

“Celebrate Cultural Cuisine”

EAT CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Ask the students to look at the food and culture themed poster and the food offered for lunch in the cafeteria to see if they can identify one country highlighted on the poster where rice is commonly eaten as a dietary staple. Discuss their observations when the students return back from lunch and have had an opportunity to review the poster.

LEARN CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Objective

Students will describe the role food plays in various celebrations.

10 Minute Lesson

Through teacher-guided discussion, students will discuss the role that food plays in celebrations. Discussion will enable students to identify their own personal food traditions and gain understanding of the important part that food plays in how we celebrate. Students will also examine how different foods can be “traditional” for the same celebrations, depending upon the group or culture celebrating.

LIVE HOME ACTIVITY

Instruct students to think about a few holidays (i.e. Chinese New Year, St. Patrick’s Day, Mardi Gras, etc.). Ask them to identify one food that could be eaten to celebrate one of these holidays, and prepare that food to enjoy with your family at home. Have students talk in class about the food that they prepared at home.

Teacher's Notes

Background

Food is an important part of any celebration in all countries of the world, regardless of culture, ethnicity or religion:

Food is a very important and necessary part of our lives. We use food for a variety of different purposes and the food that we choose to eat is selected because of a variety of different influences. Food also plays an important part in how we celebrate. Foods commonly eaten at celebrations often reflect particular staple foods commonly eaten in certain countries, for example pasta in Italy, beans in Mexico, and rice in China.

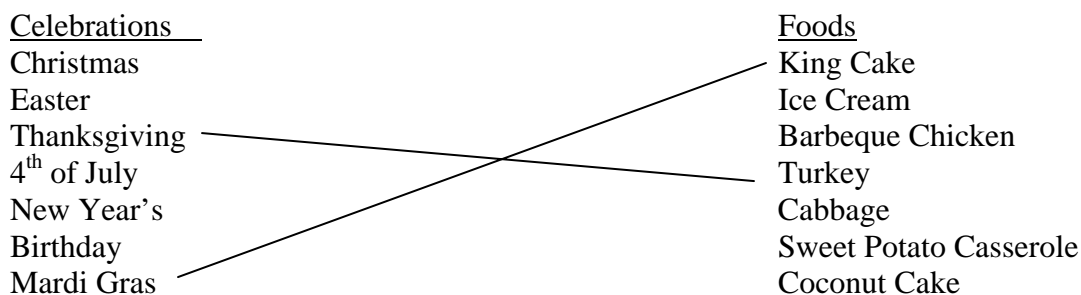
LEARN 10 Minute Lesson

Food is usually part of our many celebrations, and is used and selected for many various reasons. However, the way that food is used in celebrations varies from home to home, state to state, and country to country. The celebrations that we have and the ways that we celebrate them are affected by our culture.

Along with our culture, the idea that gathering around a table, uniting as friends and family is an important aspect of food and celebrations. When we celebrate it is usually with people we love and trust, or are trying to get to know. Food is a powerful element that can bring together many different people. The smell of food also is powerful in that it is able to bring old memories and events to mind (cinnamon=Christmas, a certain meal and its smell can remind a person of home). ***Pause briefly to ask students if there are any smells that remind them of certain holidays or celebrations.***

Have students record a holiday and/or celebration and a food item they traditionally consume for this occasion. Collect the slips and compile a listing of student's responses separating them into two categories: celebrations and foods. Eliminate any exact duplicates from the list.

Have students copy the listing of celebrations and foods and attempt to match the foods to the corresponding list of celebrations. See example below:



Following this activity, briefly discuss its difficulty. Explain that there are no *right* or *wrong* answers. Perhaps allow students the opportunity to share the celebration and food they submitted. Highlight the subjective nature of “traditional” celebration cuisine.

Introduce and explain the EAT Cafeteria Connection and LEARN Home Activity to the students.

Optional Enrichment Idea

Have students select a holiday and identify the foods their family commonly eats for the corresponding celebration. Challenge students to trace back their heritage to determine if any of their identified foods can be linked to their cultural heritage. Example: Each year for Christmas your family prepares a Christmas goose. This can be linked to the traditional Christmas meal of the Irish culture.