

TED® Extension, Category 2
Hidden Pigs

Overview

Mensa for Kids' TED Extensions are short, easy-to-use guides that help teachers, parents and youth use TED talks in a classroom or home setting. They are not written in a lesson plan format, but they do have a list of discussion questions, all at higher levels of thinking.

Watch the TED talk at:

www.ted.com/talks/christien_meindersma_on_pig_05049.html

THINK ABOUT IT:

1. Christien Meindersma said that there were 16 million people in the Netherlands and 12 million pigs. Does that surprise you? In Australia, there are four times as many sheep as humans. What other livestock animals do you think there tend to be a lot of?



2. Pork bone fat gives soap a pearl-like effect. Manufacturers don't list "pork bone fat" on the label. Why do you think that is?

3. She listed pork parts in products such as soap, bread dough, toothpaste, gelatin, concrete, train brakes, china, paint brushes, beer, cigarettes, and bullets. Did any of these uses surprise you? Why?

4. Which of the uses she described did you think was the most important?

5. Ms. Meindertsma mentioned that bread dough contains pig product as well. That is L-Cysteine, which is used as a dough conditioner and also is found in savory meat dishes. It can be made, and is most commonly made, with duck feathers. Would you rather have pig hair or duck feathers in your bread?

6. She said that she found 185 uses of the pig during her three-year research. What uses can you think of off of the top of your head for a cow?

7. Ms. Meindersma undertook this project to see if pig really was an animal in which all parts were used. What do you think her conclusion was?

8. The two ideas that ended the talk were that it is odd that we don't respect pigs more, given all of their uses that benefit humanity, and that it is odd that people have no clue as to what products are made of. What other things do you think are commonly used and not appreciated fully?

DO IT:

Look at the labels of a selection of foods in your house. Research the ingredients and find out what surprising things your family is eating.

READ ABOUT IT:

- Read the FDC guidelines for “acceptable defects” in food here: www.fda.gov/food/guidancecomplianceregulatoryinformation/guidancedocuments/sanitation/ucm056174.htm#CHPTD
(Example: apple butter can have an average of 5 or more whole or equivalent insects — not counting mites, aphids, thrips, or scale insects — per 100 grams of apple butter.)
- *The Whole Hog: Exploring the Extraordinary Potential of Pigs* by Lyall Watson
- *The Complete Pig: An Entertaining History of Pigs of the World* by Sara Rath

WATCH IT:

- See more of the book Ms. Meinderstma created, now acquired by the New York Museum of Art:
www.christienmeindersma.com/index.php?/books/pig-05049/
- *The Joy of Pigs* (a documentary in the *Nature* series)
www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/episodes/the-joy-of-pigs/introduction/2123/

SURF IT:

- Visit Christien Meindersma's Web site to see the other projects she has done:
www.christienmeindersma.com
- Visit the site of the global pig industry: www.thepigsite.com

