

name \_\_\_\_\_

## Time Frame

2-3 class periods

## Overview

Students will learn about geographic, economic, human and cultural influences on food choices around the world and conduct research to learn about the influences behind an international recipe.

## Objectives

- Research information about a particular country.
- Identify the geographic, economic and/or cultural influences behind a dish from the country they have chosen.
- Research and calculate costs to prepare and serve their dish at a restaurant.
- Write a description of their dish for an imaginary restaurant menu.

## Materials

- “Where in the World?” activity sheet (reproduce and cut out and separate country cards and food cards)
- “Country Research Log” activity sheet (one per student)
- International cookbooks
- Access to the Internet
- Art materials
- Calculators



## Lesson Background

Food plays an important role in our daily lives. Without it, we cannot survive or have the energy to live, work or play. But food is more than just a survival tool. The foods we eat can tell a story about who we are, where we live and what we believe.

Many factors influence our food choices, including history, geography, economics and cultural traditions. In various parts of the world, food choices can depend on factors such as:

- Food availability/natural resources
- Climate
- Religious/cultural beliefs
- Movement of people
- Economics

The availability of food is a key factor in the diets of many places around the world. For example, many areas in Asia developed a cuisine that was centered on rice, because it grows well there. Tropical cultures developed family food patterns based around fruits and vegetables that grew in abundance. Here in the U.S., seafood is part of many dishes that hail from New England and Seattle, where fish are plentiful.

Climate is another influential factor in shaping dishes around the world. For example, Greek people use many fruits, vegetables and olive oil in their cooking. That is because Greece has a Mediterranean climate, meaning hot, dry summers and mild, rainy winters. Crops like wheat, olives, nuts, grapes, fruit and vegetables grow really well in this type of climate. Most Indian dishes are spicy because “spicy” plants grow well in the hot and humid climate of India. In addition, eating spicy foods can actually make us feel cooler. Australia and New Zealand are famous for their delicious lamb. That is because sheep need lots of fresh grass for food. Grasses grow well in cooler areas that have plenty of rainfall throughout the year.

Religious and cultural beliefs also influence food choices. Foods that are common for one country or culture may not be acceptable in other areas. The Japanese, for example, prefer eating their fish raw, while the English prefer it in a “fish’n’chips” combination. Some religions have laws stating which food can be eaten at which times of the year or foods that are forbidden to be eaten altogether. Kosher Jewish people, for example, are forbidden to eat pork and many types of seafood. Some Europeans would not eat an ear of corn, because they consider it food for hogs and other animals. In the United States, we don’t normally eat insects, but many other cultures regard them as preferred foods. Culture can also dictate the times to eat and what to eat at certain meals.

The movement of people can also influence dietary choices. Places with large immigrant populations often see evidence of the home country/culture in local cuisine, restaurants and the food available in local supermarkets.

Finally, economics can play a factor in food choices. For example, those who live in developing nations might not choose dishes that use expensive ingredients.

## Answers to Where in the World

- **Huevos Rancheros** - Mexico
- **Soufflé** - France
- **Quiche Lorraine** - Germany
- **Frittata** - Spain
- **Egg Drop Soup** - China
- **Tamagoyaki** - Japan
- **Matzo Brei** - Israel
- **M'hanncha** - Morocco
- **Vasilopita** - Greece
- **Coconut Bread** - Jamaica
- **Pan Potatoes with Egg** - India
- **Eggs Drumkilbo** - Britain
- **Spaghetti Frittata** - Italy
- **KooKoo** - Iran
- **Pavlova** - Australia

## Engage (20-30 minutes)

1. Divide students into two groups. Randomly distribute the food cards from the “Where in the World?” activity sheet to one group and distribute the country cards from the same activity sheet to the other group.
2. Explain that the food cards represent different recipes made with eggs and the country cards represent the countries where those dishes originate. Students’ task is to try to find the person/card from the opposite group that matches their card. If they have a food card, they must find their food’s country of origin. If they have a country card, they must find the food from their country.

3. Give students five minutes to try to find their partners. If students are having trouble, they can research online to find their food's origin.
4. When all students have found a partner, review the answers (see background information) to determine if the matches are correct. Then, ask students what strategies they used to find their partners. Ask students what they know about the ingredients or preparation methods of the egg dishes on the cards. What story can these foods tell us about the countries from which they originate?
5. Write the following questions on the board: What factors determine the recipes/dishes that originate in a particular country? Guide students to think about geographic, economic, cultural and human factors. Ask each pair to list as many answers as they can.
6. List answers on the board or a flip chart. Possible answers include:
  - **Geographic** - natural resources, food availability, climate
  - **Economic** - ingredients people can afford, trade, need for preservation
  - **Human** - passed down from previous generation, likes vs. dislikes, movement
  - **Cultural** - religious traditions or restrictions, ethnic traditions and customs
7. Have students brainstorm examples for each factor. See examples from the background information to help spur thinking.

## Explore (45-60 minutes)

8. Distribute the "Country Research Log" activity sheet.
9. Ask partners from the introductory exercise to select a country and research its climate, location, natural resources, crops and cultural/religious traditions. Encourage students to cover a wide range of continents and cultures with their choices. They should record their research on the Research Log.
10. Then, ask students to imagine that an international restaurant is opening in your town. They must select a dish that will represent the country they have researched as part of the menu. Allow students to look through international cookbooks, or they can look online to find a recipe/dish that is native to the country they have researched.
11. Once students find a recipe, direct them to list the ingredients and describe the dish and cooking methods on their Research Log.

## Explain (15-25 minutes)

12. Challenge each pair to analyze the research they have collected and the recipe they have selected to identify possible reasons why their dish is native to their country of choice. Have them list their reasons, evidence and sources on their Research Log.

## Elaborate (30-45 minutes, possible time outside of class to research food costs)

13. Explain that the next part of their task is to figure out how much the restaurant should charge customers for their dish. In order to do this, challenge each pair to do the following:
- Predict how much it would cost in American dollars to prepare their dish for one person.
  - Choose one supermarket to use as a source. Then, research the cost of each ingredient on their list by using the supermarket's online site or visiting the store.
  - Determine how much it would cost to use that ingredient to prepare the dish for one person. Since most recipes are written with multiple servings in mind, they must first determine how much of each ingredient would be used for one serving. For example, if the recipe calls for two cups of milk and it makes four servings, they will need to identify the cost of two cups of milk and then divide by four.
  - Once they have determined how much the dish would cost to make, they must determine how much the restaurant should charge for it. For this scenario, ask students to imagine that the food cost is 30% of what the restaurant will actually charge. You may want to talk with students about why restaurants must charge more than they pay for food. For example, restaurant owners must pay rent, salaries, cost of furniture and other supplies, advertising, printing and make a profit.
  - Give each pair a calculator and ample time to do their calculations.

## Evaluate (30 minutes)

Finally, challenge students to create and illustrate a one-page menu entry that features their dish and includes its ingredients; its cooking methods; its geographic, cultural, or economic influences; its cost; and why it is a good dish to represent their country at the international restaurant. Encourage students to use descriptive words that would make diners want to order the dish.

## Standards

### CCSS ELA Standards

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W7-9.2** - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization and analysis of content.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W7-9.4** - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W7-9.7** - Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W7-9.9** - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL4-6.1** - Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL4-6.4** - Present information, findings and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

### CCSS Math Standards

- **CCSS.Math.Content.4.NBT.B.4** - Fluently add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm.
- **CCSS.Math.Content.4.MD.2** - Use the four operations to solve word problems involving distances, intervals of time, liquid volumes, masses of objects and money, including problems involving simple fractions or decimals and problems that require expressing measurements given in a larger unit in terms of a smaller unit. Represent measurement quantities using diagrams such as number line diagrams that feature a measurement scale.





# A World of Food Choices

- **CCSS.Math.Content.5.NBT.7.7** - Add, subtract, multiply and divide decimals to hundredths, using concrete models or drawings and strategies based on place value, properties of operations and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction; relate the strategy to a written method and explain the reasoning used.
- **CCSS.Math.Content.5.MD.A.1** - Convert among different-sized standard measurement units within a given measurement system (e.g., convert 5 cm to 0.05 m) and use these conversions in solving multi-step, real world problems.

## National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (NCSS)

### Theme 1: Culture (Early Grades)

- Learners will understand:
  - How cultural beliefs, behaviors and values allow human groups to solve the problems of daily living.
- Learners will be able to:
  - Ask and find answers to questions related to culture in the contexts of school, community, state and region.
  - Explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways various cultural groups meet similar needs and concerns.

### Theme 3: People, Places and Environments (Early Grades)

- Learners will understand:
  - Benefits and problems resulting from the discovery and use of resources.

### Theme 7: Production, Distribution and Consumption

- Learners will understand:
  - The characteristics and function of money and its uses.
- Learners will be able to:
  - Ask and find answers to questions about the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services in the school and community.



## Where in the World Food Cards

Huevos Rancheros	Soufflé	Quiche Lorraine
Frittata	Egg Drop Soup	Tamagoyaki
Matzo Brei	M'hanncha (Snake cake)	Vasilopita
Coconut Bread	Parsi Potatoes with Egg	Eggs Drumkilbo
Spaghetti Frittata	Kookoo	Pavlova



## Where in the World Country Cards

Australia	Spain	Japan
Britain	Iran	Italy
Greece	Morocco	France
Jamaica	China	Mexico
Germany	Israel	India

## Country Research Log



Our country is: \_\_\_\_\_

It is located on the continent of: \_\_\_\_\_

Its climate is: \_\_\_\_\_

Natural resources include: \_\_\_\_\_

Its main crops are: \_\_\_\_\_

Some cultural traditions are: \_\_\_\_\_

Some religious traditions are: \_\_\_\_\_

A dish/recipe that originates there is: \_\_\_\_\_

The dish can be described as: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Ingredients and cooking methods include: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why this dish originates in our country include: (include any geographic, economic, human, cultural, religious reasons): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

To prepare this dish for one person would cost: (include costs/calculations below): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If the cost for one person were 30% of what a restaurant would charge, the restaurant would charge: (include costs/calculations below): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

