

NEWS BREAK

Article: Will a salad-making machine meant to cut germs also cut jobs?

Section: MAIN, A8

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, October 8, 2017** of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a small group or larger, class discussion.

Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

EALR 1.1 Civics

- Evaluates relationships between key ideals and historical and current realities.

EALR 1.4 Civics

- Understands that citizenship and civic involvement in the neighborhood and community are the rights and responsibilities of individuals.
- Analyzes how a position on an issue attempts to balance individual rights and the common good.

Objectives: Students will read an article, and develop their opinion on automated machines and robots and how they might impact employment in the future.

Pre-Reading Discussion:



- What do you see in both pictures? What can you infer from both pictures? Where do you think the picture was taken? Why?
- What do you think the article will be about? What are the clues in the pictures?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

Write your guess and then look up the definition and write it below your guess. How close did you come to the correct definition?

Still, Ayers says other chefs have **criticized** him. “Many of my colleagues in the industry are like, ‘What are you doing to us? You’re going to the machines?’ ” Ayers said.

Criticize Guess:

Criticize Definition:

What is **criticize**? Have you heard this word before?

Comprehension Questions:

1. Salad bars are magnets for what?
2. The Silicon Valley startup Chowbotics has devised what it says is a partial solution. Its device, which it calls Sally the Salad Robot does what?
3. How do customers make their salad?

4. There is evidence that automation can have a devastating effect on employment. Commercial robots have already begun to eliminate jobs, according to a Massachusetts Institute of Technology-Boston University study published in March. Researchers analyzed the effects of industrial robots on local labor markets in the United States from 1990 to 2007 and what did they find?
5. What is the Roomba?
6. “You’re seeing the momentum of Silicon Valley behind it,” Sekar said. So far, Chowbotics has raised \$_____ million in venture funding from various investors.

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions:

- How do you think robots and automated machines will impact employment in the future?
- Would you rather buy a salad from a machine or go to a restaurant? What are your reasons why?
- Did you already know that salad bars were magnets for viruses and bacteria or did this information surprise you?
- Do you think automating salads will reduce the health risks? Why or why not?
- If automation continues and jobs are at risk. What can citizens do? How can their voices be heard in regulating that industry?

Nonetheless, robot-induced unemployment is a mounting concern. Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates recently made a case for taxing companies that own robots, which could delay their implementation and provide some money to retrain people whose jobs are lost. The San Francisco board of supervisors is considering a so-called robot tax. “We could be looking at over 50 percent of jobs disappearing in the United States over the next 10 to 15 years,” said Jane Kim, a San Francisco supervisor.

- Should companies that use robots be taxed in different ways? Why or why not?

But as a growing number of food- and drink-slinging robots have begun interacting with diners in the San Francisco Bay Area, Deepak Sekar, the device’s inventor and the founder and chief executive of Chowbotics, has faced questions about whether his machine will put people out of work. He denies that will happen.

Sekar insists his company’s focus — which is on the salad-bar market instead of restaurants more broadly — means Sally won’t be a job killer.

He says workers at salad bars could restock the robot, which holds enough ingredients for 50 salads before it needs to be refilled. And, he says, restaurants can continue with their usual food preparation methods — relying on kitchen workers to do the chopping or buying precut vegetables.

- Do you agree or disagree with Sekar? Do you believe that automated machines/robots won't be "job killers?" Why or why not?
- How could automation help the human race?

News Break is posted to the Web on Monday. Please share this NIE News Break program with other teachers. To sign-up for the print replica for your class, please [register on-line](#) or call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655. Copyright © 2017 The Seattle Times Company

Newsbreak Answer Key: October 8, 2017

Pre-Reading Discussion:

Answers will vary

Vocabulary Building:

Criticize: Indicate the faults of (someone or something) in a disapproving way:
"States criticized the failure to provide an adequate and permanent compensation" .

Comprehension Answers:

1. Bacteria and viruses
2. It's aimed at reducing the risk of food-borne illness by assembling salads out of precut vegetables stored in refrigerated canisters.
3. Diners use a touch screen to place their orders, choosing from a menu of recipes or designing their own salads. The machine calculates the number of calories per salad and drops the veggies into a bowl in less than a minute. There is less human contact with the food.
4. They estimated that adding one robot per 1,000 workers has led to unemployment for up to six workers and has caused a decrease in wages by up to 0.50 percent.
5. Vacuuming can be delegated to Roomba, iRobot's robotic vacuum.
6. \$6.3 million

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions:

Answers will vary