

Midnight Feast

ACTIVITIES FOR READERS AGED 12-16

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

- Make a playlist for *Midnight Feast*. (YouTube.) Students arrange 5 to 10 tracks which match the emotions and themes in the story, then briefly explain how each song relates to the story, either by atmosphere, lyrics or both.
- Imagine *Midnight Feast* is a movie/stage play and design a poster to advertise. (See [How To Design A Poster](#). Create any size wall posters from any size images at [Block Posters](#))
- What do you think happens *after* the final page? Design and write an 'epilogue' screen. What do you think happened to Roya after she fell asleep? What happened the next morning? The next year? What probably happened over the next five years? Why do you think that?
- Take one or several of the pages that depict Roya's imagination (most of the 'b-side pages'), and use that setting to write your own short story. For example, the black cats form a subplot in their own right. Roya has seen a black cat in real life, then imagined what they get up to. Are you able to rewrite this story from the cat's point of view?
- Apart from *Midnight Feast*, what else might this story be called? If picturebooks were published with sub-headings, what would be a good sub-heading for *Midnight Feast*?
- As in the movies, take what seems the most compelling image(s) and create an advertisement.
- Pick five adjectives to describe Roya and explain how they apply.
- Using the themes in the story, write your own picturebook text, creating your own characters and situation. It does not have to relate to *Midnight Feast* at all aside from its themes of imagination versus reality.
- Rewrite the ending of *Midnight Feast* so that the lavish feast really happens and Roya suffers no disappointment. Illustrate a new page.
- Retell each page, this time from Roya's first person point of view.
- Make your own test of ten questions. Ask questions about plot, theme, symbolism, then test a partner.
- Rewrite the story as a poem. It certainly doesn't have to rhyme. (But if you want it to rhyme you might make use of [Rhyme Brain](#).)
- Retell a different story using the same pictures. How different can you make it?
- Create a before/after list in two columns to show what has changed over the course of the story.

VOCABULARY EXTENSION

(from the close reading notes, in preparation for the compare and contrast essay below)

	WORD	WHAT I THINK IT MIGHT MEAN	NOTES AFTER LOOKING IT UP
1	personification		
2	en face		
3	omniscient		
4	mundane		
5	doppelganger		
6	pathetic fallacy		
7	pageantry		
8	motif		
9	naïve		
10	food insecurity		
11	allegorical name		
12	hue		
13	gourmand		
14	meal worms		
15	Spartan		
16	riff		
17	anthropomorphism		
18	intratext		
19	recto and verso		
20	epiphany		
21	mimetic of		
22	pastoral scene		
23	synthesise		
24	dissonance		
25	homophone		

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Write a 'compare and contrast essay' making use of *Midnight Feast* and another short narrative. Aims:

- Justify own interpretation of ideas in visual texts using knowledge of narrative structures and evidence from the text.
- Explain possible reasons for varying interpretations of a text.
- Explore layers of meaning.
- Identify target audience.
- Reflect on what own response to texts reveals about personal values and attitudes.
- Analyse a text in terms of its social and political comment.

Step 1: Students are guided through the compare and contrast process. Teacher uses short narrative of own choice. Below is an example using a music video: [Kimbra's 'Settle Down'](#) from the album *Vows*, in which a girl imagines herself a 1950s housewife. Here are the lyrics:

1. I wanna settle down
I wanna settle down
Won't you settle down with me?
Settle down

2. We can settle at a table
A table for two
Won't you wine and dine with me?
Settle down

3. I wanna raise a child
I wanna raise a child
Won't you raise a child with me?
Raise a child

4. We'll call her Nebraska
Nebraska Jones
She'll have your nose
Just so you know

5. I wanna settle down
I wanna settle down
Won't you settle down with me?
Settle down

6. Run from Angela Vickers
I saw her with you

Monday morning small talking on the avenue
She's got a fancy car
She wants to take you far
From the city lights and sounds deep into the dark

7. Star so light and star so bright
First star I see tonight!
Star so light and star so bright
Keep him by my side!

8. I wanna settle down
I wanna settle down
Baby there's no need to run
I'll love you well
I wanna settle down
It's time to bring you down
On just one knee for now
Let's make our vows

9. Star so light and star so bright
First star I see tonight!
Star so light and star so bright
First light I see tonight!
Star so light and star so bright!
Keep him by my side!

Hey oh oh....

TIPS FOR WRITING A COMPARE AND CONTRAST ESSAY

Point of Comparison	<i>Titles</i>
Plot	It is tempting to spend most of your time regurgitating the plot, finally getting to the comparison in the final paragraph. This is a common trap. Spend very little time on the plot. Practise summarising both stories as part of your revision, in one or two sentences.
Character	Take the characters from each story and explain how they are similar, how they are different. Explain how this impacts the story (plot) and theme (message). Spend less time describing a character's appearance, focusing mainly on symbolism of clothing and so forth. Spend more time describing a character's personality and actions, with examples. How do the characters change? Before... But now... This shows...
Point of View/Voice/Language	Point of View: First person or third person POV? Whose story is this? Is the story told by a minor character who acts as an impartial observer? Or is the main character the same as the first person? Voice: educated, formal, informal, sad, upbeat, hopeful...? (Here might be a good place to include a quotation or two.)
Setting	Setting includes both TIME and PLACE. It is easy to focus on place and forget to mention time. Time: Contemporary (present-day), set in the past, in the future? Place: Specific to one region? Universal? Small-town, urban?
Structure	Are there any point-of-view switches? Is time linear, or are there many flashbacks and flash forwards? Is the story divided into 'chapters', or easily dividable chunks? When describing/understanding the various structures of a simple plot, this sheet from Shutta Crum's website comes in handy.
Themes	Why did the author write this story? Was there an epiphany for the character? For you, as reader? Were you reminded of a time in your own life, and encouraged to think of it in a different way?

COMPARE AND CONTRAST ESSAY TEMPLATE: MIDNIGHT FEAST vs. KIMBRA'S 'SETTLE DOWN' MUSIC VIDEO (EXAMPLE ONLY)

Point of Comparison	<i>Midnight Feast by Lynley Stace</i>	<i>Settle Down by Kimbra, produced by Warner Bros. Records</i>	<i>Points of difference and similarity</i>
Plot	<p>Roya is made to go to bed each night at the same time as her younger sister. She has trouble falling asleep and copes with the lack of stimulation by imagining an alternative world in which food is plentiful. She is disappointed by the 'Midnight Feast' her parents set up for her so retreats once again into her imaginary world to forget the starving, homeless masses of people she has seen out of the kitchen window.</p>	<p>A young woman sings about a girlhood fantasy, in which she wished for a 1950s-style housewifely existence. The visuals of the music video suggest this dream has been burned, with the wild dancing of Kimbra having broken out of her imaginary world as she entered the adult one.</p>	<p>Both narratives are about girls with rich inner lives who are ultimately disappointed by reality.</p>
Character	<p>Roya is on the cusp of adolescence and wishes for more: more food, more freedom, more novel experiences. Because of lack of food Roya's imagination is cuisine-heavy. She not only imagines popcorn at the movies, but a mountainous, never-ending supply of it.</p> <p>Roya feels as if she is being treated younger than she really is, evident by the fact that she is sent to bed at the same time as her much younger sister. In her white nightgown she looks younger in her 'real world' than in her imagined, dressed-up self. The final page shows her looking really quite tall, perched on the side of the garden bed, in a highly made-up face. Although she had physically grown (and is now able to see out of the kitchen window), she can't have grown that much over just a few days: her growth is mostly internal.</p>	<p>The contrast between the young-adult Kimbra (in her early 20s) and the child representations of girlhood are shown clearly by the younger girls who act out a 1950s housewife fantasy. But even the fantasies are not pleasant: the miniature housewife is not having a good time at all. This may be a depiction of the evolution of the original fantasies, which may have been perfect, overlaid with the newfound realisations of an older self, disappointed by unrequited love.</p> <p>Roya of <i>Midnight Feast</i> may well find her own childhood imaginings tainted by reality. This had already started to happen on the final page, in which the backdrop of her glasshouse is an industrial one. Both Kimbra and Roya are girls who have their fantasies corrupted as part of growing up.</p> <p>The little girls in <i>Settle Down</i> are blonde and wear white dresses. Blonde symbolises childhood (in Caucasian cultures) and the white dresses symbolise innocence. This contrasts with Kimbra's black dress, and wild, dark curls. She has now rebelled. Even the style of dancing contrasts, with the little girls performing a gentle, scripted dance while Kimbra dances spontaneously.</p>	<p>Whereas <i>Midnight Feast</i> depicts a character arc over a very short space of time (a few days, and especially one night), Kimbra's video depicts the difference between a preadolescent self and a young adult self. We might expect that the difference between those two ages be starker.</p>
Point of View Voice	<p>This picturebook is told in third person by a male narrator, which puts more distance between the reader and the character of Roya. Third person POV is common in fairytales. This is a modern story, or set in the near future, so a fairytale technique lends weight to</p>	<p>The lyrics are sung in first person: 'I wanna settle down'. This echoes the egotistical nature of children, who are most concerned with satisfying their own needs and wishes.</p>	<p>Both <i>Midnight Feast</i> and Kimbra's song feature girls reimagining imperfect realities, and in both cases things may have never been that good in the first place. Were the 1950s really so good for women? And when the middle class masses of</p>

<p>Language</p>	<p>a hypothetical situation.</p> <p>In <i>Midnight Feast</i> there are visual allusions to fairytales, such as on the ‘royal bedroom’ page, in which Roya has imagined some new fusion of <i>The Princess On The Pea</i>, <i>Jack and the Beanstalk</i> and <i>Rapunzel</i>. The cuckoo reference comes from Wordsworth. The mother is shown reading a book of Wordsworth’s poems. The poem and the story are both about something that cannot quite be grasped: in Wordsworth’s case he can’t quite see the cuckoo, and in Roya’s case the wonderful abundances of her imagination feel just out of reach.</p> <p>The language of <i>Midnight Feast</i> suggests things have been different in Roya’s lifetime: ‘If only the food markets would return, with the right kind of night-time bustle’. And when she complains about the endless summer nights, she may be speaking of climate change in a permanently warmer world.</p>	<p>The naivety of the narrator shines through with, ‘We’ll call her Nebraska/Nebraska Jones/She’ll have your nose/Just so you know’, as if a mother can choose which of the parents features to inherit. This is the voice of a child who, in her imaginary world, can influence any outcome at all. This use of imaginative power is shared by Roya in <i>Midnight Feast</i>.</p> <p>One repeated verse of <i>Settle Down</i> borrowed from a well-known nursery rhyme: ‘Star so light and star so bright/First star I see tonight!’ The star is a symbol of unfulfilled dreams: this singer has ‘stars in her eyes’. The nursery rhyme is traditionally recited to very young children and so when used in this song, emphasises the naivety of the singer.</p> <p>Notice emphasis of "down" and "now" in the lyrics, ‘It’s time to bring you down, on just one knee for now’ as if marriage is something that brings you down and gets worse with time.</p>	<p><i>Midnight Feast</i> start to suffer from food insecurity, it might be easy to look back and remember a time of plenty, but was it ever so? In both narratives, the perfect, reimagined past never really did exist.</p>
<p>Setting</p>	<p>Time: The time is ambiguous. The television in Roya’s living room is pre-dates flat screens, and could be set in the 1950s. The phone on the wall in the kitchen is slightly more modern, yet Roya’s mother talks on a mobile phone. It’s not even clear that the landline is still in use. This is an impoverished household in a world which may well include more up-to-date technology, just not that which is available to the masses.</p> <p>Place: The characters speak in Australian accents, but the narrator is American. This suggests a story set nowhere and everywhere. The characters also are ethnically ambiguous, with Arabic and Persian names, with reference to ‘Mrs Chen next door’ suggesting a multi-cultural neighbourhood which could stand in as representative of the whole world.</p>	<p>Time: The scenes with the blonde little girls are unambiguously set in 1950s/1960s America, a highly specific few decades in world history in which women were highly encouraged to return to the home after their efforts in the war. This era is still prominent in popular culture, with a proliferation of modern movies and TV series set during this time (<i>Mad Men</i>, <i>The Wonder Years</i>, <i>Pleasantville</i>, <i>Forrest Gump</i> and so on). So viewers will easily recognise the highly coiffed hairstyles of the little girls dressed as housewives and the short back and sides of the husband dressed for dinner (which is in itself a custom harking back to an earlier era). The music video even begins with the title of the song with a man narrating in the background. The crackle-track overlay, the retro, slanted font of the title and even the inflection of the narrator suggest the 1950s. Yet Kimbra is dressed in a modern style with retro influences. So the story itself is modern, with the singer’s imaginary world harking back to an earlier time.</p> <p>Place: We know that Kimbra grew up in New Zealand but can’t tell from the lyrics, since English language pop-music tends to have its own stylised ‘international’ accent. Regardless of where it is set, 1950s America has had a large influence on the rest of the Western world. Like <i>Midnight Feast</i>, this is a ‘Western’ story, by dint</p>	<p>A specific place is not important to either of these stories. But time is more important in <i>Midnight Feast</i>, which is set in an alternative present or a near, dystopian future.</p>

		of it being in English, but the themes are universal.	
Structure	<p>When the reader first meets Roya, she is in the real world of the story. Suddenly on the following page she is in her imaginary world. As her imagination grows more robust, she breaks out of her own room and into fields of poppies, aquariums full of cats, Japanese outdoor baths and so on. Eventually she comes crashing back to reality when she realises she has grown tall enough to see out of the kitchen window. In that moment she understands that others are worse off. The colour scheme is momentarily switched, but she is soon able to retreat into her imagination again.</p>	<p>When the viewer first meets Kimbra we see her against a backdrop of porcelain dolls. The film cuts to the lower half of a face, and when the entire face is revealed, it is no longer the face of a young woman but of a little girl, who looks eerily adult in make-up and the 1950s equivalent of women's fashion. We have now been transported back to a time in Kimbra's childhood when she was imagining what grown-up life would be like. But soon we see the dolls of the background on fire.</p>	<p>Like <i>Midnight Feast</i>, the little girl's dreams of <i>Settle Down</i> have been destroyed. In the music video they have been 'burned' (symbolised by the fire), whereas <i>Midnight Feast</i> makes use of a similar idiom, in which Roya's dreams have been 'shattered' (symbolised by the eggshell breaking).</p>
Themes	<p>Roya learns that reality will never match her dreams, and decides to stay inside her imagination despite newfound knowledge of the world around her.</p> <p>The new world is one of heat and drought and lack of food for the masses. This isn't the world Roya would have seen in her childhood fairytales, in which the future is full of hope.</p> <p>Roya is shown dancing with an imaginary man, but this is not her main concern. Romance may well be on her mind had she not more pressing desires: in this case, the driving force is hunger.</p>	<p>The food rituals in <i>Settle Down</i> are about communion with a love interest: "We can settle at a table/A table for two/Won't you wine and dine with me..." Later the husband is shown sharing a picnic with the love rival Angela Vickers. This symbolises a transfer of affection, which is hammered home by the image of the husband's dinner gone cold, framed and therefore emphasised by the open top of his empty dining room chair.</p> <p>One interpretation of this song is that girls are still taught that the 1950s ideal of womanhood is still the ideal, and dreams will only be burned if girls grow up hoping to rely on a husband to fulfil their emotional and financial needs. The mannequin in the video implies that girls with such dreams don't really care who they settle down with, as long as the man fulfils items on a 'checklist of ideal husbands'.</p>	<p>Both of these narratives are ultimately about disappointment, and the dashed hopes of girlish dreams. While the girl in Kimbra's song hoped to spend her adult days dolling herself up in the mirror, living in an immaculate suburban house then making dinner for a devoted and loving husband, in reality she is vacuuming the carpets with a stressful expression on her face, and spying on a man she suspects of infidelity.</p> <p>Both <i>Midnight Feast</i> and <i>Settle Down</i> include food, which in turn stands for many things other than satiety.</p>

Step 2: Students choose another short narrative which shares one or more things in common with *Midnight Feast* and create their own compare and contrast template. (Unlike the template above, theirs should be in bullet point form to save time.)

Lists of picturebooks grouped by theme:

- [Imagination](#)
- [Disappointment](#)
- [Dreams](#)
- [Environment](#) (and more specifically, [Drought](#))
- [Famine](#)
- [Are There Picturebooks That Make The Dark Less Scary?](#) From The Book Doctor at The Guardian
- [Food inspired children's books](#)

Point of Comparison	<i>Midnight Feast by Lynley Stace</i>	
Plot		
Character		
Point of View/ Voice/ Language		
Setting		
Structure		
Themes		

VISUAL LANGUAGE

Aim: Use the principles of graphic design and the language of advertising to sell something non-existent

Write a travel brochure for a visitor to your imagination. The 'travel brochure' may be based on a dream you have had, a place you wish existed, a place in a book which you have imagined, or somewhere you have just made up, right now for this purpose. Describe the sights the travellers would want to see. Include photo collages or hand-drawn illustrations.



ORAL LANGUAGE

Aim: Discuss complex or controversial topics in a structured situation.

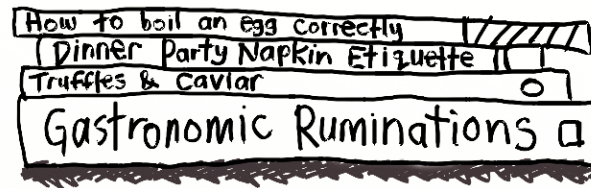
Alternatively, make use of [Google Moderator](#), at least to begin with. Environmental themes touched on in *Midnight Feast* can be controversial and spark as much lively debate as a classroom teacher can withstand. Some topics for a formal (or a 'jump-in') debate:



1. *Midnight Feast* is set in an overpopulated urban environment.

Urban Living: Cities are the future of human evolution ([from an io9 article](#)). Further Links on City Living:

- [100 Urban Trends You Should Know About](#) from co.exist
- [Planners Prepare For Population Explosion](#) from The West Australian
- [Will Cities Of The Future Be Filled With Vertical Slums?](#) From Fast Company
- [Surreal Paintings Depict the Duality of Man and Nature's Relationship](#) from My Modern Met
- [What Country Best Represents The Future?](#) This question was posed recently by io9
- [Cramped Photographs of Hong Kong Cubicle Apartments](#) from Lost At E Minor
- [How food shapes our cities](#) from Carolyn Steel at TED
- [Understanding Urbanity: 7 Must-Read Books About Cities](#) from Brainpickings
- [Escape fantasies: thoughts on living alone](#) from Growing Sideways
- [Can The Threat Of Climate Change Make Cities Richer And Healthier?](#) From Co.Exist

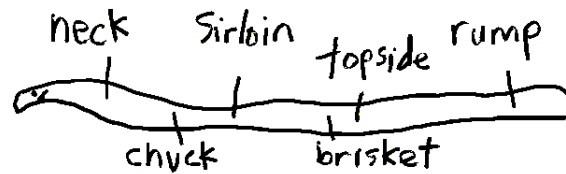


2. Roya is a young gourmand. But is this helpful in a world with food shortages?

Foodieism: Residents of rich countries have become too obsessed with food.

See: [Will Self On Foodieism](#), in which the author argues that Britain has become far too obsessed with food. “We Radio 4 types really could do with paying a bit less attention to what's on the end of our forks, and a bit more to what's at the end of our roads.”

- [What Does It Mean For Food To Be A Luxury?](#) From Jezebel
- [‘Witnesses to Hunger’ Take You to Places Where Food Is a Luxury—in the USA](#)
- [Ranking The World’s Biggest Food Companies On How They Treat The Developing World](#) from Co.Exist
- [How Americans Spend Money On Food](#), a graph from Explore
- [You Aren’t What You Eat: Fed Up With Gastroculture \[Kindle Edition\]](#) and [here’s a review of it](#) at The Guardian
- [Did The Discovery Of Cooking Make Us Human?](#) From BBC News
- [Gourmands Through The Ages: ‘A History Of Food In 100 Recipes’](#) from The Salt
- [The joy of eating playlist](#) on TED
- [Jonathan Haidt: The moral roots of liberals and conservatives](#) on TED
- [Fight sky-high food prices by switching brands - but don't let anyone know](#) from The Telegraph
- [The End of Cheap Coffee: Why the Diner Staple Is About to Become a Luxury](#) from GOOD
- [A breakdown of the words used to describe eaters and food lovers](#) from We Are Not Foodies
- [Why Luxury Food Items Are Barely Worth Their Price](#) from Time Ideas
- [Definition of a ‘luxury good’](#) from Wise Geek
- [How the UK breaks down food items for different taxes](#)



3. You may have noticed some references to insect eating in Midnight Feast. Some cultures already eat insects. How do you feel about the practice? Have you ever eaten an insect?

Sustainable farming: Government should promote the human consumption of insects.

- [Bacon, Pork Shortage Now 'Unavoidable', industry group says](#) from LA Times
- [Why You'll Be A Vegetarian in 25 Years, Like It Or Not](#) from Fooducate
- [Will People Really Be Forced To Stop Eating Meat?](#) from Live Science
- [Mealworms could replace beef, chicken as Earth's source of protein](#) from Science Recorder
- [To Fight World Hunger, the Secret Ingredient Could Be Bugs](#) from GOOD
- [Tea Made Of Insect Poop](#) from Skepchick
- [Should You Really Start Eating Insects?](#) from io9
- [Nordic Food Lab Gets Funding for 'Insect Gastronomy'](#) from Eater
- [5 Surprising Foods of the Future: Our expert has predictions. But can you see yourself eating this stuff?](#) From Take Part
- [SustainWeb](#) is a website about food sustainability, with projects and campaigns
- [The Wikipedia entry for Sustainable Agriculture](#) includes a long list of other relevant terminology
- [Sustainable Table](#) has printable PDFs on food sustainability
- [8 Differences Between Organic and Sustainable Food](#) from About.com
- [Haocheng Mealworm Inc.](#) appears to sell mealworms in cans, and provides recipes
- [10 Invasive Pests You Should Be Eating For Dinner](#) from Take Part
- [The website of Fergus The Forager](#)
- [What are the best insects to eat?](#) From Survival Guru at Outside Online



4. Overpopulation: The world is full.

[The Scarcity Fallacy](#), a pdf article by Scanlan, Jenkins and Peterson:

[Food] Scarcity is a compelling, common-sense perspective that dominates both popular perceptions and public policy. But, while food concerns may start with limited supply, there's much more to world hunger than that. A good deal of thinking and research in sociology, building off the ideas of Nobel laureate economist [Amartya Sen](#), suggests that world hunger has less to do with the shortage of food than with a shortage of affordable or accessible food.

- [Scientists: Exploding Population Could Force Humanity to Go Vegetarian](#), and [Will food shortages force us to become vegetarians](#) from iog
- [Half The World's Food Is Thrown Away, Study Finds](#), from The Guardian
- [A Wonderful Infographic About Water Consumption](#)
- [The Best Resources For Teaching & Learning About World Water Day](#) from Larry Ferlazzo
- [The Future Of Food \(Part One\)](#) – a documentary (YouTube)
- [A National Network Of Seed Sharing Promotes Better Food](#)
- [Will we ever chow down on kibble made for humans?](#) From iog
- [2011 Global Food Policy Report](#) (or any later versions)
- [What Food Crisis? We Just Need To Make Use Of What We Have](#) from co.Exist
- [Could you really survive the apocalypse by eating freeze-dried food?](#) From iog
- [Are women the secret weapon in the battle for food security?](#) From The Guardian
- Many species of fish are now unsustainable. Sardines are some of the more sustainable fish that humans (and cats) can eat. Because they're lower in the food chain than tuna, they tend to contain less mercury. Yet in the West, tuna has become a more popular choice of fish. Slate examines the question: [Why Do Americans Eat So Much Tuna Fish?](#) (True not just of America but of other nations of non-fish connoisseurs.)
- [If GM Crops Provide More Food, That's a Good Thing, Right?](#) From Discover Magazine
- [7 Billion and Counting: The Challenge Ahead](#) from Sociological Cinema
- [World On Course To Run Out Of Water](#) from My Science Academy
- [What will the future of cooking look like?](#) Some less dire predictions in the kitchen from Good Food

- [Is this the banana your grandchildren will eat?](#) From Boing Boing
- [How The World's Population Will Change In The Near Future](#), a graph from Explore
- [Louise Fresco on feeding the whole world](#) a TED talk
- [Ending Hunger Now](#), a TED talk from Josette Sheeran
- [The global food waste scandal](#), a TED talk from Tristram Stuart
- [What was the population the year you were born?](#) From Guardian Science
- [How many people can the earth support?](#) From The Guardian
- [Human Overpopulation](#) at Wikipedia
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5. **Climate change: Adaptation should be the most urgent response to climate change** (from the [Bickel & Brewer debating competition](#))

- [The Best Sites To Learn About Climate Change](#) from Larry Ferlazzo
- [The Best Resources For Learning About The Drought Of 2012 \(& Beyond\)](#), also from Larry Ferlazzo
- [Birke Baehr: What's wrong with our food system](#) at TED
- [Pam Warhurst: How we can eat our landscapes](#) at TED
- [Britta Riley: A garden in my apartment](#) at TED
- [Cary Fowler: One seed at a time, protecting the future of food](#) at TED
- [Homaro Cantu + Ben Roche: Cooking as alchemy](#) at TED
- [Adaptation To Climate Change](#) from The European Commission
- [Which U.S. cities can best adapt to climate change?](#) From Grist
- [Australia's Climate Change Adaptation Program](#)
- [How can poor countries adapt to a changing climate?](#) From Oxfam
- [Climate Change: Impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptation in developing countries](#), a report by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- [Skeptic Check: Hostile Climate](#), a podcast from Big Picture Science
- [Climate Change, Climate Justice, a community conversation about the ethical, religious, and social justice implications of climate change](#) from Penn State University (available on iTunes U)



6. Fast food should be more heavily taxed.

- [Big Food Ideas](#), an interview with Michael Pollen from The Austin Chronicle
- [Why A Salad Costs More Than A Big Mac](#) from Consumerist
- [Assorted links on nutrition and food](#) from Larry Ferlazzo
- [“Just go outside and play!” Dubious “obesity” solution and questions of access and empathy](#) from The Feeding Doctor
- [Are there “food deserts” as a dietary problem?](#) From Marginal Revolution
- [At McDonald’s in Japan, French Fries Are Causing All Sorts Of Chaos](#) from Kotaku
- [Five Words Ruined By The Fast Food Industry](#) from Eating Rules
- [Ellen Gustafson: Obesity + Hunger = 1 global food](#) issue at TED
- [The 10 Parent Companies That Make Your Favourite Brands](#) from Geekologie
- [How Much X Could You Eat On A Dollar?](#) From GOOD
- [The Price Of Water Keeps Going Up, Which Is Bad, Because We Need Water To Live](#) from co.EXIST

THE GEOGRAPHY OF FOOD

Aim: Use a mixture of online and library resources choose a geographical area and report on a culture’s cuisine and food history.

1. Students choose a country/geographical area in which they take an interest. [The World Of Travel Channel](#) on YouTube has many great videos about places around the world. Larry Ferlazzo also has a collection of [The Best Sites For Learning About The World’s Different Cultures](#). That page includes a number of links about food culture.
2. After choosing a geographical area, start further research on [Wikipedia’s ‘Global Cuisine’ page](#). See also: [Wikimedia Cookbook: A collection of recipes from around the world](#), Wikibooks.

3. Making use of at least two resources other than Wikipedia, research the food of that area, making notes in your own words as you read. Find out about:
 - a. Food etiquette
 - b. Staple food(s)
 - c. Traditional drinks
 - d. Cultural variations within that area
 - e. Nutritional status of the people
 - f. How are foods prepared?
 - g. How the diet has changed over time
 - h. How the environment influences the food culture
 - i. How economic conditions affect trade and food distribution
4. Design a poster, [infographic](#) or digital presentation ([10 Tools for Creating Infographics and Visualizations](#))
5. Report back to the class or to small groups. See [Advice For Making Good Presentations](#).

See also:

- [Hungry Planet: What the world eats in a week](#), from Visual News
- [Comparing School Lunches Globally](#) from On an e-Journey with Generation Y
- [Kitchen Cupboards With Their Doors Photoshopped Off](#)
- [How the rest of the world treats meat](#) from Culinate
- [15 international food etiquette rules that might surprise you](#) from NBC Travel News
- [The Most Interesting Breakfasts In America](#) from Bon Appetit
- [A Dish for Every \(American\) State?](#) From Cooking Channel

For older readers with access to good libraries:

- [10 Amazing Books On Food History from Jeffrey Pilcher](#) (Flavorwire)
- [The Diner's Dictionary: Word Origins Of Food And Drink](#)
- [13 Books On The Food System That Could Save the Environment](#) (Foodtank)

INTERCULTURAL STUDY: BEDTIME AROUND THE WORLD

Aim: To become aware of daily routines in other cultures

In Western children's literature, the 'bedtime' story is important because it is tradition for children to sleep separately from their parents, even from a very young age. This isn't the case in many other countries.

1. Show students photos of [Where Children Sleep, by James Mollison](#)
2. (Younger) students discuss their own views on ideal sleeping arrangements and ideal bedrooms. Is it better to share with brothers and sisters? How big is an 'ideal' bedroom? How would it be set up? What kinds of furniture and electrical equipment (if any) would an ideal bedroom include?
3. Students find an example of a favourite (or a new-to-them) bedtime picturebook. (Books about: [Bedtime](#) (see also: [Best Read Aloud Books For Before Bed](#), from Education Matters)

CREATIVE WRITING

In *Midnight Feast*, Roya has a rich imaginative life.

See: [Digital iStorytelling: Ways to Write and Tell Stories](#) (pre-writing, telling stories, story writing and recording using various recommended apps)

dream space

Aim: Write an imaginative text in an interesting and thought-provoking way.

In *Midnight Feast*, Roya's imagination allows her to whisk herself away to imagined worlds. She does this because she feels like she is a prisoner in her bedroom, sent to bed too early, lacking outside stimulus. In this lesson, students create their own imagined inner-world: a Dream Space.

The Pre-write: Students close their eyes and listen while the teacher asks them to imagine a 'dream space'. This is not a real space, but completely imagined. It's a place they'd really like to spend time in.

- Money is no object.
- This place can be anywhere on earth, or beyond.
- It can be as vast or as cosy as you would like.
- Imagine what kinds of things you'd like in this place.
- What season is it? What time of day?
- What can you see from here?

- What can you hear? Creatures, signs of other human life? The sounds of nature? Music?
- Is this place generally loud or quiet?
- Is there a distinctive smell?
- Is there a dominant colour?
- Is it light or dark, day or night?
- Are there any animals with you?
- Is there furniture? Other large objects?
- Explore the place with your senses as you wander/move/swim around for a minute or so, then I'll tell you to open your eyes.

Next, students quickly record details in five or so minutes of non-stop writing. Students don't worry about spelling/punctuation. The aim is just to get everything down. Write in present tense (This place IS).

First draft: Students organise images into a description of two or more paragraphs. The creative writing skill emphasised here is 'describing detail'. It's helpful to start with broad strokes of detail, zooming in like a camera to describe the smallest detail that regular visitors to this place wouldn't even notice.

Peer Response: In pairs or groups of three, students swap their dream spaces by reading each other's first drafts. Emphasise revision, not proof-reading and editing. Feedback is guided:

- My overall impression of the dream place...
- The most vivid details for me as reader included...
- This place suggests... (about mood, values, interests, passions of the writer)

Readers may also like to comment on:

- Any parts they found confusing
- Irrelevancies or repetitions
- Suggestions for emphasis
- Use of descriptive verbs and strong nouns.
- Suggestions for further development

Finally, students write (and illustrate) their revised versions independently, before following the usual steps of process writing.

Dreamlike Spaces:

- [People who live in glass houses...](#) (I'm not sure if this is a normal response, but first thing I think is, Where do they go to the toilet?)
- [Most Awesome Web Photos](#) on Facebook
- [Interesting Engineering](#)
- [What are the most surreal places one can ever visit?](#) a Quora question answered by Colin Suttle, with photos.

On Dreaming:

- [Even your strangest dreams are rooted in reality](#) from LiveScience
- [How Nature Affects Our Imagination](#)

an invitation

Aim: Practise writing a formal invitation to an imaginary event.

Imagine an event you would like to attend – the most amazing event ever -- then create an invitation for your friends.

- Where will the event be held?
- What time and date?
- What should attendees wear?
- What kind of food will be served?
- What will you organise for entertainment?

Now design an invitation and put it into an envelope. Address it to an imaginary name and an imaginary street. (See: [Miss Manners' Etiquette For Addressing Envelopes.](#))

Next, put all of the envelopes into a hat. Each member of the class takes one at random. This can form the stimulus for a further piece of creative writing or artwork. For excellent links on digital (and non-digital) storytelling, see [Larry Ferlazzo's list online](#).

FOOD TECHNOLOGY

As an activity for the home, students prepare a meal for (or with) their families.

Aim: Use computational and creative skills to plan, shop for, and prepare a family meal.

1. Set a budget
2. Decide on meal to be served, including number of courses

3. Find or design recipes
4. Work out servings and required amounts per person
5. Write a list and shop for ingredients
6. Store food appropriately
7. Plan meal, including preparation times
8. Safely cook meal
9. Set a table
10. Serve dinner ([How to plate food like a food stylist](#) from Huffpost Taste)
11. Manage the cleaning up afterwards
12. Report back to class after the event, including photos if possible

Imaginative Follow-up:

If you could open your own eatery, what would it be called? What sort of place would it be? It can be as original as you like. (Take the real-life [Robot Restaurant](#) as an example of originality.)



Aim: Make use of the language of advertising to appeal to consumers, and present information using the principles of graphic design.

Create a menu (bearing in mind that not all restaurants offer more than a single choice) and make the dishes sound as tempting as possible. Students may choose to illustrate. As a variation on the theme, students may choose instead to make the menu sound as unappealing as possible. This still allows students an insight into what makes menus sound as appealing as they do.

See: [The 10 Best Children's Cookbooks](#) (according to The Independent)

ART

Aim: Innovate, transform and recycle to create a piece of food-themed artwork that surprises.

Task: Students create a work of art with a food theme. The artwork may be on paper, or a decorated functional object. Maybe the artwork isn't what you'd normally think of when you think of 'art'. Here are some links for inspiration:

- [How To Make Art Out Of Food](#) from The Everyday Minimalist
- [Japanese Food iPhone Cases](#) from Food Republic
- [Insanely Creepy Skulls Carved Out Of Fruit & Veg](#) from So Bad So Good
- [Tasty Fruit and Vegetables As Everyday Objects](#) from So Bad So Good
- [A dress made out of some sort of cabbage?](#) From Laughing Squid
- [Awesome Vintage Apple Art: 9 Fruits You Won't Find at Your Supermarket](#) from Mother Jones (and [here's an article](#) about how apple diversity has actually grown, for completion's sake)
- [Perpetually Dirty Mug Is Yours For Life](#) from Lost At E Minor (a mug with lipstick marks on it, and drips that won't wash off)
- [What do fruits and vegetables look like on the inside?](#) (some MRIs of foods, from Inside Insides)
- [Sliced down the middle: conceptual food art](#)
- [In Japan you can make gummy bear replicas of yourself.](#)
- Images for "food art" on [Google images](#)
- [16 Awesome Food Art Ideas](#) from Bored Panda
- [Play With Your Food](#) from Visual News
- [Food Art on Tumblr](#) and [Food art on Facebook](#)
- [A Recipe For Instagram Success: Food Art](#)
- [McDonald's Serves Up A Feast Of Characters For Fast-Food Photography](#)
- [Match up pictures of food with works of art](#)
- [Try out your barista skills by making some coffee/hot chocolate art.](#) More examples [here](#).
- Sketch the street view of your local eatery or café, or your dinner every day for a week
- [The Sandwich Book](#) is a pop-out work of art which looks like an actual sandwich from Colossal (See [other food art at Colossal.](#))
- [Sculpt some salt and pepper shakers](#) out of clay
- [Make one item of food look like something else entirely.](#)
- [Pizzas can be art too.](#)
- Take some [photographs of food still lifes](#) to represent your family or people you know.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

- Create your own scary underwater creature, using inspiration from the scariest fish. Even familiar animals look a bit different under water. Check out [Photographs of Underwater Dogs by Seth Casteel](#)
- Contra Costa County Library [had a 'Stuffed Animal Sleepover and Midnight Feast'](#). It went like this: Kids can drop off their stuffed animals at the library for a sleepover. Cameras will take photos of the animal shenanigans when they think no one is watching. Kids can pick up their stuffed animal from 4-8 p.m. the following Monday at a special story time. If kids want their animal back sooner, they can contact the library. (Maybe you can cook a [Fairy tale Feast.](#))
- Write a review of a non-fiction food book, a food-centric novel or a recipe book. [The Cookbook As Literature](#), from The Millions
- Investigate the etymology (word history) of some food related language. (Read first: [On culinary vocabulary](#) from Oxford Dictionaries Blog)
- Research a specific part of the history of food language by making use of etymological dictionaries. Maybe start by looking at [50 Idioms About Meat and Dairy Products](#) from Daily Writing Tips
- For ESOL students, [here are some videos](#) about talking about food from engVid
- [Sour Science: Do Sour Taste Preferences Change with Age?](#) A science experiment from Scientific American
- Use a flavour dictionary (or not) to try some unusual [food pairings](#)
- Make your own healthy eating/literary food quote [memes](#)
- Research a specific food or food group e.g. '[A Brief History Of Cheese](#)' or [Molars Say Cooking Is Almost 2 Million Years Old.](#)
- Find a newspaper (or Internet) article and turn it into some '[newspaper blackout poetry](#)'.
