Influences on Food Choice Handout

Policy environment

Physical environment

Social environment

Individual factors
Influences on Food Choice Teacher Guide

**Policy environment**
- School meal programs
- Food and nutrition assistance
- Policies that affect food prices
- Regulations on food marketing

**Physical environment**
- Food cost
- Food availability (in homes, stores, restaurants, schools)
- Food access (vehicle access, sidewalks, public transit)
- Food marketing (advertising, shelf placement, food labels, toys)

**Social environment**
- Culture
- Religion
- Eating habits of friends, family, coworkers

**Individual factors**
- Hunger
- Taste
- Income
- Knowledge
- Emotions
- Health conditions
- Values and priorities (public health, environment, social justice, animal welfare, nutrition, convenience)
John’s Food Environment

John lives near a small town in a rural farming community. His parents produce and sell vegetables on their family farm, and they raise chickens to sell eggs. They sell their produce at several farmers’ markets in nearby towns. John’s parents do not have a large income, and they produce as much of their own food as possible. When their food supplies run out, they must drive 30 miles to a general store that has limited options.

What would John eat for dinner?
Draw or describe what might be on John’s dinner plate:

Why does John eat what he eats?
Give examples of how John’s social and physical environment might affect his food choices:

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<th>Social environment</th>
<th>Physical environment</th>
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Lesson 12: Why We Eat What We Eat

Lydia’s Food Environment

Lydia and her family, immigrants from Central America, live in a large city. Her parents are rarely home from work in time for dinner, so Lydia often eats alone in front of the television. Her father uses the family car to get to work, so Lydia stays within walking distance to get meals. Though her parents encourage her to eat fruits and vegetables, there is no grocery store near her family’s apartment. There are a couple of corner stores, which sell microwavable snacks. Her friends often meet up to eat at the only nearby restaurant.

What would Lydia eat for dinner?
Draw or describe what might be on Lydia’s dinner plate:

Why does Lydia eat what she eats?
Give examples of how Lydia’s social and physical environment might affect her food choices:

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Dietary Change Signs

DECREASED

INCREASED BY UP TO 50%
DOUBLED

MORE THAN DOUBLED