

# APES ~ FAMINE ACTIVITY

This activity is designed to demonstrate the inequitable distribution of the world's resources.

## Materials Required

- |                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 8 ½ x 11” sheets of paper | a package of Oreos |
| 100 pennies               | three bowls        |
| a bag of rice             | a large world map  |
| 3 plastic zip-top bags    |                    |

## Preparation

1. Make large signs—8.5 x 11” or larger—representing each area of the world you'll represent in the skit. Make one sign for each of the following areas and population percentages:

- China - 25%
- Other Asian countries - 20%
- India - 15%
- Latin America (including Mexico) - 10%
- Africa - 10%
- Former Soviet Union - 5%
- North America - 5%
- Europe - 10%

For this activity, the first six regions will represent the developing world.

2. Utilizing the number of participants you expect for your “Famine,” students will estimate the approximate number of people needed to represent each of the above categories. For example, if you have 20 people, you will need five to represent China, four to represent Asia, three to represent India, two each to represent Europe, South America, and Africa, and one each to represent North America and the former Soviet Union. If the numbers don't work out evenly, the “extra” participant(s) will serve as Project Leader(s). If the numbers work out exactly, the teacher will serve as Project Leader.

Number of people present in class:	_____
Number of people assigned to.....	_____
China - 25%	_____
Other Asian countries- 20%	_____
India - 15%	_____
Latin America - 10%	_____
Africa - 10%	_____
Former Soviet Union - 5%	_____
North America - 5%	_____
Europe - 10%	_____

3. Before the activity, the teacher or designated student has gone to the grocery store and counted the number of different items in one aisle. This information is not shared yet.

## Presentation

1. This demonstration will show a representation of how the world's resources are distributed. Think about the following two questions during the demonstration:  
*Why is the distribution like it is?*  
*What should we do about it?*
2. The Project Leader(s) (teacher or “extra” students) will divide the group into the “world” according to the numbers the class calculated. Designate certain areas of the room to represent different geographic regions of the world. (For example: China and other Asian countries in one corner, Africa in the middle, South America in another corner.) You may want to situate the geographic regions relative to their placement on a world map.
3. Project Leader(s): Distribute the resources according to the following guidelines. Feel free to add or substitute any comments, questions, stories, or examples that will enhance the activity.
  - **Giving:** Of all the money donated throughout the world, 95% goes to North America, 3% goes to Europe, and 2% goes to the rest of the world. The Project Leader(s) will hand the appropriate number of pennies to each of the groups, tossing the two pennies for the world into the most populous areas, give three pennies to Europe, and give the rest to North America.
  - **Food:** 1/8 of the food produced in the world is shared by most countries of the world; 1/4 goes to Europe; 5/8 goes to North America. Using an electronic balance, the Project Leader(s) will divide the bag of rice into three bowls according to the above fractions. They will measure the rice into zip-top bags and hand out to the appropriate countries.
  - **Food Choice:** Explain that people in many countries eat the same foods daily. For example, in Puerto Rico, usually people eat beans and rice for many meals. The groups should guess how many products are in one aisle at the grocery store, then the number should be revealed. Distribute Oreos according to the following: 1 to the world; a few to Europe; The rest to North America.

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## Discussion

*Why the distribution is so unequal?*

There are a number of ways to keep the discussion positive, including the following:

- **Government:** America's government is founded on principles that encourage prosperity.
  - *What are some other systems of government that do not allow or do not provide incentives for people to gain wealth?*
  - *Are there members of the groups who endorse such philosophies, and why?*
- **Selfishness:** It can't be denied that over-consumption in the developed world is an issue.
  - *What we can do about it?*
  - *Why might we be more aware of the situation as a result of this activity?*

The following are a few suggestions:

- **Be thankful:** Be grateful for your abundance.
  - *How many of the group has complained about something they've eaten during the week?*
- **Use abundance wisely:**
  - *Brainstorm ways to share what we have with the rest of the world.*