

GIVING BACK



LUNCH MONEY

DeJuan Strickland, 15, is raising money to help families pay for school meals.

LEXILE: 1080L (900L alternate reading level)

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.4, RI.6-8.8, W.6-8.1

ENGAGE THE READER

Tell students that they'll read an article about DeJuan Strickland, a kid who's raising money to fight food insecurity. Ask: What is food insecurity? What might be its causes? How might a community or local government address food insecurity? Then have students scroll through the photos in the article, and ask: What is DeJuan doing to address food insecurity, and how can you tell?

QUESTIONS FOR CLOSE READING AND DISCUSSION

- How is DJ addressing the problem of food insecurity? Do you think his strategy will be effective? Explain.
- DJ says it's "weird that [school meals] are free in some areas and not in others." Why aren't school meals free everywhere? Who do you think decides? Should school meals be free in your community? Why or why not?
- What pointers about community work can you take from this article, and why? How might DJ pursue his initiative, as he puts it, "on a larger scale"?

EXTEND LEARNING

Encourage students to start their own initiative to fight food insecurity. They might start generating ideas by researching organizations in their community that address hunger, to see what kind of work they do. Students can also search for news articles about kids who are participating in similar efforts. Have them take notes on their research. Then have students in small groups discuss their findings and choose an approach that the whole class can take part in. Have them make notes on how the project might be organized. Then have each group present its idea to the class. Students should evaluate each idea and come up with a final plan.

Students might also get other kids involved. Have them make posters they can post around the school to generate support. The posters should announce the effort and how people can get involved.

COVER STORY QUIZ + ANSWER KEY

The cover quiz can be found on page 3 of this guide.

To create a digital quiz, you can use our template [here](#).

1. B (RI.3) 2. A (RI.8) 3. A (RI.2) 4. C (RI.4) 5. B (RI.1)

6. D (RI.7) 7. Answers will vary. (W.1)



HUNGER ON THE RISE

The USDA reports that millions of Americans cannot afford to buy enough food.

LEXILE: 880L

BEFORE READING

Have students read the headline and examine the photo and caption. Ask: What is this story about? What problem does the article describe? Why might school lunch be central to the article? What can be done to address the problem of hunger in the United States? Whose responsibility is it to address the problem? Explain. As students read the article, have them note details that support or challenge their ideas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- According to the article, what's causing the rise in food insecurity? Have these factors affected your community? Explain.
- Why do you think Congress has let some government programs expire? What do you think Congress should do, and why? What might individuals do to address the problem of hunger?



A FOND FAREWELL

For decades, China has loaned pandas to American zoos as a token of friendship. Now pandas are going back.

LEXILE: 870L

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Culture

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.4, RI.6-8.7, W.6-8.2

BEFORE READING

Tell students that China has loaned pandas to American zoos for decades. Ask: Why might China have done this? Introduce students to the term “panda diplomacy,” and ask: How might the term be important in this story?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why might be the reason zoos are returning pandas to China? What can this tell us about diplomacy?
- What might our relationship with animals say about us? Why do people value animals like the panda?
- Why is the panda's return to China newsworthy? What might be some of the consequences of their return?

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Have students create a comic strip about the article. The text boxes, dialogue bubbles, and illustrations should convey the article's key information and ideas to someone unfamiliar with the story. The comic strip should have a catchy title. Students can work in small groups or individually. Give them the option of creating a multi-panel comic or a poster-size illustration—or a combination of both. Whatever the format, the comic should draw details from the article.

Name _____ Date _____

Use this week's cover story, "Lunch Money," to answer the questions below. For questions 1–6, circle the letter next to the best answer. If you need more space to write your response to question 7, use the back of this page.

<p>1. What caused DeJuan Strickland (DJ) to raise money to support families in paying for school meals?</p> <p>A. He had a friend who was unable to pay for school lunch one day.</p> <p>B. He had firsthand experience with the issue.</p> <p>C. He learned about food insecurity in school.</p> <p>D. He worked at a nonprofit organization to tackle food insecurity.</p>	<p>4. Which best describes food insecurity?</p> <p>A. not having access to free lunch at school</p> <p>B. not being able to pay for school lunch</p> <p>C. not having reliable access to food</p> <p>D. having unpaid school meal debt</p>
<p>2. What does this quote tell you about DJ? "I wanted to do something to make sure other kids don't have to feel that same way."</p> <p>A. He cares about others.</p> <p>B. He feels bad for himself.</p> <p>C. He wants every state to provide free school lunches.</p> <p>D. He knows school meal debt is a big issue.</p>	<p>5. According to the article, DJ hopes to have a career in</p> <p>A. fundraising.</p> <p>B. computer programming.</p> <p>C. writing.</p> <p>D. football.</p>
<p>3. How is the section "Enough to Eat" important to the article?</p> <p>A. It provides context for the issue DJ is addressing.</p> <p>B. It describes how not having enough to eat is harmful for kids.</p> <p>C. It explains how to repay school meal debt.</p> <p>D. It offers advice for kids who want to help address food insecurity.</p>	<p>6. What new information is provided by the photos?</p> <p>A. DJ and his mom are working to set up a nonprofit organization.</p> <p>B. DJ buys his own lunch from the grocery store.</p> <p>C. DJ presented his principal with a check for \$400.</p> <p>D. DJ has received an award for his community work.</p>

7. Missouri is considering making school lunches free for all students. Write a persuasive letter to Missouri's state government, explaining why school lunch should be free.
