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Overview: This lesson will challenge students to identify how food is grown and how they perceive fruits and vegetables in a persuasive essay about food and food culture.

(Time Needed: 1-2 class periods with option to finish for homework or revise on their own time.)

Standards:

- ELAGSE11-12RL1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
d. Identify children at nutritional risk.
- ELAGSE11-12RL3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
- ELAGSE11-12RL4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.
- ELAGSE11-12RL5: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- ELAGSE11-12RI5: Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
- ELAGSE11-12RL6: Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

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Objectives:

- Students will understand that food and people's perspectives of food are influenced by their past experiences.
- Students will evaluate persuasive writing and identify effective techniques used.
- Students will identify opinions directly stated or underlying opinions.
- Students will create a letter to the author discussing questions that the reader has and their personal opinions about food.

Materials:

- Post or print this article by Barbara Kingsolver - <https://orionmagazine.org/article/stalking-the-vegetannual/>
- How to annotate a text - <https://www.ramapo.edu/crw/files/2013/03/20-2.pdf>
- Interesting look at persuasive essay and psychology - <https://mindmetaphors.weebly.com/analysing-persuasive-texts.html>
- Rubric for student writing - https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/~media/ArtsEdge/LessonPrintables/grade-6-8/writing_a_fable_six_traits_writing_rubric.ashx

Outline:

- Engage: Students will brainstorm where their food comes from.
- Explore: Students will explore one author's persuasive essay about food and food culture.
- Explain: Teacher will explain how psychology plays an important role in effective persuasive writing.
- Extend: Students can examine their own beliefs about food and food culture through personal letters.

Lesson Plan:

- Engage: Start by asking students to describe their last meal and how it came to be on their plate. Give them five to ten minutes to free write about where their food comes from. Encourage them to get really creative and make things up if necessary.
- Explore: Let the students explore the article "Vegetannual" by Barbara Kingsolver. Have them annotate the text using the pdf in the materials. Have plenty of sticky notes, highlighters, colored pens, etc. available for them to use on the text. They can also use their phones to look up new words.

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- Explain: Teacher will explain what persuasive texts are and how they are used. The article about persuasion and psychology is a great resource to share or paraphrase. Allow students to share their feelings about the work, questions about the text, and their thoughts on their own knowledge about where food comes from.
- Extend: Students will construct a letter to Barbara Kingsolver persuading her to do something. This could be to persuade her to write for children on this topic, to change her mind about how food is grown, or that food should be available year round. They should use evidence from her essay as support for their claim.
- Evaluate: Students' letters will be evaluated with the rubric provided or with your school or class rubric for persuasive writing.

***This became a chapter in the book Animal, Vegetable, Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver. It's an amazing book that high schoolers really enjoy. Consider making this into a book study or reading circle.