

FOODMILES.COM • FOR TEACHERS

Six Ready-to-Use Food Miles Lessons

Starter-main-plenary lesson plans built around the free foodmiles.com calculator and games — no sign-up needed, works across geography, maths, science and citizenship.

1. Warm-up: Higher or Lower	10 min • any subject
2. Track Your Own Lunch	25 min • geography / maths
3. Compare Five Foods	20 min • maths / geography
4. Where Does Our Food Come From?	30 min • geography
5. Working With Real Data	30 min • maths
6. Does It Actually Matter?	35 min • citizenship / PSHE

Warm-up: Higher or Lower

10 minutes

Any age

Any subject

Whole class or pairs

Objective: get pupils thinking about relative food-miles distances before a lesson, with no prep needed.

STARTER

3 MIN

Load the Higher or Lower game on the big screen. Explain the rules: two foods appear, guess which travelled further on average.

MAIN

5 MIN

Play as a class, taking turns calling out answers - or let pupils play individually/in pairs on their own devices, building a streak.

PLENARY

2 MIN

Ask: what surprised you? Which foods seemed to travel further than expected, and why might that be?

You'll need: a screen or pupils' own devices. foodmiles.com/higher-or-lower.php

Extension: ask pupils to guess the actual mileage, not just which is higher, before revealing the answer.

Track Your Own Lunch

25 minutes

KS2-KS3

Geography / Maths

Individual, then whole class

Objective: use real data to calculate the distance travelled by pupils' own food, and see food miles as personally relevant rather than abstract.

BEFORE THE LESSON

Ask pupils to note 2-3 things from their lunch or a recent shop - check the packaging for country of origin, or bring the packaging in.

MAIN

15 MIN

In class, look up each item's origin on the [foodmiles.com](https://www.foodmiles.com) calculator and record the distance. Use the Food Miles Detective worksheet to capture results.

PLENARY

10 MIN

Build a shared class table or chart of everyone's items. Who has the furthest-travelled lunch? The closest?

You'll need: the Food Miles Detective worksheet (printable, included with this pack) and access to [foodmiles.com](https://www.foodmiles.com).

Extension: ~~convert each distance to kilometres, or add up the whole class's total food miles for the day.~~

Compare Five Foods

20 minutes

KS1-KS2

Maths / Geography

Whole class or pairs

Objective: practise ordering and ranking using real distance data - a gentle first step into working with data for younger pupils.

STARTER

5 MIN

Pick five recognisable foods (e.g. bananas, apples, coffee, rice, potatoes). Ask pupils to guess the order, shortest journey to longest.

MAIN

10 MIN

Look each one up on Browse All Foods to find the real average distance, and check the guessed order against the real one.

PLENARY

5 MIN

Reveal the actual ranking. Discuss: which surprised you most, and why might that food travel so far (or so little)?

You'll need: a screen. foodmiles.com/browse-foods.php

Extension (older pupils): write a short comparison explaining why one food travels further than another.

Where Does Our Food Come From?

30 minutes

KS2-KS3

Geography

Whole class, then pairs

Objective: locate countries on a map and build a picture of global trade and supply chains.

STARTER

5 MIN

Open the Interactive World Map on the whiteboard. Click a few countries together and see what's been tracked from each.

MAIN

20 MIN

In pairs, pupils explore the map (or Browse All Countries as a list), pick a handful of countries and mark them on a printed or drawn world map.

PLENARY

5 MIN

Share findings. For older pupils, compare the emissions figures shown on each country's page.

You'll need: an interactive whiteboard or screen, pupils' own devices for pair work. foodmiles.com/world-map.php

Extension: plot the rough distances on the map with string or a ruler, comparing the shortest and longest journeys found.

Working with Real Data

30 minutes

KS3

Maths

Individual or pairs

Objective: practise averages, unit conversion and comparison using a live, real-world dataset rather than made-up textbook numbers.

STARTER

5 MIN

Show the Leaderboard page.
Ask what patterns pupils notice in the most-travelled foods and journeys.

MAIN

20 MIN

Set tasks using the leaderboard figures: calculate averages, convert miles to kilometres, or compare two routes' totals.

PLENARY

5 MIN

Discuss why the numbers keep changing - this is live data from real visitors, so two classes doing this a year apart won't get identical answers.

You'll need: a screen, calculators or squared paper. foodmiles.com/leaderboard.php

Extension: compare the class's own calculated averages against the site's published figures.

Does It Actually Matter?

35 minutes

KS3-KS4

Citizenship / PSHE

Groups, then whole class

Objective: weigh evidence and form a reasoned opinion on a genuinely contested question, rather than accepting a simple answer.

STARTER

5 MIN

Quick poll: "does it matter how far your food has travelled?"
Show of hands, no discussion yet.

MAIN

20 MIN

In groups, read What Does The Research Actually Say? and Are Food Miles Still Relevant?, then discuss the case for and against.

PLENARY

10 MIN

Re-run the poll. Has anyone changed their mind? Ask a few pupils to explain why, or why not.

You'll need: a screen or printed extracts. foodmiles.com/research.php · foodmiles.com/still-relevant.php

Extension: write a short balanced paragraph presenting both sides, for older pupils.

Everything in one place

All the tools these lessons use are free, need no sign-up, and work on a shared classroom screen or pupils' own devices.

foodmiles.com

The calculator itself

**/world-
map.php**

Interactive world map

**/higher-or-
lower.php**

Higher or Lower game

/leaderboard.php

Most-travelled foods &
routes

Also included in this teacher resources pack: the printable **Food Miles Detective** worksheet (one page, for Lesson 2 above) and the **Food Miles Passport** booklet, for a longer week-long project. Find both, and everything else, at **foodmiles.com/for-teachers.php**.