



# Chickens by the Millions (Scenario B: Learning Experience #1)

## Student Procedures



**Essential Question:** How do our food choices affect the environment in which we live?

**Note:** You will work in a project team of three or four students. Team answers to the questions below should be recorded in your individual journal. Each team should be ready to contribute to a class discussion on each topic.

### Procedures

1. Copy the essential question for this lesson into your journal and take a few minutes to answer it.
2. Imagine that someone has offered to buy your lunch at a fast food restaurant in your area (i.e. McDonald's, Wendy's, etc.). Think about what you would choose from the menu and record it in your journal. Write responses to the following in your science journal:
  - a. What percent of the members of your class would choose chicken nuggets, chicken fingers or a chicken sandwich as a part of their order? In your journal use that percent to estimate how many students in your school would order chicken today if they had the opportunity.
  - b. How could you estimate the number of people in your state who will choose to eat chicken today, and how many individual birds are necessary to provide that many chicken meals? Describe the strategy that your team would use for answering this question.
3. You will be working in a project team of three or four. Each team member should have a task: researcher (may have two of these), recorder, communicator. Each team member will be responsible and accountable for your team's work.



4. With your team, reflect on where the chicken meat in your imaginary lunch comes from (the answer is not the freezer in the rear of the restaurant) and complete questions one through three in *Back to the (Chicken) Farm* (Student Sheet #1). You will need to know the following information:
  - a. there are more than 17 million people living in the Chesapeake Bay watershed
  - b. the average American consumes approximately 86.5 pounds (39.3 kilograms) of chicken meat each year
  - c. each chicken contains approximately 3 pounds (1.4 kilograms) of marketable meat
5. After you calculate how many birds must be raised in order to satisfy our appetite for chicken meat each year, think about how and where most of those chickens are raised. Although “free range” chickens may roam freely outside searching for food, almost all chickens produced for meat in this country are raised in large chicken houses where they spend their lives inside. Complete *Back to the (Chicken) Farm* (Student Sheet #1).
6. In your journal write a few sentences about the environmental impacts that result from raising warehoused chickens in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Are they positive or negative? Suggest a way to mitigate one of the negative impacts. Share your ideas with your team, and add your team’s top suggestion to the class list.

