

# LESSON PLAN: KS3

## Aims

- Pupils gain a deeper understanding of the effects, impacts and causes of malnutrition in children.
- Pupils learn how Unicef is helping to protect children from malnutrition and enabling them to access their right to nutritious food, the best health care possible, and reliable information to help them stay healthy.
- Pupils understand some of the wider economic, geographic and climate-based factors that contribute to malnutrition.
- Pupils explore different ways that your school can fundraise on Unicef's Day for Change to help malnourished children grow up healthy and strong.

## Prior Learning

- It would be beneficial if the students had already seen the KS3/4 Day for Change assembly presentation, but this is not essential.

## Success criteria

- Students are able to explain some of the key effects of malnutrition, where in the world malnutrition is particularly prevalent and/or on the rise, and understand that climate change is one of the contributing factors.



- To know that children and young people have a right to nutritious food, the best health care possible and reliable information to help them stay healthy.
- Fundraising plans for Day for Change have been agreed.
- Students have worked well as part of a team, both in completing their research and in the presentation of their findings.

## Key words

Malnutrition, Wasting, Stunting, Unicef, UNCRC and articles

## Resource preparations

- Lesson presentation
- Internet connection to show video
- Lesson activity sheets
- Internet access for students (for main lesson activity)
- Copies of the UNCRC (summary version)

Thinking about children in danger can evoke strong feelings in both adults and children. Sharing your feelings about the information – for example, that it made you feel sad or surprised – could help to initiate a supportive conversation.

When discussing these issues, be sensitive to the possibility that there may be young people in your class who find the film and topic upsetting; you may prefer to share the film in a lesson, where the learning environment allows for a more intimate discussion.



**DAY FOR CHANGE.**  
[unicef.uk/dayforchange](https://unicef.uk/dayforchange)

**FOR EVERY  
CHILD IN  
DANGER**

**unicef**   
UNITED KINGDOM

# Teaching Sequence

Please note: text in grey provides additional background notes for the presenter.



## Slide 1: LEARNING ABOUT MALNUTRITION

Explain that all children and young people everywhere have the right to nutritious food and the best possible health care.



## Slide 2: WHAT IS NUTRITION?

Ask pupils to define what they think is meant by the term 'nutrition'. Once pupils have had a chance to suggest different interpretations, explain that nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the body's dietary needs. Good nutrition – an adequate, well balanced diet combined with regular physical activity – is a key component of good health.



## Slide 3: TRUE OR FALSE?

Ask students what they already know about malnutrition based on what they have recalled from the assembly presentation and/or their general knowledge.

Then do the 'true/false' activity, to challenge some possible assumptions and set a basis for learning.

## Slides 4–5:

These slides are taken from the assembly presentation and provide an opportunity to recap what is meant by malnutrition, acute malnutrition and chronic malnutrition. If your students have not seen the assembly presentation, it's essential to spend some time going through this content to establish understanding of key issues and terms.



## Slide 4: WHAT IS MALNUTRITION?

### WHAT IS MALNUTRITION?

- **Malnutrition** is about not having the mixture of nutrients necessary for growth or good health.
- Children with **severe acute malnutrition** have very low weight for their height and **severe wasting** (their body breaks down muscle and fat to make energy).
- They may also have swollen feet, limbs, hands and faces.
- Urgent, life-saving care is needed.



## Slide 5: WHAT IS MALNUTRITION?

### WHAT IS MALNUTRITION?

- **Chronic malnutrition** occurs over time and results in **stunting**, whereby a child's body and brain is unable to grow and develop to its full potential.
- Stunting generally occurs before the age of two.
- It is due to a chronic lack of nutrients during a child's first 1,000 days, from conception to second birthday.
- If this is not addressed early in the child's life it cannot be reversed.

Although the information and resources being used in the lesson will draw upon examples from around the world, it is important to mention that chronic malnutrition is also an important problem for some children and young people in the UK.

*Please note that malnutrition is a broad term commonly used as an alternative to undernutrition, but technically it also refers to overnutrition. People are malnourished if their diet does not provide adequate calories and nutrients for growth and maintenance, or if they are unable to fully utilise the food they eat due to illness (undernutrition). They are also malnourished if they consume too many calories (overnutrition). The focus of Day for Change is on malnutrition in the context of undernutrition.*

## Slide 6:

### WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP?



This slide also draws upon the assembly presentation but gives further detail about Unicef’s work to protect children from malnutrition.

**Providing life-saving food:** explain that this photo shows a child suffering from severe acute malnutrition. They are receiving life-saving emergency food in the form of ready-to-use high energy peanut paste. Such foods are called ‘ready-to-use therapeutic foods’.

**Checking for signs of malnutrition:** Unicef helps to ensure that children’s nutritional status and growth is monitored. The photo shows a child having their mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) measured, which gives an indication of the muscle mass of the upper arm. This is a way to monitor whether children have acute malnutrition. *MUAC is a rapid and effective predictor of risk of death in children aged 6–59 months and is increasingly being used to assess adult nutritional status.*

**Making sure that a child receives the nutrients they need in the first 1,000 days:** stunting generally occurs before the age of two. It is due to a chronic lack of nutrients during a child’s first 1,000 days, from conception to their second birthday. Stunting often starts before birth if the mother herself is malnourished and cannot pass on enough nutrients to her unborn child. Poor feeding practices, poor food quality and frequent infections are other causes of stunting.

Supporting breastfeeding and providing vitamin and nutrient sprinkles for toddlers are two examples of how Unicef is helping to keep babies safe from malnutrition. By preventing and treating malnutrition in the first 1,000 days of a child’s life, Unicef has helped cut the number of children badly affected by stunting by nearly 100 million since 1990.

## Slide 7:

### THE IMPACT OF MALNUTRITION AND THE POWER OF NUTRITION



Show the video from [The Power of Nutrition](#), which explains how malnutrition affects an individual and the wider community. This provides the context for the main class activity.

Explain to students that under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), children and young people have a range of rights. Provide summary copies of the [UNCRC](#) and ask students to identify some of the rights that are denied to children and young people because of malnutrition.

**DAY FOR CHANGE.**

[unicef.uk/dayforchange](http://unicef.uk/dayforchange)

**FOR EVERY  
CHILD IN  
DANGER**

**unicef**   
UNITED KINGDOM


## Slide 8: YOUR TASK

**YOUR TASK**

Produce a statement or display to inform others about the impacts and treatment of child malnutrition, and how they can support Day for Change.

Think about how the statement or display could be adapted for:

- your school's website
- a newsletter for parents
- Twitter
- a blog post.



DAY FOR CHANGE world at the change FOR EVERY CHILD IN DANGER | unicef

Explain that, as a class, students are going to produce a **Day for Change statement or display about malnutrition** to inform others about the impacts and treatment of child malnutrition, and how they can support Day for Change. The statement can be displayed in the classroom or somewhere else in school but extracts of the statement may also appear on the school's website, newsletter, VLE, Twitter account and blog. You could even make a video about your statement.

*Whilst malnutrition remains a huge danger facing children and young people, some progress has been made. For example, the global trend in stunting prevalence and numbers of children affected is decreasing (from 39.6 per cent in 1990 to 23.8 per cent in 2014), but this is not fast enough. In some regions of the world the rate of decline has been slower (e.g. Africa) compared to others (e.g. Asia). Lower-income countries bear a disproportionate share of stunted children relative to the total population distribution.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> [www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/jme\\_brochure2015.pdf](http://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/jme_brochure2015.pdf)

## Slide 9: YOUR TASK

**YOUR TASK**

- WHO is affected?
- WHAT are the effects/dangers?
- WHERE does it occur?
- HOW is Unicef protecting children from malnutrition?
- HOW can we support Day for Change?

DAY FOR CHANGE world at the change FOR EVERY CHILD IN DANGER | unicef

To do this, split the class into six separate groups, and ask each group to focus on one of the following questions in relation to malnutrition:

- **who** is affected?
- **what** are the effects/dangers?
- **where** does it occur?
- **how** is Unicef helping to protect children from malnutrition?
- **how** can we support Day for Change?

The **lesson activities sheet** provides further guidance and suggestions for each of the above questions. Please note that students will need access to the internet for part of the suggested activity, and the activity sheets should be distributed digitally so that students can access the hyperlinks within the document. The variety of tasks available can complement particular student learning styles and there are opportunities for activities to be differentiated and extended as appropriate.

### Plenary

Bring the work of the whole class together to share and reflect upon the statement on malnutrition, including the plans for how the class can fundraise for Day for Change.

Explore ways that you can share and promote your statement within the school and wider community (for instance, with parents and governors).