- Food Packaging Audit - Ask students to bring in food packages from home (e.g., fruit wrappers, boxes) and conduct an audit in class. Students can sort them by material (plastic, cardboard, etc.) and discuss which are recyclable or biodegradable. They can then brainstorm alternatives to single-use packaging.
- Create a Vertical Farm Model - Have students research vertical farms and then work in groups to create a model using materials like cardboard, paper, and plants (or images if real plants are not possible). They can present how vertical farms work and why they are considered a sustainable option.
- Class Debate - Organise a class debate on the topic "Should we eat less meat to help the environment?" Divide students into two groups and provide them with arguments for and against. After the debate, reflect on different perspectives.
- Food Miles Map - Have students research how far certain foods travel from farm to table (food miles) and plot the journeys on a world map. Students can then discuss which foods have the lowest and highest environmental impact.

Teaching materials written by Claire Romito

H O P S K I P
STUDIOS



Coimisiún
na Meán

Produced with funding from



SCAN HERE
FOR RTE KIDS PLAYER



Curriculum Links:

This programme and resource support the teaching of Social, Environmental, and Scientific Education (SESE) and Social, Personal, and Health Education (SPHE) from the Irish Primary School Curriculum (1999). It aligns with the "Environmental Awareness and Care" strand of both the Science and Geography curricula. In SPHE, it relates to the "Environmental Care" sub-unit of the "Myself and the Wider World" strand. Additionally, the topic of making informed food choices is addressed within the "Taking Care of My Body" strand unit of the SPHE curriculum.

Other Resources for Learning About Sustainable Food:

GIY's Grow At School

GOAL's Food for Good

Argi Aware's Incredible Edibles

Fairtrade Ireland's Teacher Resources

WWF's Be a Food Warrior



All 6 episodes of What's Next?
are available to stream on RTE Player
<https://www.rte.ie/player/kids>

Teaching materials written by Claire Romito

H O P S K I P
STUDIOS



Coimisiún
na Meán

Produced with funding from



SCAN HERE
FOR RTE KIDS PLAYER

