

Cooking with Culture

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Overview

The study of popular culture allows students to examine many aspects of everyday life. It encourages them to take notice of subtle innuendos that comment on society's view of the value of various groups and their cultural practices. But exactly what is "popular culture?" There seems to be no consistent definition of popular culture. The definition a person chooses is based on his or her beliefs about society. John Storey has collected several definitions in *An Introductory Guide to Cultural Theory on Popular Culture*. One definition says that popular culture is culture that is well liked by many people. Another view sees popular culture as anything that is not high culture such as operas or Shakespearean plays. It is also defined as "mass culture" which is commercial culture where people consume in an automatic and passive manner. Another definition says that popular culture is generated by the people; it is the authentic culture of the people. Popular culture is often associated with the working class and is seen as part of inferior mainstream culture. It is also a source of protest against the dominant groups in society. Those who believe that popular culture originates from the people do not believe that it is imposed from above or emerges from below. Rather, it is a struggle or articulation between the dominant and mainstream groups. Each of these definitions is probably faulty in some way. For instance, the definition that says that popular culture is anything that is not high culture does not take into account situations such as William Shakespeare whose plays are now considered high culture but were folk culture when he wrote them. For the purposes of this unit, we will consider popular culture to be those things, rituals, celebrations, customs, opinions that are popular, things that much of society likes.

A unit on popular culture presents so many possibilities. Students can study the impact of television, toys, books, fashion, family gatherings, public celebrations, various rituals, gender identity and food. However, if students are to benefit from the study and research of popular culture within necessary time constraints, they must work with a limited aspect of this very broad phenomenon. Therefore, I have decided to focus on rituals and traditions associated with food within the students' cultures. Because this seminar, *Popular Culture in Latin America and the United States*, concentrates heavily on popular culture in Latin America, my students will also explore Latin American popular culture during a section of this unit.

This unit, *Cooking with Culture* is designed for a ninth grade gifted English class, although it can easily be adapted to any grade level and subject area. Students will learn about popular culture by creating a multicultural cookbook that has three main components: a section with interesting and unusual information about selected cultures; a section with personal anecdotes about rituals, celebrations and other pop culture activities, and a section with recipes that are related to the anecdotes. Students will enhance the cookbook with pictures, photographs and designs. This unit will give students a chance to use a variety of research tools including books, databases, internet sources and personal interviews. They will take advantage of our technology resources by using the digital camera, the scanner, *Publisher*, *Adobe PhotoShop*, *PageMaker* and *PowerPoint* to complete the cookbook. Students will showcase their work to parents and teachers during a presentation and party where students will unveil their finished book, talk about its contents and serve food made from the recipes in the book. This five-week unit will be presented during the second semester after students have learned to use the research and technology tools.

Rationale

Who can resist the wonderful smell of bread baking or the tantalizing aroma of simmering spaghetti sauce. Good food pleases the palate and brightens the spirit. Holidays and special occasions bring thoughts of fun and feasts. Specialties such as the Thanksgiving turkey with savory stuffing, the Easter ham with brown sugar glaze, Fourth of July grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, scrumptious birthday and anniversary cakes are centerpieces of warm memories for people everywhere. The love of food is universal. Indeed a Korean proverb says, "Eating is Heaven." Food trends among cultures is an interesting facet of pop culture. The manner in which various ethnic groups incorporate food into their rituals and celebrations is a mark of pride and identity.

Of course, food is also essential for life, a fact that Americans began to take very seriously in the 1990s which reflects the strong, almost obsessive interest in healthy foods. Today's teenagers, however, seem to be interested in food of any kind, healthy or not. They trek into my classroom daily, snooping around for candy or leftover microwave popcorn, items I often have on my desk. They are always groaning about being hungry or complaining about how long it is until lunch. So, with this strong interest in food already in place, it seems like a good idea to tempt students with discussions and samples of food as I smoothly and stealthily bombard them with tons of new and interesting ideas about popular culture.

Thus, our venue into the study of popular culture will be food. Starting the unit with food samples accompanied by interesting cultural facts will grab the students' interest and leave them wanting more. This will provide me with an opportunity to introduce other topics of popular culture to them such as trends in clothes, movies, television, family activities, music and politics. Since popular culture deals with practices that are current, students should be familiar with the topics. On the surface it may seem that the study of such topics is frivolous, but deeper exploration into the psychology and sociology of popular culture reveals a complex web of interaction. For instance, Hirschberg examines the idea of "otherness" as a part of popular culture. He says that cultural views of people who are different because of appearance, behavior, mental capabilities and the like often cause these "others" to be ostracized or made scapegoats because society assumes negative things about them. In his article, "Visualizing the Disabled Body," Lennard J. Davis argues that deformed people are often considered less than human and are treated accordingly. Lucy Grealy concurs with this perception as she describes her own trials and tribulations in "Autobiography of a Face." They impart the idea that "normal" people are uncomfortable around such people and would rather keep them out of the way than deal with them. Paul Monette discusses how culture can use illness as an excuse to ostracize people in his article "Borrowed Time: An AIDS Memoir." Since the class will base their study of popular culture on the idea that it is what the masses like, the idea of "otherness" helps to clarify what the masses society values. Even though this unit deals primarily with topics pertaining to food and popular culture, I hope to touch on these other issues during class discussions.

This unit seeks to have students become engaged in critical thinking that urges them to look below the surface to examine what all this means. In the chapter "Social Sense" from a *Natural History of the Senses*, Diane Ackerson says that what we like to eat is culturally determined. She also points out that most of the senses can be enjoyed when one is alone, but taste is primarily social. Humans rarely choose to dine in solitude. Throughout history "taste" has always had a double meaning. It comes from the Middle English "tasten" which means to examine by touch, test or sample. The earlier Latin term, "taxare" means to touch sharply. So, taste has always been a trial or test. By studying the "food" aspect of popular culture, students will be able to compare ethnic tastes and find similarities and differences among cultures. By expanding their interest beyond the sampling of food, students will learn to articulate new discoveries about why various routines and products become popular and what these phenomena say about society. For instance, a student may remember making sugar cookies with her mother so that they could have a tea party with the Barbie dolls. This can lead to a discussion of popular toys and the cultural values they embody. Watching television always requires snacks such as popcorn, pretzels, candy and Pepsi, unless you are watching football, baseball or other sports programs. Then, a real meal is required, usually at half-time. This topic can allow for a discussion of how television shows have changed and how this change connects to society's standards. Going to amusement parks used to involve the packing of a picnic basket of fried chicken, potato salad, baked beans and special desserts. Now-a-days every food imaginable is available at food stands in the park. So instead of anticipating the fried chicken and potato salad, we look forward to the cheese fries, corn dogs, cotton candy and candy apples. Either way, these comfort foods are an essential part of having fun and creating good memories. The eating ritual, however, may signify the deterioration of family "togetherness" since everyone seems to go for himself.

In keeping with the major topic of this unit students will create an end product, a cookbook. They will complete a number of tasks including interviewing family members. This is one way to get families involved in students' school work as well as to hone the students' interviewing skills. They will have to write a narrative account and a narrative procedure to accompany the recipes they gather. They will also conduct research to complete their "interesting facts" section of the unit. Constructing the page layouts will improve their skill in using *Publisher* or *PageMaker*. All of these activities address a wide range of District standards. Thus, this is an ideal unit for eliciting enthusiasm from students and encouraging them to engage in higher level thinking as they not only learn to improve their writing, speaking and technical skills, but also learn the meaning and significance of popular culture.

Objectives

During the course of this unit, students will be able to effectively participate in class discussions about their family traditions, favorite foods, research information and new insights. During such discussions they will follow the rules of "accountable talk" which is a discussion model that requires participants to allow each other to speak without interruption or insult. They must also give feedback on comments and information presented during the discussion. Students will also improve their research skills as they look for information about popular Latin celebrations, rituals and day to day activities. They will learn how to evaluate web sites and how to use internet search tips to find what they are looking for more easily. They will also find information about their own cultures. In doing so they will learn to use primary sources and effective interviewing techniques. Students will have fun relating anecdotal stories to accompany the recipes they choose for the cookbook. They will write this narrative account of a specific instance or tradition in such a way that it not only tells a story but also captures the emotion of the experience. Most ninth graders have never written an original recipe, so this activity will give them a chance to demonstrate their ability to write an effective narrative procedure as they explain how to make their cookbook items. Students will use the digital camera to take pictures associated with their cookbook entry, or they may scan photos they already have. They will use *Adobe PhotoShop* or *Microsoft Publish* to edit the photos for use in the book. They will then demonstrate creativity and proficiency with the use of *Publisher* as they create their own pages to add to the cookbook. In addition, students will present a *PowerPoint* demonstration to the class about their contribution to the cookbook. Students will also demonstrate their ability to work effectively with others as they plan and produce a celebration to showcase the completed project.

Strategies

I will use my own family traditions as a model for laying the groundwork for capturing students' interest in this unit. I will start by bringing in food that my family prepares for a special occasion, maybe puff pastry turnovers stuffed with hot peppers and chicken sausage. While the students are tasting this delicious appetizer, I will tell them about my family's love of hot, spicy food, a taste we have acquired from the East Indian cooking that my mother, who was born in Calcutta India, lavished upon us as we were growing up. I usually make these turnovers to add to the mounds of other food my sisters and brothers bring for family gatherings such as Easter, Christmas, Thanksgiving and cookouts. Not only is Indian food popular in our house, but so is "soul food," a result of my father's African American heritage. I am from a large family of nine children, and each of us brings our food specialty to family gatherings. My brother Chris's specialty is collard greens cooked with smoked ham hocks. Bill always does the meat: delicious fall-off-the-bone ribs, the golden brown turkey, the tender roast beef or the hot dogs and hamburgers. My sister, Jane, brings her melt-in-your-mouth macaroni and cheese. Another sister, Celeste, cooks her famous, cannot-be-duplicated, southern fried chicken. My youngest brother David makes his skillet cornbread; Bruce makes barbeque sauce; Ivan bakes pound cakes and Satara, who rarely cooks, makes the grape Kool-aid.

A good way to continue modeling the assignment is to give the class a hand-out that contains a copy of the turnover recipe, the background information I shared with them about my family and a picture of the appetizer or of my family. This will later serve as a model for one of the pages they will create for the cookbook. This activity can then lead to a discussion of the students' family holiday and leisure time traditions and how these rituals reflect their ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Since most classes reflect a variety of cultural or ethnic groups, students will begin to see the similarities and differences among them. Hopefully there will be some surprises and insights. As they begin to discuss their own favorite foods, some students may want to bring samples in for the class. This would certainly be welcome as a treat and as a great motivator for students to become involved in this unit.

Next, I will restate the idea that food is an important and defining element of all cultures and it is the major aspect of popular culture that we will connect to other popular culture topics. To keep students interested, I will present some "did you know" facts about food. For instance, insects make up ten percent of the protein consumed in the world. The Masai of Tanzania drink cow's blood to bring them closer to their creator. The ancient Roman feasts sometimes featured a goat stuffed with a lamb which contained a chicken, inside of which was a rabbit stuffed with a dormouse. Scottish haggis is the heart and liver of a sheep or calf, chopped finely and seasoned with suet, oatmeal and spices and then boiled in the animal's stomach. In ritual sacrifices, the Aztecs killed and then cooked their victims in a spicy chili pepper sauce and served it to the officials. I expect to hear groans of distaste as I give these descriptions, so I will then ask the class if they can think of any foods that some people may find strange

or repulsive. They will probably mention things such as chitterlings, escargot, tripe, hog mauls, caviar and the like as examples of foods comparable to my examples. This discussion will illustrate Diane Ackerman's idea that what people like to eat is culturally determined. What some cultures consider tasty, others consider repulsive. After piquing their interest, I will give students the printed copy of these food facts along with an annotated bibliography and suggest to them that they can find more interesting information like this in the sources listed.

Background Information – Food Trends Through the Twentieth Century

Food trends are a part of popular culture, and it is interesting to examine these trends both past and present. In October 1999 *The Columbus Dispatch* published a list of twentieth century food trends. The first decade was opulent and characterized by full plates. In this decade the Hershey Bar was introduced, the first pizzeria and first tea bags appeared, and tuna was put into cans. In the second decade Crisco, Oreos, Lifesavers and the first standard electric mixer came along. Popsicles, Gerber's baby food and Kool-aid were introduced. The 1930s brought the first girl scout cookies and American Airlines began serving food on board. In the 1940s we saw the first McDonalds and the first dishwasher. The 1950s produced convenience foods and time-saving gadgets. It was also called the "casserole decade" because of the new availability of creamed soups that quickly pulled different foods together into one dish. In the 1960s Julia Child's television show and cookbook became popular. Ordinary people could now cook their own gourmet food. During this decade Weight Watchers gained fame; Dave Thomas opened the first Wendy's; Cool Whip, Tang, Pringles, bundt pans and Buffalo wings all found their way into the market. Hot items of the 1970s included Ben and Jerry's ice cream, Stove Top Stuffing, Starbuck's Coffee and food processors. In the 1980s, food wasn't the point. Presentation was. The presentation of food at restaurants was more important than taste. This decade saw introduction of the microwave and an interest in regional cooking. The focus on food and health began to flame at the end of this decade. Food editor Sue Dawson points out that in the 1990s health and food continued to be most important. She said that we did not just count calories, we counted grams, We didn't just eat balanced diets. We had to eat soluble fiber and omega-3 fatty acids. We changed our eating habits every time a new scientific study showed a link between disease and food. It will be interesting to identify the new food trends now that we have entered the new millennium.

Other Popular Culture Topics

To further illustrate what popular culture is, I will give examples of other topics. One example is fashion. The class can share stories about popular fashion and what it represents. I am sure that my class will have a good time looking at old pictures of me and my family sporting platform shoes, huge afros, dashikis, saris, psychedelic colors and basketball uniforms with short shorts and long pulled-up tube socks. If I include pictures of my parents, I have fashion evidence that spans decades from the 1940s to the present. The discussion these pictures spark should be quite stimulating. Real photos are a much greater catalyst for thought and comment than pictures from a book. I will invite students to bring in some of their family pictures and add to the discussion about what fashion says about the times. One thing that they should notice is the recurrence throughout the years of a particularly resilient item of clothing, blue jeans. In his book, *Everyday, Everywhere: Global Perspectives on Popular Culture*, Hirschberg says that blue jeans, an American creation, have had many transformations in cultural meaning since the 1800s. Maybe students can ask their parents and grandparents what kind of people wore blue jeans in their younger days. The changes in fashion through the years also signify the diversity of American culture and the changes in attitude. Men of the 1950s would never have worn the bright colors and flowery patterns that men of the 1960s wore. Society of the 1950s would never have imagined that “real” men would wear earrings, necklaces and bracelets. As late as the 1980s many employers did not allow women to wear pants to work. Students can incorporate cultural information about fashion into their cookbook by connecting different types of clothes to the types of meals at which they were worn – casual receptions, formal dinners, fast food restaurants, picnics or any number of other meals.

Another interesting topic for students to explore is entertainment, particularly toys, television, popular books, movies and amusement parks. The Barbie doll phenomenon began over forty years ago and is still going strong. In a December 1998 volume of *Biography*, John Kehoe writes that two Barbies are sold every second in over 140 countries around the world. As a matter of fact, if the dolls were placed head-to-toe, they would circle the earth 7.5 times. Students could share memories of their favorite toys and discuss whether or not they always got the hot item such as the latest Barbie or the Cabbage Patch doll. We could find out what boy toys have been popular throughout the years. Many of the students and their mothers, grandmothers and an increasing number of males watch soap operas. A discussion about their popularity should bring out the characteristics that appeal to the American audience. Students can trace the types of show whose popularity has come and gone over the years. For instance, the cowboy-and-Indian shows have disappeared due largely to the popular culture belief that the portrayal of native Americans in those shows was insulting and politically incorrect. Students will learn that the media in other countries is not as complex and advanced as ours. The television shows are much different from ours. For instance, in Latin America, the melodrama is extremely popular. Brazil features marathon variety shows and a seemingly pointless program starring a blonde actress named XuXu who has set unprecedented records for capturing mass audiences.

Students will continue to make cultural connections in this manner – looking at authentic examples of a variety of topics, tapping into prior knowledge and making inferences about the impact of these topics on society and themselves. Again, our exploration of these topics will be tied into traditions revolving around preparing and eating food. The key attraction of the unit will be the recipes that students obtain from their families. The sharing of food represented by these recipes and the sharing of information contained in the cookbook articles will be the essential ingredients of the unit’s culminating activity, a publication party.

Hispanic Influence in America

Hispanics have always been an integral part of America’s history. During the Revolutionary War that freed the United States from England, General Bernardo de Galvez, Governor of the Louisiana Territory sent money, guns and other supplies to George Washington. Captain Jorge Farragut from the Spanish Island of Minorca fought with the United States in both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. More than 400,000 Hispanics served the U.S. during World War II, and about 25,000 served in the Persian Gulf War. The Gold Rush progressed because miners used mining techniques from Mexico, Peru, and Chile. The old cowboy legends of the Old West came almost entirely from the Hispanic Culture. Latinos in America have contributed to the field of medicine also. In 1959 Dr. Severo Ochoa won the Nobel Prize in Medicine and Physiology for his discovery of RNA one of the chemical building blocks of life. In 1986, Dr. Franklin Chang-Diaz was the first Hispanic astronaut in space followed by Sydney Gutierrez in 1993. Dr. Ellen Ochoa was the first Hispanic woman in space. Many Americans grew up with Hispanic entertainers such as Rita Moreno and Desi Arnaz. Moreno is the only artist to win all four major industry awards: Oscar, Emmy, Tony and Grammy. Arnaz introduced the “three camera” technique that is a staple of the industry.

Latin American food, clothing, music and vacation spots are very popular in this country, yet many students are unaware of this Latin influence. One of the first questions for students to explore is what are the Latin American countries? Most will mention Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Peru and Venezuela. But there are many more in South America, Central America and the Caribbean. So students will study a list of the Latin American countries as part of their Latin Persona assignment that is detailed in the “Classroom Activities” section of this unit. Because of their interest in pop music, most young people are familiar with some of the current faces in Latin pop culture such as Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, Gloria Estefan and Santana. Perhaps the class can identify and analyze the appeal of these Latin performers and predict the growth of this Latin influence in the United States. Pittsburgh has a very

small Latin American population, so our students do not readily recognize the rise in Latin American pop culture in the United States. The popularity of Latin entertainers has an impact on the way the millions of Latin immigrants in this country are seen. Because of the media blitz around the popular entertainers, many Americans associate Latin with sexy, sensual, glamorous. However, the Latin world is very impoverished and many countries face discrimination and repression by the military. Even though this unit is about the food aspect of pop culture, we will inevitably touch on other topics of pop culture that give insight into some of the ways that society forms its opinions of various groups.

Classroom Activities / Lesson Plans

Lesson One

I will start off this unit by initiating a casual discussion about food. Questions such as what is your favorite dinner, your favorite dessert, your favorite snack, will start the thinking process. I will share an explanation of my favorite foods and then talk about my family's food traditions that are carried out at every family gathering. As mentioned previously in this narrative, each person in my family has his or her specialty that they bring to the celebration. I will describe the dishes in mouth-watering detail. We will spend about ten minutes on this discussion. Then I will unveil the delicious puff pastry hot pepper and chicken turnovers for the students to sample. Students will be invited to share information about their favorite foods and some family traditions. Students can volunteer to bring in food samples during this week.

Lesson Two

Students will have ten minutes to draw a scene that captures a moment or event involving their family where food was important. I will provide markers and paper. Students do not have to be artists to do this. Stick figures and geometric shapes are fine. As a matter of fact, I expect many of the drawings to be quite funny. Each student will tape his/her picture to the chalkboard so that the rest of the class can discuss what they think is going on. My drawing will be that of me dropping a sweet potato pie as I am taking it from the oven. I will tell the story of "The Pie that Met an Untimely Death." This story-telling activity will model what I want the students to do. Students will then explain what is going on in their drawings. This is meant to be a fun, up-beat activity, so students will be encouraged to give us all the juicy details of what is happening in their drawings. Now they should be ready for their homework

assignment. The assignment asks the students to write a narrative account about the incident portrayed in their drawing. Since it is a story, something must *happen*. There must be a beginning, a middle, and an end, and the language should appeal to as many of the senses as possible. I will give them a copy of my “sweet potato pie” story to use as a model. We will create a rubric together by deciding what components and qualities the story must have to be considered an excellent piece. We will also discuss how the written version of the story differs from the oral version they just presented. Descriptive detail, good word choice, style and organization must replace body language, voice inflection and eye contact.

Lesson Three

During the next lesson, students will participate in a read around. First we will review the assignment and discuss what makes a story good. We will review the rubric we made as we discuss this. Each student will then read his/her story and receive peer feedback to help with the revision process. We will find something great in each story. Students will then have five minutes to write out their plan for revision. This plan should incorporate the suggestions given by both students and teacher.

While students are still in the read-around circle, I will share with them the idea that food preferences are for the most part determined by one’s culture. I will share the food facts mentioned earlier in this narrative including foods they find repulsive. Students will then receive a hand-out of this information to refer to later. Students will keep all hand-outs and assignments from this unit in a special folder.

Lesson Four

During the next lesson students will complete a one period research activity. I will explain that since we are learning about popular culture through our research on food, let’s find some fun facts about food from various cultures. They will find fun food facts from the *EatEthnic.com* website. This site has an abundance of interesting, unusual and amusing facts on cultural nutrition. Students will select an index card on which I have written two questions. They will write the answers to the questions on the back of the cards and cite the source. They will be advised not to share the information with other students because we will play a mini jeopardy game with the information during the next class. Students will rewrite the answers to the questions neatly and correctly on fresh index cards and tape them to the jeopardy board under the point value that they think the question should be worth. They will tape the

question cards on a separate board. One student will be the master/Mistress of Ceremonies/ judge. Students will pull numbers to designate the order in which they may take a turn at earning extra credit points by answering the questions correctly.. Students may not answer the question they researched. This activity should add to the fun students will have in learning about food and popular culture.

Here are sample questions that students will research. They cover many cultures. What is a *kudzu* and what is it traditionally used for? (*a perennial climbing leguminous vine that can grow a foot each day and produce tubers up to seven feet long and 450 pounds in weight. It has traditionally been used as a hangover remedy in China and may inhibit alcohol intake*) What is the first vegetable cultivated by humans, first grown over 10,000 years ago in Mexico? Give additional information about this vegetable. (*the pumpkin*). What is a Native Alaskan specialty traditionally made by burying it in a pit for weeks or months, and now made in plastic bags? It is fondly known as “stinky tail.” (*fermented beaver tail*) What food contains up to one-trillion bacteria and over three and a half million pounds are eaten annually in one country? (*That much cheese is eaten in the United States annually. Europe and parts of the Middle East enjoy cheese, but it is not a popular food throughout much of the rest of the world.*)

Lesson Five

Next, students will review several definitions of popular culture as stated earlier in this narrative. Once again students will select an index card with a topic and a website and/or a book/magazine/newspaper article title where they may find information. These topics will refer to American pop culture and will include the following: Barbie, Disneyland, rap music, blue jeans, soap operas, fast foods, advertisements, video games, gadgets. Students should examine the source written on the card, but they may look at other sources as well to find information on their topic. Students will have two class periods to write this brief report. They must cite their sources. They will share their information by creating a poster (using a *PowerPoint* slide) to hang in the class. Students will also give a brief oral presentation of the information.

Lesson Six

The Latin American Connection

Now that students have some information under their belts, I will present the Latin American connection. I will begin a discussion to see how much students know about Latin America and its influence within American culture. I will share the information mentioned earlier in this unit and then narrow the focus to food with a Latin influence. This assignment will be a model for what students will later complete based on their own family traditions.-

Students will look at a list of Latin American countries, Latin celebrations and Latin food facts. We will discuss them. Students will then select a country and a Latin American activity involving food. It may be a Latin holiday celebration or simply dinner. With this information, students will use their creativity to complete a persona activity. Students must become a Latin American character that they make up. They will write an autobiographical sketch of their persona and then a memory the character has that focuses on food. For instance, a student may pretend to be eighty-year-old Maria Gonzales who lives in Mexico City where her family consists of many grandchildren and great-grandchildren . They are very poor, but they enjoy life, especially during festive meals. Even at the age of eighty, Maria still cooks her famous dessert, arroz con dulce (rice pudding). Maria tells the audience about a family gathering after her great granddaughter's First Holy Communion where there is much celebrating with food and music. She recounts how everyone awaits the presentation of her dessert, which she always brings out last. Maria then passes around a paper that has a copy of her recipe and an explanation of its significance. The student may include a picture of the dessert or/and a picture of Maria on the paper with the recipe. Later, students will produce this type of page for the class cookbook they will make.

Lesson Seven

Now that students have completed several assignments and discussion sessions about food rituals in their own families and in other cultures, I will give the "cookbook" assignment. Because of the preliminary work they have completed, the students should be able to work independently on this section of the unit. I will pass out the assignment sheet that asks students to describe their favorite family occasion or activity involving food. They may attach the narrative account they wrote in response to the picture they drew earlier, or they may write a new account. This assignment requires that they interview a family member to get that person's thoughts on the activity and to get a recipe for one of the favorite foods served during the occasion described in the narrative. The assignment also requires each student to use the digital camera to take a picture of the family member who is providing the recipe, or a picture that represents their family in some way. Students may also bring a picture to school to scan it. Each student must then create a page like the one they did for the Latin persona assignment. This one should be much more creative since they now have experience in doing this activity. Completed pages will be critiqued by the class and approved for placement in the class cookbook.

Lesson Eight

Students will be given a list of tasks to complete the cookbook. Each student must select three of the most interesting food facts and pop culture facts they learned during this unit and type them to be included in the “Interesting Food and Pop Culture Facts” section of the cookbook. Students may include a drawing, picture or graphic with their entry. The class must select two editors to proofread the draft of the book and assemble it. Volunteers may submit drawings, pictures and designs to add character to the book. When the class approves the final draft. The book will be copied and bound.

Lesson Nine

Students will plan a publication party. They will design the committees to handle invitations, refreshments, decorations and scheduling. They will invite parents and staff. Students will bring in samples of the dishes in their cookbooks.

Appendix

District Communications Standards

The activities in this unit meet the following Communications Standards:

1. *All students use effective research and information management skills, including locating primary and secondary sources of information with traditional and emerging library technologies.* This is evident in the students’ use of internet as well as printed resources. Students also utilize primary sources when they conduct interviews to complete their cookbook pages.
2. *All students read and use a variety of techniques to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.* During this unit students will read articles from books, internet sites, magazines and pamphlets. They will participate in discussions, complete writing assignments, tap prior knowledge

as they talk about various cultures and make predictions about what they read to help make sense of the texts.

3. *All students respond orally and in writing to information and ideas gained by reading narrative and informational texts and use this information and ideas to make decisions and solve problems .* The assignments and activities in this unit require students to discuss topics about popular culture and to complete a variety of written assignments.
4. *All students write for a variety of purposes including to narrate, inform and persuade in all subject areas.* Students will complete written assignments that narrate an experience involving food. They will also write brief library reports about food rituals of various cultures..
5. *All students analyze and make critical judgments about all forms of communication, separating fact from opinion, recognizing propaganda, stereotypes , bias and recognizing inconsistencies and judging the validity of evidence.* Students will apply this standard as they read about and discuss the traditions of a variety of cultures.
6. *All students exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken instructions, asking and answering questions appropriately, and promoting effective group communications.* The activities in this unit require discussion and group work as they complete the cookbook.
7. *All students listen to and understand complex oral messages and identify the purpose, structure and use.* Students must apply this standard as they listen to classroom instructions about completing various assignments about food traditions.
8. *All students compose and make oral presentations for each academic area of study that are designed to inform persuade and describe.* Students will make oral presentations of their narrative accounts and, information about food facts, and their cookbook page.

New Standards Portfolio Assignments

Students will complete the following *New Standards Portfolio* pieces during this unit:

1. Students will write a narrative account about an experience involving a family food tradition.
2. Students will read informational texts and create a poster
3. Students will compose and deliver an oral presentation about Latin American traditions and about their page of the cookbook.
4. Students will write a genre piece when they complete the Latin persona piece.

5. Students will write a narrative procedure when they write the directions for the recipe they obtain for the class cookbook.
6. Students will demonstrate their ability to read a functional document when they make the item from the recipe for the class cookbook. They will take a picture of the finished product and attach it to the recipe.

List of Latin American and Caribbean Countries

<u>Central America</u>	<u>South America</u>	<u>North America</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>
• Belize	Argentina	Mexico	Antigua/Barbados
• Costa Rica	Bolivia		Aruba
• El Salvador	Brazil		Bahamas
• Guatemala	Chile		Cayman Islands
• Honduras	Colombia		Cuba
• Nicaragua	Ecuador	Dominica	
• Panama	French	Dominican Republic	
Guiana	Guyana	Grenada	
	Paraguay		Guadeloupe
	Peru		Haiti
	Suriname		Jamaica
	Uruguay		Martinique
	Venezuela		Puerto Rico
			St.Kitts and Nevis
			St. Lucia

St Vincent and the

Grenadines

Trinidad/Tobago

Virgin Islands

Model Narrative Account

Assignment: Tell the story of an incident or experience involving food at a family gathering. The gathering may be a celebration of some type or just Sunday dinner. Make sure your story has a beginning, a middle and an end. Use vivid descriptive details.

Example:

The Pies That Met an Untimely Death

I walked around to the back yard of my brother's house carrying a large foil pan with my famous special-occasion baked beans. No one had as yet figured out my secret recipe. I set the hot container on the long, food-laden table that had been constructed on the back yard deck for our family's Fourth of July annual celebration. Squeals of "Aunt Renee! Aunt Renee!" from my nieces and nephews brought a smile to my face as they gathered around my legs like a litter of bouncy puppies. I gave each of them a lollipop from the bag I had dangling from my arm. They always counted on me to have a treat for them.

I gave each of them a hug as I heard several adult voices asking with anticipation, "Are those the baked beans arriving?"

"Yes indeed," I replied proudly. "Now I'm going back to get the sweet potato pies."

I heard my sister say, "I'm first in line for the pie."

The pies were still in the oven. I decided to bring the beans over first in case everyone was ready to eat before the pies were done. I live just around the corner, so the split delivery was no problem.

As I entered my front door, the wonderful aroma of the pies was absolutely heavenly. Many other desserts would be on the dessert table at the cook-out, but everyone would want to get a piece of my sweet potato pie before it was gobbled up. I had four pies in the oven, two on each rack, not nearly enough for the sixty-plus people. That's what made the pies extra special.

I opened the oven door and peeked in. Yes, they were ready. The pies were in disposable foil pans, so they had to be placed on cookie sheets so that they could easily be removed from the oven. But I had only one aluminum cookie sheet, so the two pies on the top rack were on a tin foil sheet-cake pan that I handled very carefully. I reached in with my mitted hands and carefully grasped the flimsy sheet-cake pan, guiding it out of the hot oven. I almost reached the counter when the sheet-cake pan inexplicably twisted – all on its own, and the pies slid off. Splat! Top down onto the floor!

I was horrified. “Oh no-o-o!” I yelled. All that time, energy and expensive ingredients gone to waste. I could have cried. I closed the oven door so that I could clean up the mess. If only the pies had landed face up. Cleaning up the delectable smelling mess was agony. After many scoops from floor to trash bag, I was finished.

I leaned against the counter with a sigh and then realized that I could still smell the pies along with the smell of the hot oven, a burning hot oven! “Oh No!” I cried once again as I snatched the oven door open. I was greeted with a gentle mist of smoke. The pies were black. While I was cleaning up the first accident, I forgot that the two other pies were still in the oven.

The cook-out went on as usual, but the question of the day was, “Where is the sweet potato pie?”

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