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Environment

Community Gardens

Vocabulary: staple sporadic hardy

Mini Lesson: Problem-Solution

Literacy Practice: Cost of a Recipe



"I'm on the inflation diet. Every week I spend the same amount of money and come home with less food!"

Discussion

The cost of living makes it hard to afford basics such as housing, clothing, and food. How can people cope with the high cost of living?

People in the northern community of Inuvik pay very high prices for food, especially produce. What do you think the people of Inuvik did to lower food costs? Write your ideas here.

Read the following passage to find out how the people of Inuvik lowered food costs.

Community Gardens

Bill the fruit man is a welcome sight as he rolls into Inuvik, a remote town in Canada's far north. His 16-metre (53-foot) trailer is weighed down with fresh produce and food staples. Shoppers line up, eager to check out the quality and prices of this month's selection. Today Bill is selling oranges at a rate of \$22 a crate. Expensive? Not for residents of Inuvik. Bill's produce prices are the best in town.

In remote communities north of the Arctic Circle, people grapple with the high cost of food. Food must be shipped great distances



Inuvik Community Greenhouse.

to reach northern towns, and transport costs are high. Food supplies are usually shipped in by sea or flown in by small planes. Winter ice blocks ports, and storms shut down local airports, so food deliveries are **sporadic**.

The highway that links Inuvik to southern towns is closed for up to four months of the year due to weather. As the three local grocery stores run low on supplies, food prices increase even more. Shoppers check expiry dates and pick through wilting heads of lettuce trying to get the most value for their precious food dollars.

Families across the North spend up to two-thirds of their monthly income on food.

Stop and Think:

Why do you think lettuce wilts on the grocery store shelves?

The people of Inuvik have responded to high produce prices by building the world's most northern greenhouse. Gardeners grow a wealth of produce from **hardy** veggies like broccoli and squash to sweet melons and herbs. The variety of produce expands as gardeners try growing luxury foods such as strawberries and spinach.

Stop and Think:

Why do you think strawberries and spinach are called luxury foods?

The greenhouse, built from an old hockey arena, has two floors. The top floor is used for growing bedding plants and flowers. These plants and flowers are sold to the public. The local government buys flowers to fill the hanging baskets and window boxes that add beauty to the town's public places.

The lower floor houses a community garden that boasts over 80 garden plots maintained by more than 100 gardeners. For 15 hours of volunteer work and an annual fee as low as \$25, gardeners can take advantage of the benefits of indoor gardening. Inuvik's summers are cool and its soil is poor. Blackflies come out in full force during June and July. So the waiting list to get a garden plot in the greenhouse continues to grow.

Stop and Think:

Imagine you are a member of Inuvik's community greenhouse. As a volunteer, what can you offer the greenhouse?

The greenhouse doubles as a community centre. People meet to picnic and socialize in its year-round warmth. Plots are set aside for elders and community groups. Children garden side by side with parents and grandparents.

The Inuvik Community Greenhouse ensures a harvest of healthy produce in an area where fresh food is scarce and costly. One day, perhaps, Bill the fruit man will retire knowing that the residents of Inuvik can have their fill of greens every day.

The Inuvik Community Greenhouse was started by a non-profit society in 1989.

Check the ideas you wrote on page 71 about the cost of living in Inuvik. Can you find your ideas in the passage?

If not, do your ideas connect in some way to the ideas in the passage? How?

Discussion

1. How do you rate fresh produce in your community in terms of cost, quality, and availability? Explain your answers.

excellent good not-so-good terrible

- 2. Find two reasons why food costs are high in northern Canada.
- **3.** Find three benefits that the community greenhouse offers the residents of Inuvik.
- **4.** There is a waiting list of people wanting to get a garden plot. Why is the top floor of the greenhouse not used for gardening plots?
- **5.** Would your community benefit from a community garden? How? What steps would a community need to take in order to start a community garden?

Summarizing

Reread paragraphs 5 and 6 of the passage, on page 73. Choose the best summary of these paragraphs.

- (a) The top floor of the greenhouse is used to grow plants and flowers, which are sold to the public. The bottom floor has garden plots, which the residents of Inuvik use to grow produce.
- (b) The government of Inuvik buys plants and flowers from the community greenhouse. The government uses these plants and flowers to beautify the town.
- (c) Many residents want a plot in the community garden because it is difficult to garden outdoors in Inuvik. For instance, there are many blackflies in the summer.

Explain your choice.

Does the summary you chose

- contain the most important idea from each paragraph?
- omit details such as quotes, examples, and descriptions?

Vocabulary	
Circle the best meaning for each	s by looking at how it is used in the sentence.
riguic out what the word incan	is by looking at now it is used in the sentence.
	potatoes are a staple for many Canadians. (b) healthy but rare item

(c) dependable

(c) wild

(a) sick; having a pale colour

predictable or sporadic? Explain why.

3. Hardy animals usually live longer than weaker animals.

Write an answer for each question. Use complete sentences.

What food staples always appear on your shopping list?

(d) sudden but predictable

(d) strong; can survive hard conditions

(b) not enough

1. Most people develop food habits. They tend to buy certain foods week after week.

2. In some areas, rainfall is predictable. For example, it always rains a lot in the spring. In other areas, rainfall is **sporadic**. How would you describe rainfall in your area—

3. Some jobs, such as tarring roads on a hot day, require healthy people who can work under hard conditions. What is another job requiring **hardy** workers? Explain why.

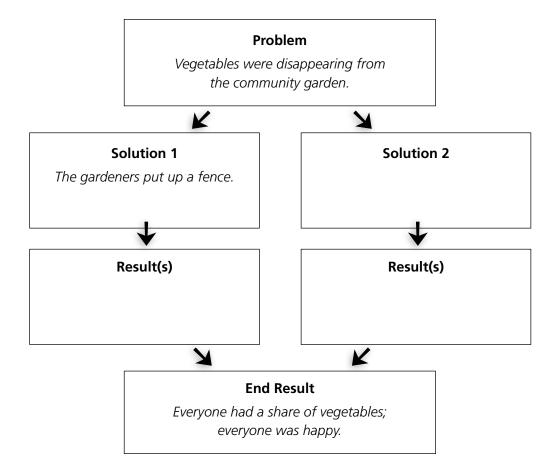
Mini-Lesson: Problem-Solution

One way to organize ideas is to present a problem, provide solutions, and state results.

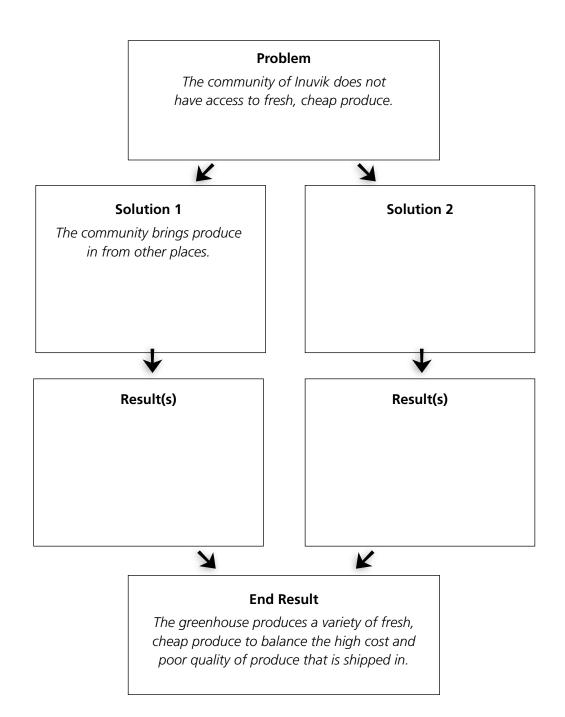
Read the following paragraph. Identify the problem, solutions, and results.

The members of the community garden were angry. Their vegetables were disappearing. The next spring, the gardeners put up a fence. But come harvest time, veggies were missing again. And it would cost the gardeners \$250 to replace the broken gate in the fence. So they removed the gate. The following spring, the gardeners tried something new. They set aside a public garden plot in the community garden. And they hung a sign on the fence—"Please help yourself to the veggies in our public plot." Come harvest time, the gardeners' plots were untouched. A sign appeared in the public plot. It read: "Thank you. God bless."

Look at the problem-solution idea map below. Fill in the missing information with the ideas from the paragraph above.



Reread the passage *Community Gardens*. Finish the problem-solution idea map.



Literacy Practice: Cost of a Recipe

Everyone knows the advantages of home-cooked meals over ready-made meals. Meals cooked at home are fresher and more nutritious. Recipes can be adjusted to suit different tastes. For example, more hot spices can be added, or less salt used. Also, fresh fruit and vegetables can replace canned or frozen produce.

But with the price of fruit and vegetables these days, is home cooking cheaper than buying ready-made meals?

Use the recipe below and the listed costs to answer the questions that follow.

Recipe: Vegetable Soup (8 servings)

Ingredients 6 cups vegetable stock ½ head small cabbage

4 large tomatoes 1 ½ tablespoons Italian seasoning

1 medium potato 1 can (341 mL) corn niblets

1 medium onion 1 medium zucchini

2 stalks celery salt and pepper to taste

2 medium carrots

Recipe Ingredients: \$13.60 (Cost does not include seasonings.)

Campbell's Vegetable Soup (1 can / 2 servings): \$.99

Knorr Vegetable Soup Mix (1 package / 4 servings): \$2.45

- 1. How many servings does the vegetable soup recipe make? _____
- 2. (a) How many servings does one can of Campbell's soup make? _____
 - (b) How many cans of soup would you need to make eight servings?
 - (c) What would be the cost of eight servings of Campbell's soup? _____
 - (d) How many servings does one package of Knorr soup make? _____

• • •	
	(e) How many packages of soup would you need to make eight servings?
	(f) What would be the cost of eight servings of Knorr soup?
3.	The cost of salt and pepper is not included in the cost of the ingredients for the homemade soup. Should it be? Explain your answer.
•	What is one hidden cost of making homemade soup? (HINT: Hidden costs are not obvious. Hidden costs are not always related to money.)
•	Would you substitute the canned corn with frozen corn? Why or why not?
•	Would the price of the homemade soup always be the same? Explain your answer.
•	Which soup would you serve your family—one of the prepared soups or the homemade soup? Give two reasons for your choice.
	And what do you think?
	The cost of healthy foods varies from province to province. Even city to city. For example, a bag of brown rice is about \$2.19 in Toronto, Ontario, \$7.76 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and \$11.99 in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut.
	Source: Edmonton Journal, <i>Drastic price variation of healthy foods</i> , Feb. 2009.

Dictionary Use

Mark the following statements true (T) or false (F). Use the dictionary entries as needed.

- 1. Hitting a perfect boast requires a rifle. _____
- 2. A false **boast** is like an exaggeration.
- 3. It is against the rules for wrestlers to grapple. _____
- 4. A sailboat's **grapple** can be made of heavy metal.
- 5. Libraries offer a wealth of information. _____
 - boast (n.) 1: a statement you express with too much pride (His boast about being a good cook was proven to be a lie.) 2: a reason to be proud (Our greatest boast is our son.) 3: a shot in the racquet game of squash
 - boast (v.) 1: BRAG 2: to have something that is impressive (The apartment boasts a beautiful view.)
 - grap-ple (n.) 1: a wrestling hold or grip 2: a hand-to-hand struggle3: a small anchor with many prongs
 - grap-ple (v.) grappled; grappling 1: to hold and fight with another person 2: to try to solve or deal with a problem (grapple with seasonal flooding)
 - wealth (n.) 1: the total value of what somebody or something owns2: a large amount