



Foodways at Colonial London Town

Umble Pie Anyone? Why We Eat What We Do – Culturally Acceptable Foods

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How does culture affect the foods we eat?

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Grade Level: Elementary (Grade 4/5)

COMMON CORE STATE 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.4.3](#)

Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1](#)

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.3](#)

Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2.b](#)

Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.9](#)

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

MARYLAND CONTENT STANDARDS: Define how culture influences people.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- Determine how our culture influences the foods that we choose to eat.
- Consider how socially acceptable foods have changed from the colonial period.

MATERIALS:

- RS#01: Taboo Foods – How Culture Defines What We Don't Eat
- RS#02: Ingredients Then and Now

PROCEDURE:

1. Begin a discussion with the entire class about the cultural significance of food.
 - Ask students, "We all know that food is essential to keeping humans alive and healthy. But, apart from its role in physical health, why is food important?"



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- Explain that food is a very important part of our lives and also our identity. Food is related to who we are and how we feel about ourselves. The foods we eat can distinguish us from other cultural groups.
 - Food can also make people feel very connected to a memory. Ask the students if they remember a particular smell coming from a kitchen. When a food connects us to a happy time in our lives or memory, they are often times called “comfort foods” because they bring us comfort and joy.
 - Food is also a way of showing that you belong to a group. Ask, “Is there a dish that is served in your families only at a holiday time or on special occasions?”
2. Introduce the concept of variations in diets and food preparation among different cultures. Explain that many cultures around the world use similar ingredients but the finished dishes are very different. When you say “yummm” you are saying, “Yes! This is me! This is very good!” When you say, “ewww... yuck,” you are basically saying “No! This is not me, this is unfamiliar.”
 3. Distribute RS#01: Taboo Foods – How Culture Defines What We Don’t Eat. First have students complete the survey independently, and then go through the answers as a class.
 - Ask students why they would or would not eat the foods listed. Create a climate in which students feel free to respond (perhaps by including in the list an unusual thing you have eaten and can talk about).
 - Discuss patterns that start to emerge. Ask if they can see any patterns or categories of things we tend not to eat.
 - Did most people choose to never eat organs or the “innards” of an animal? What about animals that we typically think of as pets in America, such as cats, dogs and horses?
 - Ask students why they had the reactions they did? Where did they learn this?
 4. Explain that all parts of an animal are equally digestible; meaning they all can be eaten. But, the culture we live in make us believe that certain foods should not be eaten. In our general American culture, oftentimes raw meats, brains, blood, or animals that are typically pets are considered not to be food. But there are even variations within our national culture. For some in our country, eating “roadkill,” such as opossum or raccoon, is perfectly acceptable, while others do not consider those items to be food at all.
 5. Explain that food taboos and culturally acceptable foods are powerful and can affect our bodily reactions. For example have you or someone you know gagged or vomited after eating a food you believed was taboo? Food taboos are so strong because they usually have a reason or rationale as to why you shouldn’t eat a certain food.
 6. Distribute RS#02: Ingredients Then and Now. Have students browse the *Colonial Cookbook* recipes (Chapters I-III), and list three ingredients that are unfamiliar. Using Internet and/or print resources, have students complete the table for each of the three ingredients. This activity will demonstrate that even though a dish or an ingredient may not be common in our households, it is oftentimes still eaten in many other cultures and countries. Students may wish to use <http://www.Foodtimeline.org>.



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<http://www.cooks.com>, or <http://www.allrecipes.com> to find recipes and learn more about the dishes.

TECHNOLOGY:

- The Cultural Food Taboos of the United States
<http://cooking-recipes-food.com/the-cultural-food-taboos-of-the-united-states/>
- Food Time Line <http://www.foodtimeline.org/>

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION:

- One of the easiest ways to differentiate this lesson would be to incorporate more teacher modeling. Teachers may complete Ingredient #1 as a class on RS#02: Ingredients Then and Now.
- If students are not familiar with primary source analysis, it is highly recommended that the teacher work directly with students, especially during the time that the students need to read the recipes.
- Vocabulary might also be a concern. Words that might be difficult for students to comprehend can be replaced with synonyms within the documents, or you can provide a glossary for the students along with the documents that they need to complete the lesson.
- Scale the number of recipes and ingredients researched depending on ability level. Students may also be asked to find images of the ingredients and/or cooked dishes.

ASSESSMENT: Students can present what they have learned about one of their selected ingredients to the class using some form of digital presentation software, such as PowerPoint or Prezi. Each presentation should consist of four slides:

- 1) The name of the ingredient and what it means
- 2) How the ingredient was used in colonial times
- 3) How modern Americans think of and/or use the ingredient
- 4) An example of how another modern culture uses the ingredient



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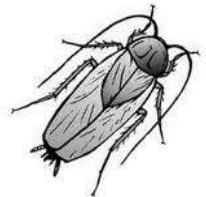
Resource Sheet #01

Taboo Foods – How Culture Defines What We Don't Eat

Following each food, indicate with an X how likely you would be to eat that food.



	Sure!	Only if I had to.	Never!
1. horse			
2. cow			
3. cat			
4. sea slug			
5. brains			
6. dog			
7. tripe (cow intestines)			
8. raw fish			
9. dolphin			
10. kangaroo			
11. monkey			
12. insects			
13. blood or blood sausage			
14. snake			
15. opossum			
16. cheese with worms in it			
17. potted meat			
18. hedge hog			
19. tongue			
20. Kidneys			
21. shark fin			
22. intestines			
23. whales			
24. eyeballs			
25. pork			





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Resource Sheet #02

Ingredients Then and Now

Directions: Browse through the *Colonial London Town Cookbook* recipes in Chapters I-III. Find three ingredients that are unfamiliar to you, and research them to complete the table below.

	Ingredient #1:	Ingredient #2:	Ingredient #3:
What is it?			
In what recipe was it used? How?			
What social class ate it? What does that tell us about how desirable the ingredient was in colonial times?			
How do Americans today feel about this food?			
What evidence can you find of this food being eaten anywhere in the world today? Who eats it? How?			