

Activity: Food In Your Life



TIME ESTIMATE
35 minutes



MATERIALS
Sheets of paper and writing materials for all participants

PURPOSE

To evoke deeper reflection on our own positionality and lived experiences in relation to corporeal and sociocultural oppression in the food system.

DESCRIPTION

Participants will be given several rounds of prompts. With each round, they will write their response onto a piece of paper and crumple it up into a 'snowball', then throw it in the centre. Each participant will then pick a random piece of paper and share what is written down with the class. This activity can be adapted to accommodate different classroom setups and learning styles.

STEPS

1

Ask the participants to individually reflect on their relationship with food throughout their life, and the roles around food preparation in their family or community. Participants will sit silently for 5 minutes and reflect on questions that you provide. Provide the option for them to write down and process their responses to each question:

- How did you perceive food when you were young?
- Who made or prepared food in your family or community when you were growing up?
- Did your relationship with food change during your adolescent years?
- How would you describe your current relationship with food?

2

Now, participants will reflect on a new set of prompts and write their responses out this time. Instruct participants to pull out three small pieces of paper. On each piece of paper, they will write a one or two-sentence response to a prompt that you will provide. Give a clear instruction that participants do not write their names on the papers to maintain anonymity. Give learners one prompt at a time with 2 minutes per prompt as they individually reflect and answer the following:

- Is making and preparing food differentiated by gender, ethnicity, age, or another identity marker?
- Does there seem to be a shift around who prepares the food from when learners were young to now (in their families, communities, alone or in their peer groups)?

Facilitator Note

Offer the option for participants to write their names if they wish to be associated with their responses. Upon completion of the individual reflection time, participants may be placed in small groups to debrief on their reflections. In the past, participants have noted that they enjoyed the bonding component of sharing their lived experiences. We leave this decision to the discretion of the facilitator.

MODULE 7: GENDER, EQUITY AND FOOD SECURITY

- 3 This portion is the “snowball” component in which the class will gather as a group and anonymously share their responses. Ask the participants to form a circle. Restate the first prompt from Step 2. Invite participants will crumple up their response paper, or “snowball”, and throw it into the centre of the circle. After everyone has done so, participants will pick up a random snowball from the centre. Participants will take turns to read the response on the paper they picked aloud.
- 4 Once each person in the group has gone, you will restate the next prompt and repeat the process until both prompts have been covered. Each prompt should take approximately 5 minutes depending on class size.
 - If participants pick up their own snowball, they can crumple it back up and throw it into the centre before picking up a new snowball, or they can choose to skip their turn.
 - Provide participants with the option to pass their turn if they prefer not to read the snowball that they picked up.
- 5 Debrief the activity and invite learners to share what they learnt from the activity in pairs, in small groups of 3-5 or as a class depending on class size.
 - How did this activity make you feel?
 - How do you think gender normativity has impacted your life and/or shaped your perception of and relationship to food?
 - Did any surprising or interesting response stand out for you during the snowball activity? Discuss trends or similarities that you observed in your group’s responses.

ASSESSMENT: WRITTEN REFLECTION

Write a reflective journal on an insight that came out of this activity, bringing in elements from the course materials (lectures, activities, and readings) or from your own experience and academic background. Facilitators are encouraged to suggest or adapt guiding questions provided in the instructions, a suggested word count and an evaluation rubric (if graded) for clarity on what is expected from the learner.

Example of a guiding question:

- The gender binary perpetuates normative expectations of how gender should be performed and privileges certain experiences and lives. In your opinion, how can we offer and create alternative narratives that will reimagine our relationship with food?

These reflections can be picked up at the end of the class as an ‘exit ticket’, where learners submit their short reflection before leaving the class or workshop, or assigned as a take-home exercise.

NOTES: