

Name Model

Topic Food



**Write a brief account of the class conversation about the topic, describing what you know at this point about some of its aspects:**

Our class discussed Michael Pollan's letter to the next President of the USA. He makes the case that food is a matter of national security. He connects food to the health of the nation's economy, human mortality, and the problems with the environment. We talked about how many things are affected by what we grow and eat. Pollan seems quite concerned that we are making bad choices. I was surprised to learn that food production is only second to cars in terms of fossil fuel consumption. That doesn't make sense to me.

### POTENTIAL AREA OF INVESTIGATION 1

**In a few words, describe an area within the topic that you would like to know more about:**

I would like to know more about the affects of food on our health. Food and health seem to be very connected and I'd like to understand more why people choose to eat the food they do.

**Explain why you are interested in this area of the topic:**

Even though food is supposed to be healthy and give us life, four of the top ten killers of US citizens are diet-related diseases. This has driven the costs of health care up tremendously in the last half-century - a cost that my generation will pay. I don't understand how it works, but it seems like we should figure something out.

**Express your potential area of investigation as a question or problem:**

Why is the American diet so unhealthy and what can be done about it?



POTENTIAL AREA OF INVESTIGATION 2	POTENTIAL AREA OF INVESTIGATION 3	POTENTIAL AREA OF INVESTIGATION 4
<p><b>In a few words, describe what you would like to know more about within the topic:</b></p> <p>I had no idea that pollution and the way we produce our food were connected. Apparently, our food industry uses nearly as much fuel as the cars we drive. Because of the risks of global warming, it's probably important to figure out how to bring this amount of consumption down in the industry. Pollan mentions sunshine a lot too, which seems obvious - how is it not being used?</p>	<p><b>In a few words, describe what you would like to know more about within the topic:</b></p> <p>If the food-price-related riots in more than 30 countries tell us anything, it is that people need food to be affordable. According to the article, however, international trade laws influence the price of food worldwide. I want to know more about how food prices in others countries relate to the policies and trade practices of the USA.</p>	<p><b>In a few words, describe what you would like to know more about within the topic:</b></p> <p>Pollan talks a lot about policy and politicians like Nixon, Earl Butz and Tommy Thompson. There seem to be many connections between politics and food, especially something about how Nixon needed to increase food production but now Obama can't do the same thing. There seems to be a lot of history in the food industry that I need to learn to know more about what's happening now.</p>
<p><b>Explain why you are interested in this:</b></p> <p>When I eat something, I don't really think about where it came from, but when I think about it, I have seen many tractors and semi trucks harvesting and moving food around. I imagine that is what Pollan is talking about when he says that the food industry uses a lot of fossil fuels. This connection between food and energy is something new for me.</p>	<p><b>Explain why you are interested in this:</b></p> <p>I have seen many ads on the TV showing starving children in places like Africa and Asia. I find it weird that while the USA has too much food, other countries have very little. The "paradox" Pollan seems crazy.</p>	<p><b>Explain why you are interested in this:</b></p> <p>When I eat food, I never really think about how it is connected to politics or how politics affects what I'm eating. I just think about how good or bad it is, and if I want more or not. But since food is so important to us, I think it's a good idea to know more about how decisions politicians make affect what I'm eating.</p>
<p><b>Express your potential area of investigation as a question or problem:</b></p> <p>How will we sustain our current food production without polluting the environment while doing so?</p>	<p><b>Express your potential area of investigation as a question or problem:</b></p> <p>Why are farmers in other countries not growing their own food and how does that relate to "food sovereignty?"</p>	<p><b>Express your potential area of investigation as a question or problem:</b></p> <p>How have US policies affected food production in the past and what policies do we need to change to make the system better?</p>