

Shopping Smart / Shopping Green

AIM

To help students gain the understanding that supporting locally grown food directly affects the local and global environment and also to help them develop language skills by learning vocabulary and practicing listening, reading, speaking and writing skills.

OVERVIEW

This lesson will raise students' awareness of how to shop thoughtfully and conscientiously, how to save money by doing so, and how they can help the environment by shopping for locally grown and seasonal food. Students will learn how to read grocery store newspaper inserts and negotiate real-life situations in terms of how and where to shop and how they can best spend their money.

DAY 1

1. Warm-up Activity

Begin by asking the class the following questions about their shopping habits:

- How often do you shop for food?
- Where do you shop for food?
- Do you shop when you are hungry? Is this a bad idea? Why?
- Do you buy impulse items?
- Do you shop with a budget?

2. Survey

Moving around the classroom, suggest students ask each other “w-h” questions (where, why, when, how) about their food shopping habits, using the graphic organizer below.

Name	Where do you shop for food?	Why do you shop at these stores?	When do you shop for food?	How can you save money at the food store?

Then have students break into small groups and ask them to discuss within their group the responses from their classmates and what they learned from the survey. Follow up with a class discussion about the students' shopping practices.

Optional Assignment

Have students conduct this same survey in the community or in their school and report back with their findings.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Reflect on their shopping habits.
- Conduct a survey inside the classroom.
- Discuss and reflect on answers to survey and in-class questions.
- Listen for the main idea and answers to questions in a PBS or NPR segment.
- Analyze and summarize data from newspaper inserts.
- Prepare questions for a questionnaire to be used in a contact assignment.
- Present findings from a contact assignment.
- Develop language skills.

TARGET GROUP

Intermediate- to high-level ESL communication class

(For the purpose of this lesson, the target group levels range from 1 through 8, with the following guidelines: 1 = beginning, 5 = intermediate, 8 = advanced.)

LENGTH

Three 50- to 60-minute communication class periods

MATERIALS

- Graphic organizers
- **“Growing Local, Eating Local,”** a video clip from NOW (PBS), week of 11/2/07, available at <http://www.pbs.org/shows/344/index.html>.
- **“Local Food,”** a segment from Forum (NPR), 7/19/05, available at <http://www.kqed.org/epArchive/R507191000>.
- Green Efforts, a page on the website of Mollie Stone’s Market that lists the organic food they carry and provides information on their recycling efforts; available at <http://www.molliestones.com/green/>.
- Grocery store inserts, to be found at the entrance to large grocery stores and online.

3. Discussion Questions

Have students break into small groups or pairs and ask them to discuss the following questions:

- Would you drive a long distance to a store to buy something inexpensive?
- Do you try to eat food that is in season, such as strawberries in the spring and apples in the fall? Is this a good thing? Why or why not?
- Would you save money if you ate more vegetables and less meat?
- Is saving money always the most important thing to consider when buying food?

DAY 2**1. Analyze Video Clip / Radio Segment**

Stream **“Growing Local, Eating Local”**

(<http://www.pbs.org/shows/344/index.html>), starting the video clip 10 minutes into the segment.

Alternatively, listen to **“Local Food”** (<http://www.kqed.org/epArchive/R507191000>), which is also a useful resource for this activity.

Ask students to answer the following questions about what they viewed / heard:

- What is the main idea in the segment?
- What does *local* mean?
- Who is helped when people buy locally grown food?
- Name two advantages to eating locally grown food.
- What does *locavore* mean?
- Explain the meaning of the phrase “Think global, buy local.”

After students view / listen to the segment, suggest they work in pairs to compare each other’s answers to the above questions. Then encourage them to share their answers with the whole class. Write responses on the board.

2. Analyze Newspaper Inserts

Distribute grocery store inserts from Safeway, Lucky's, Whole Foods and Piazza's that have pictures of food items available at these stores. Review the context of the inserts and their function. Then ask students to pair up and look through the inserts for:

- Two food items that are locally grown
- Two of the same food items that are not locally grown
- Two food items that are organic

Distribute copies of the chart below for students to use to organize their findings.

What food item did you find?	Where is it from?	How much does it cost?

Ask students to summarize their findings and report back to the class. As a whole class, interpret the findings, comparing prices and useful information.

3. Contact Assignment

Have students prepare questions for a questionnaire that they will take to their local farmer's market. They should go to the market in pairs or in groups and interview five local farmers, filling in their questionnaire. These are possible questions, but encourage students to devise their own as well.

Name of farmer	What do you grow?	Where is your farm located?	How many miles away is your farm?	Do you use pesticides?

Allow students time to prepare an oral report for the next class, summarizing the information they gathered.

OPTIONAL

Homework / Pair Work / Grocery Store Treasure Hunt

Give the students an imaginary budget to buy food for a party. Tell them to read the grocery store inserts ahead of time so they know which stores to go to. Ask them to try to buy as many food items as possible from local producers. Also instruct them to read labels and ask the vendors where the food came from. They should report back to the class:

- Where they bought the food
- What deals they found
- A description of the dinner they will prepare

Invite the class to evaluate whose dinner sounds the most appetizing.

DAY 3

1. Presentation

Students give oral presentations explaining the findings from their farmer's market expedition to a partner, a small group or the class.

2. Food Origin Chart

Explain to students that they will explore the origins of the food they buy to gain an understanding of what it takes to get food to the market and ultimately to them as consumers.

Provide a list of different foods, such as rice, soybeans and wheat, and ask students where these items are grown. Suggest that students work in small groups to find out the answers and ask them to fill in the chart.

Food	Where it comes from
Rice	
Tofu / milk / dairy	
Pineapples	
Coconuts	
Tomatoes	

3. Computer Lab Activity

Give students a map of California and explain to them that all of the foods in the chart can be grown or, in the case of the dairy products and tofu, obtained from sources in California. Ask them to take their maps to the computer lab and research where in California these foods originate. They should be prepared to report back the following day the location of various farms throughout California.

Extension Activities

These suggestions can be incorporated into a lesson or be used as an out-of-class assignment:

- Make a weekly shopping plan.
- Educate family members about eating locally grown food.
- Generate a map that shows stores in their neighborhood that sell locally grown food. Students could use Google maps for this exercise and tag the stores on the map by dragging and dropping a place mark.
- Locate, then volunteer to work in community gardens. (A good example is Hayward High School's organic working garden. Contact Theo Hartman at theo.hartman@gmail.com.)
- Check Mollie Stone's Green Efforts page on their website (<http://www.molliestones.com/green/>) to see lists of the organic food they carry as well as information on their recycling efforts.