



Children's Curriculum for Arkansas Foodbank Packet

The supplies you need for this lesson are included in each section.

- Day 1: Prepping for week
- Day 2: Collect snacks to fill backpacks. Count and sort the snacks.
- Day 3: Collect hygiene items and put together in zip-lock bags.
- Day 4: Collect and count coins.
- Day 5: Celebrate and make the donation to the Arkansas Foodbank.

Teacher background knowledge and facts:

Arkansas Foodbank's Why:

The Backpack Program began in 1994 when a school nurse called the Foodbank for help – kids were falling asleep in class, dizzy, and having trouble concentrating. She believed it was all due to hunger. Arkansas Foodbank responded. The Foodbank purchased kid-friendly food and sent it to that school. Since then, we continue to partner with schools throughout Central and South Arkansas to help children in need.

Biblical Why: Matthew 25:35

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me...

DAY ONE:

PREPPING FOR WEEK:

PreK-2nd grade: Read Aloud

Tell the children to have a seat on the floor and gather around. Tell them that you have a story to share with them that seems like it is make-believe, but it is actually true, inspired by children who struggle not having enough food to eat at home. Read Maddi's Fridge.

3rd-6th grade: Open with Backpacks

Tell the students to grab a seat and check out with their eyes what they think those five backpacks represent. Many may say back to school, homework, sports bag. Once they have shared what they think the bags symbolize, ask them to think in their heads about what they do when they come home from school each day? It would be a pretty good guess that most of thought of an afterschool snack. As you open the bags and show 4 full and one empty, say "I have five backpacks up here that represent children. One of the backpacks is empty and four backpacks are full of items. These backpacks represent children the fact that 1 in every 5 children in Arkansas go home to a house that is lacks sufficient food."

Congregational lesson: Open with Backpacks

Ask for five volunteers to come forward to help with the demonstration. Be sure to find a mix of kids and adults to help up front. Ask them each to pick up the five backpacks you have sitting up front. Now ask them what they think of when they see the backpacks. Many may say back to school, homework, sports bag. Once they have shared what they think the bags symbolize, ask them to think in their head about what they might do when they themselves or their children come home from school each day? It would be a pretty good guess that most thought of an afterschool snack. Open the bags and show four full and one empty.

EXPLORE FIVE BACKPACKS:

- Find five backpacks and fill four of the five backpacks.

3rd-6th grade:

Divide the room into five small groups of students. Place four backpacks that are filled with snacks, hygiene kits, school supplies, pretend receipt for paid school lunch, pretend A+ report card. Place another backpack that is empty except a pretend C- report card, a box of band-aides, and a receipt saying, "Your lunch account is empty, please pay!" Let the kids open the backpacks in their small groups. Have them go through each item and talk about why each is in the backpack. Walk around and listen to their thinking as well as remind

them not to open the snacks. Once they have had time to talk, ask one student at a time to hold up what they have in their hand and share why they think it is in the bag. When they have shared what they have, offer dialogue based on this list below:

Congregational lesson:

Say "I have five backpacks up here that represent children in Arkansas. One of the backpacks is empty. The empty backpack represents that 1 in every 5 children in Arkansas go hungry each day. (Place four backpacks that are filled with snacks, hygiene kits, school supplies, a pretend receipt for paid school lunch, a pretend A+ report card. Place the one backpack that is empty of snacks but has a pretend C- report card only, a box of band-aides and a receipt saying, "Your lunch account is empty, please pay!") Let volunteers pull out their items to display. As they show their items, offer dialogue based on this list below:

3rd-6th grade and **Congregational** dialogue:

- Chef Boyardee (any canned snack): is a nutritious and easy snack for students to eat for lunch over a weekend and can be heated in a microwave.
- Crackers and peanut butter: provide a protein and carbohydrate for after school or as a snack on the weekend.
- Juice box or Capri-sun: quick hydration and sugar needed for a boost.
- A+ Report Card: When needs are met at home with food, safety, rest and support, children can be the best students they can be. This report cards reflects a learning student with good grades.
- C- Report Card: When our bodies are hungry and thinking about where our next meal is coming from each day, we are not able to process information and learn. We are unable to be the best student we can be. Thus our grades do not reflect our abilities.
- Lunch Bill: Free and reduced lunch programs do not cover any extra food. When you don't have food at home, you stock pile food from the school lunch room to take home to eat in the evenings. When you have too many charges, they stop letting you get extra food to take home and hunger occurs.
- Band-aides: Symbolize hurt and a need for aide. When we face hunger every day, our emotions become damaged. We feel angry, despair, lack of justice, withdrawn and self-conscious. Some children act out in hurtful ways at school or in their homes in private. Have you ever felt "Hangry"? You may find yourself hungry and you are snappish or rude until you eat something.
- Hygiene Bag: If a family is struggling to pay for food, they have not been able to pay for hygiene materials long before falling short on money for food.

Congregational lesson:

Read **Matthew 25:35** to the congregation. We are called to feed those in need, and our school children are in need. We can partner with the Arkansas Foodbank in the coming week. (Proceed to share the plans to serve based on the service opportunities listed and what your mission committee has planned.)

Fill the backpacks!

Get out your Bible and read Matthew 25:35. As Christians, Jesus taught us to feed those in need and Arkansas Foodbank has a wonderful program to help us serve the hunger needs of children in our state.

PreK-2nd grade: “This week I would like us to ask the grown-ups in our home for spare change and backpack snacks. I have here a clear back pack that we can watch each day how we can work together to fill the front zipper with coins and the middle bag with snacks. I bet we can make that backpack overflow, don’t you? It is always good to have a goal. Do you think we should feed a child for a weekend or a month?” When they come to an agreement on the amount they want to raise write it on a sticky note and put it on the outside of the bag. Writing it on a sticky note allows you to easily change the amount if you quickly reach your goal.

3rd-6th grade: “This week, I would like us to work together to help Arkansas Foodbank to provide for the students we just learned about in our backpack lesson. We are going to work together each day in this room to serve children like us who are hungry. You learned about the need so you will need to take this note home to help your parents learn about the need to feed children. Then each day you will know what you can bring to help.”

Congregational lesson: “This week, I would like us to work together to help Arkansas Foodbank to provide for the students we just learned about in our backpack lesson. We are going to work together each day to serve children who are hungry. Please bring items or donations to help us feed more children.”

RESOURCES FOR BACKPACK:

3rd-6th grade and **Congregational lesson:**

Report Card for Jane Doe	
Reading.....	A
Writing.....	A
Math	B+
Science.....	B+
Social Studies.....	A
Attendance:	

Report Card for John Doe	
Reading.....	C
Writing.....	C
Math	D
Science.....	C
Social Studies.....	C
Attendance: 10 sick days. Tardy: 5 times	

NOTES: Lunch Account for Jane Doe
You have a lunch account balance of \$50.00.

NOTES: Lunch Account for John Doe
You have insufficient funds in your lunch account. You are no longer able to charge meals. Please see school counselor for help with this matter.

RESOURCE LETTER TO SEND HOME:

Dear Grown-ups,

Today we learned there are children in our state that do not have enough food in their homes even though their grown-ups work hard to provide for them. We looked through five backpacks to learn that 1 in 5 Arkansas children go hungry. We learned how hunger causes children to not learn to the best of their abilities. We also learned that Jesus taught us to feed all those that are hungry. Even though we are young, we want to help the Arkansas Foodbank serve as many kids in need as possible. Each day I would like to bring coins or dollars/checks to fill the backpack so they can buy food to feed families. We are trying to raise \$_____ as a group. I would also like you to take me to the store so that we can purchase snacks and hygiene products to donate to the Arkansas Foodbank. We will be packing these throughout the week. Here are items for each day that we would like to donate as much as you are willing and able:

Snacks Items

- Pop-Tarts
- Granola bars
- Individual boxes of cereal
- Beanie Weenees
- Vienna Sausages
- Noodle cups
- Peanut butter in small containers
- Slim Jims
- Gummy/Fruit snacks
- Cheez-It crackers
- Pretzels
- Chex Mix
- Cheese crackers
- Peanut butter crackers
- Small bags of peanuts
- Chips of all types
- Fruit cups
- Raisins
- JELL-O cups with fruit
- Juice boxes
- Capri Sun
- Gatorade/PowerAde
- Kool-Aid single mix
- Bottled water

Hygiene Items

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Deodorant
- Bar Soap

Coins & Dollars: As many coins as you can find. Silver coins are best (as we will be counting coins). Dollars are wonderful. Checks written by grown-ups is even better. Checks made payable to: Arkansas Foodbank (a tax receipt will be mailed from the Arkansas Foodbank)

Thank you for helping me feed the hungry.

DAY TWO:

Snack Collection

PreK-2nd grade: Explain that not all parents have enough money to provide snacks for growing children. In fact, they may not always have enough money for a family meal. Arkansas Foodbank has a program in schools where they give a backpack to a student like Maddi every Friday so that she can take food home to eat over the weekend. When you get home from school or daycare, what kind of snacks do you like to eat? (List them on chart paper or so they can see them.) One food that is healthy and easy for kids to eat at home is Chef Boyardee. Many children might share that they have eaten Chef Boyardee. Circle or add to the list other foods like cheese and crackers, easy mac, fruit snacks, etc. Say, "I think this week we can help feed kids like Maddi by bringing snacks like this into church for Arkansas Foodbank to help feed kids just like you!"

3rd-6th grade: Begin by having the children check over the snacks brought in to make sure they are unopened. Have the students sort the snacks by types and carefully pack in separate boxes and label. Let the students do all of this on their own as adults supervise. If there is time left over, ask the students to sit in a circle and take turns praying that food would be found to nurture the bodies that it feeds. Model for them how to pray out loud a food blessing and let them each take a turn.

Congregational lesson: Begin by having the adults check over the snacks brought in to make sure they are unopened. Have everyone sort the snacks by types and carefully pack in separate boxes and label. If there is time left over, ask the adults to circle the boxes and take turns praying that food would be found to nurture the bodies that it feeds, and for all of the parents and children in these households.

Foods to collect:

BREAKFAST ITEMS:

- Pop-Tarts
- Granola bars
- Individual boxes of cereal

- Peanut butter crackers
- Small bags of peanuts
- Chips of all types

MEALS:

- Beanie Weenees
- Vienna Sausages
- Noodle cups
- Peanut butter in small containers
- Slim Jims

FRUIT:

- Fruit cups
- Raisins
- JELL-O cups with fruit

SNACKS:

- Gummy/Fruit snacks
- Cheez-It crackers
- Pretzels
- Chex Mix
- Cheese crackers

DRINKS:

- Juice boxes
- Capri Sun
- Gatorade/PowerAde
- Kool-Aid single mix
- Bottled water

DAY THREE:

Hygiene Kits

PreK-2nd grade, **3rd-6th grade** and **Congregational lesson:**

Students and adults will arrive with their hygiene supplies that should be travel size, soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, deodorant. You may get items that you didn't ask for but would still be useful. Create an assembly line by handing down the zip-lock and fill one hygiene item in each bag with the last person in the line sealing and packing it in a box for delivery to the Arkansas Foodbank. If there is time left over, ask the students and adults to circle the hygiene bags and take turns praying that these items will bless the children and families that receive the items.

RESOURCES:

Hygiene Items to collect (in travel sizes):

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Deodorant
- Bar Soap

DAY FOUR:

Coin Collection

\$1 can provide 5 meals to a hungry child.

PreK-2nd grade: The money can be used to buy meals and snacks after they use the ones we donate this week. Show them coins and that the big silver coins are worth the most.

3rd-6th grade and **Congregational lesson:** The money can be used to buy meals and snacks if we use this week to collect coins! What do you think we can we can collect from our family and friends? Let's make a goal!

DAY FIVE:

Celebrate

Plan a celebration based on the age of the participants to celebrate the wines of the week.

Examples:

How many bins of food collected?

How many boxes of food packed?

How many hygiene bags packed?

How much money collected?

Create a celebration wall to show the progress for the week.

Create a fun video or PowerPoint with pictures of the activities for the week, and the last slide announce the results of the week.

Schedule a volunteer day at the Foodbank for the last day and bring the food and funds collected that week.

Donate

Food and Funds can be delivered to the Arkansas Foodbank Monday – Friday 9am-noon and 1pm-3pm.

Arkansas Foodbank
4301 W 65th Street
Little Rock, AR 72209

Questions:

Reach out to our Community Development Coordinator at 501-569-4315 or fooddrive@arkansasfoodbank.org