

**For each word you get right, we donate 20 grains of rice through the United Nations to help end world hunger.**

### What is FreeRice?

Since October 7, 2007, FreeRice (<http://www.freerice.com>) has given over 4,550,000,000 grains of rice to the United Nations World Food Program. The premise of the organization is simple: to help end world hunger by providing rice to hungry people for free. The rice is free because of the money collected from web advertising that is viewed by users who play a simple, educational vocabulary quiz game.

### How does the FreeRice vocabulary program work?

FreeRice has a custom database containing thousands of words at varying degrees of difficulty. There are words appropriate for people just learning English and words that will challenge the most scholarly professors. In between are thousands of words for learners of every level.

FreeRice is an adaptive test which automatically adjusts to your level of vocabulary. It starts by giving you words at different levels of difficulty and then, based on how you do, assigns you an approximate starting level. You then determine a more exact level for yourself as you play. When you get a word wrong, you go to an easier level. When you get three words in a row right, you go to a harder level. This one-to-three ratio is best for keeping you at the “outer fringe” of your vocabulary, where learning can take place

There are 50 levels in all, but they say it is rare for people to get above level 48. (They don't know our department).

### How does this program relate to our curriculum?

According to their site, after users have done FreeRice for a couple of days, people notice that words that they have never consciously used before will begin to pop into their heads while speaking or writing. Beyond that, the game reinforces problem-solving skills and encourages students to make educated guesses based on prior knowledge and Latin and Greek roots.

### How can we implement this as our department initiative?

We are hoping that every student in a Maine South English classroom will use FreeRice for 15 minutes during the month of December. Though it may be difficult to find 15 minutes of lab time to spare, think about the effect it will have on our students—and the world. Not only will our students be donating a wealth of food to those in need, but some of them will most likely share this site with friends and family, thus spurring the exponential growth of this worthy cause.

**Suggested lesson plan:** Schedule a half-period of lab time (try to share a period with someone else who has a class the same period as you) and do a brief demonstration of the program with the students. Tell them that they will have exactly 15 minutes to try to get as many grains of rice and the highest vocabulary level they can. At the end of the 15 minutes, tell the students to take their hands off the mouse and write down both their vocabulary level and rice total. (As a means of encouragement, you might consider offering extra credit to the student who donates the most grains of rice and the student who has the highest vocabulary level.)

Please keep track of your classroom totals and write the total on the chart in the English Workroom.

Our goal for this project is **500,000 grains** of rice (**200 grains per student—only 10 correct answers each**) which will provide **75 meals to those in need**—that's one day of three full meals for 25 people.