HOUSEHOLD CARD

Meet the Ellis family.

Ava, 12, her dad, her grandmother, and her brother Leo, 8. It's Tuesday. Dad works until 6:00 and gets home at 6:30. Grandma volunteers at the library until 5:00. She likes to cook the chicken soup her mother taught her to make. Leo has soccer practice until 6:00 and comes home hungry. The family wants dinner on the table by 7:00.

They shop once a week, on Saturdays, at a grocery store 3 miles away. The corner store on their block sells milk, bread, and snacks, but no fresh meat.

FOOD BUDGET	AMOUNT
Food for the whole week	$160
Planned for other meals	−$140
Set aside for tonight	**$20**

Salt, pepper, spices, and oil are already in the kitchen. Don't count them.

✂ DINNER CARDS · CUT ALONG THE DASHED LINES

A DINNER A

Grandma's chicken soup

$13.50 · 8 servings

Cooked at home from the Saturday shopping

- Whole chicken $8.00 — Raised in-state, about 150 miles away
- Rice $1.50 — Grown in Arkansas
- Carrots $1.20 — Grown in California
- Onion $0.80 — Grown in Washington
- Celery $1.50 — Product of Mexico
- Garlic $0.50 — No label
- 15 min to prep + 60 min to simmer
- Cook: Grandma, with help chopping
- Left over: 4 servings for lunches, chicken bones, vegetable peels, a foam tray, plastic wrap

B DINNER B

Stir-fry meal kit

$24.00 · 4 servings

Delivered to the door in a box

- Chicken — Product of USA
- Broccoli — Product of Mexico
- Rice — Product of Thailand
- Sauce packet — Packed in Ohio
- Kit put together at a kitchen 300 miles away
- 25 min to cook
- Cook: Ava and Dad, following the recipe card
- Left over: a cardboard box, 7 small plastic bags, an ice pack, a plastic sauce cup

C DINNER C

Pizza delivery

$27.00 · 2 large pizzas

$22 for the pizzas + $5 delivery fee

- 16 slices; the family usually eats 12
- The menu lists the toppings, not where they come from
- About 40 min from order to door
- Cook: no one; anyone can place the order
- Left over: 4 slices, 2 greasy pizza boxes, napkins, 2 plastic sauce cups

The Ellis family is fictional. The prices and labels are made up for this lesson.

NAME _____ PARTNER _____

What's really on the Ellis family's *plate?*

CHOOSE Pick tonight's dinner

Circle the dinner you would pick, then list its ingredients.

A · Soup **B · Meal kit** **C · Pizza**

PART 1 Add it up $20 for tonight

	A · SOUP	B · MEAL KIT	C · PIZZA
Total cost tonight			
Left over or over budget ($20 − total)			
Servings			
Cost per serving (total ÷ servings)			
Minutes until dinner			
Who does the work?			

PART 2 Read the labels Pick two ingredients from any card

INGREDIENT	DINNER	WHERE IT COMES FROM	ONE THING THE LABEL DOESN'T TELL YOU

Which dinner costs the least? Which takes the most time, and whose time is it?

PART 3 Time, money, access, culture

Write one sentence for each: how does it shape what the Ellis family eats tonight?

TIME
Who has it, and when?

MONEY
$20 tonight, $160 a week

ACCESS
What the stores nearby sell

CULTURE
A recipe passed down

PART 4 Exit ticket

We would serve Dinner _____ to the Ellis family tonight.

One change that would reduce waste from our dinner:

One trade-off that change creates:

How might the best choice differ for another household?