

“Festive Feasts: Celebrations Near and Far”

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. Students will gain understanding of the important part that food plays in how we celebrate.

LIVE HOME ACTIVITY

Have students interview their parents, grandparents or other adults within their family to determine what holiday food traditions they have passed down from past generations. (Example: Can you recall a special dish that was prepared during a holiday or other special occasion? Have you found that you also continue to prepare this same dish for those celebrations today?) Is the recipe written or has it been passed down verbally? Have students record the responses and share them with the class.

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

Lead Group Discussion- Discuss the role that food plays in celebrations around the world.

Food is a very important part of our lives. We need it to live, it is what gives us the nutrients that we need for our bodies to grow. We also use food for social reasons. When we have friends or family to our home we usually have some form of food to offer them, whether it is a light snack or a full meal. Food also plays an important part in how we celebrate. Food is a major part of celebrations all across the world.

Ask the Students: *Can you think of physical, psychological or social reason when you eat or crave food?*

The food that we choose to eat is also selected because of a number of different reasons. Many of us like certain foods because we have been raised eating those foods. In many cases, whatever our parents eat or like to eat is what we eventually enjoy eating also. The region where we live as well as economics determines much of our food selection. Our background and our environment play a great role in what and how we eat. Food is also a part of our many celebrations, and is used and selected for many of the same reasons. Delicious, mouth-watering foods are the very essence of a celebration. These special foods are what many of us look forward to as the celebration approaches. Often the aroma of a turkey fresh out of the oven is all we need to cause us to think of Thanksgiving. Imagine celebrating a child's birthday without the cake? The same is true for many cultures around the world. Is it the New Year in Japan without mochi (rice cake)? Is it Cinco de Mayo in Mexico without tamales? Is it St. Patrick's Day in Ireland without potato bread? Of course, foods eaten for holidays vary from culture to culture. Within cultures, they vary from family to family. For example, when I was a child, **(site an example from your own experience)**.

Ask the Students: *Can you think of a particular food or meal that your family enjoys on a specific occasion?*

Note: *As this lesson is discussed with the class, it is important to emphasize diversity and provide opportunities for the students to share what is unique to their culture and family.*

Food is an important part of any celebration in all nations of the world, regardless of culture, religion, or ethnicity. It can unite and strengthen community bonds and helps to maintain a common identity among a group of people.

Resources: Food and celebration, Author: Heidi Jensen; Food and Celebration mini unit, Author: Penny K. Bassett; Fieldhouse, Paul. Food and Nutrition: Customs and Culture. Croom Helm, Dover, New Hampshire, 1986.

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

Optional Enrichment Idea

Have students share the data they recorded for the LIVE home activity with the class so they can discuss it. Discuss similarities and differences in how different families include foods in their holiday celebrations.