
TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT

A Photographic Essay on North Country Food Traditions -



GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT is a photographic essay about a variety of significant ways that food and food-related traditions and customs help us to say who we are and what is important to us. The exhibit explores a variety of old and new customs related to producing, preparing, preserving, and consuming food in our daily lives. We long remember Mom's special desserts, certain dishes brought out for traditional family celebrations, or favorite neighborhood bakeries, diners, or markets with which we associate distinctive tastes and people. An uncle's help with a childhood garden, cleaning the day's catch of fish at Grandpa's camp, backyard barbecues with neighbors, and family reunion picnics have helped define each of us. **GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT** reflects the rich diversity of cultural traditions in our region and shows how expressive and artistic so many of our customs are in something so basic as the food we eat.



A Production of TAUNY (Traditional Arts in Upstate New York)

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: AN INTRODUCTION

This Teacher Resource Guide is designed to explore in-depth the cultural concepts and relationships presented in **GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT**. Through observation, discussion, and hands-on activities, students will be given opportunities to enhance their understanding of traditional culture and its role not only in the lives of others, but also in their own lives. Included here are a range of suggested activities which teachers may select and adapt to the needs and abilities of their students. All inserts may be photo-copied for distribution to students. The following are short descriptions of the activities.

1. **Identification of Terms and Concepts:** Provide students with a working vocabulary of terms which they should be familiar with before viewing the exhibit and completing the activities.

2. **Gallery Hunt:** This activity focuses on language arts, reading, and observational skills by asking students to find the answers to a series of questions in the exhibit's text and photographs. A copy of "The Story of the Plate" (Firman and Maltby, 1918: 2-9) is appended to the guide.

3. **Classroom Activities:** The classroom activities, which target students' oral, written, and interactive skills, are designed to explore in greater depth ideas introduced in the exhibit. Included here are projects on interviewing, collecting family recipes, and an exploration of the ritual and symbolic nature of foods through the study of the Passover Seder tradition.

4. **Discussion Questions:** These questions are intended to encourage students to relate some of the topics explored in the exhibit to their own experiences and also to broaden students' understanding of the role of foodways traditions as reflections of themselves and their culture. The questions are not presented in any fixed order. Select the questions suitable for your grade level.

5. **Suggested Activities:** A list of possible projects that may be organized locally to complement the exhibit and the educational programming offered here.

6. **Suggested Readings:** A selection of materials for both teachers and students who wish to read more about the subjects raised in this exhibit. See also collections of folk tales for stories on or about food and foodways.

7. **Home Cooking: The Folk Art of Good Food Radio Series:** Ten-minute taped interviews covering a range of traditional food events will be appended to the guide.


8. **Evaluation Form:** Please complete and return the evaluation form to us at TAUNY. We welcome your comments and suggestions.


FOLK ARTS IN EDUCATION: A VALUABLE PARTNERSHIP


Folk arts—also known as traditional arts—are the traditional artistic expressions of closely knit groups. They include a wide range of expressions such as music, song, story, customs, beliefs, celebrations, games, crafts, and food. Traditional arts are transmitted informally, by word of mouth or by example within a group. Folk arts—and the broader discipline of folkloristics—provide a crucial and accessible resource for the classroom teacher seeking to realize one of the primary goals of education: the preparation of students to understand, live in, and contribute positively to their culture.


Folk and traditional arts embody and reflect community aesthetics, identity, and values. Every student brings into the classroom a valuable body of knowledge that includes their traditional arts and culture. Education that incorporates folk arts emphasizes the connections between students' lives and the larger communities in which they live and provides a means of incorporating community resources into the curriculum. By their very nature, folk arts focus on multi-generational and multi-cultural learning. Incorporating traditional arts and artists into the curriculum has proven effective for teaching language arts, cultural literacy, problem solving, creative thinking, arts and music, math and science. On a more personal level, the study of folk arts has the potential to enhance students' self-awareness and self-esteem and thus promote greater understanding and tolerance of the world in which they live.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

 Students will develop a respect for, and appreciation of, the diversity of peoples and cultures in their region and beyond.

 Students will develop an awareness of the symbolic and aesthetic components of cultural expressions.

 Students will gain an understanding of the role of traditional culture in supporting and maintaining group identity and values.

 Students will enhance their interpersonal and communication skills by participating in discussions, interviews,
and related activities involving one another and members of their families and communities.

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Aesthetics: Ideas related to the issues of beauty or artistic merit in the forms we produce.

Community: A group of people who identify with each other and who participate together in a variety of traditional events. Although we think of community as a particular place, it is not necessarily linked to a geographical location.

Culture: A whole way of life of a group or society including their knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, manners, and all other products of human work and thought.

Ethnicity: Those traditions associated with and enacted by members of an ethnic group, based upon national or racial origins. Ethnicity is expressed through customs, foodways, dress, language, and other traditions.

Folk Group: A folk group may consist of members of a family, community, occupation, religion, or ethnic group, or may be made up of friends or students. Folklorists are interested in the expressive means used by the members of such groups to communicate their sense of identity with each other. People are members of a number of folk groups simultaneously.

Foodways: The study of the traditional methods of gathering, preparing, presenting, and consuming food. Also looks at the social uses of food, food customs, and the symbolic importance of certain kinds of food.

Haggadah (ha/-gä-dah): A book which tells the story of how the children of Israel (Israelites), who later became the Jewish people were freed from slavery in Egypt. Haggadah means “to tell” and it is read during the meal on the first and second nights of Passover.

Matzoh (mö/t-so-): The unleavened bread eaten during the Passover holiday.

Passover: A Jewish holiday commemorating the liberation of the Jews from enslavement by the Egyptian Pharaoh. Passover is celebrated for eight days during which special foods are eaten.

Ritual: A repeated act or series of acts that is performed the same way each time according to religious and/or social custom.

Seder (sa/-der): The meal served on the first, and sometimes second, night of Passover during which the story of Passover is told and foods symbolizing the Jewish experience in Egypt are eaten. Seder means “order” and refers to the order of the meal.

Symbol: Something which stands for something else, especially a material object used to represent something intangible such as the bald eagle symbolizing freedom or a wedding band symbolizing marriage and commitment.

Tradition: Skills and knowledge passed down by word of mouth or example are considered traditional. Folklore is traditional culture.

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: GALLERY HUNT

1. As you go through the exhibit make a list of the various ethnic groups identified in the exhibit. Circle the group or groups of which you are a member.

2. Traditional cooks take pride in not only how something tastes, but also how it looks when served. Look at the photographs. Which foods do you think look good? Which ones do you think look bad? Why?

3. In a couple of photographs baked goods have been made to look like vegetation. Write down the name of one (1) of the types of vegetation.

4. How much does the large pumpkin pictured in this exhibit weigh?_____

How much does the wheel of cheddar cheese weigh?_____

How many wheels of cheddar cheese would it take to equal the weight of the pumpkin?_____

5. List two (2) foods gathered from the wild. List foods you yourself have gathered from the wild.

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: GALLERY HUNT ACTIVITY



Find the plate pictured above in the exhibit. Read the label and write down the holiday the table is set for.

This china pattern is called Blue Willow. There is a story told in the picture on the plate. Look closely at the plate. Look for the people going across the bridge and for the doves flying above them. What else can you see on the plate?

When you return to your classroom, write your own story about the picture on the plate. Then ask your teacher to tell you “The Story of the Plate.”

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

A. The Language of Food:

Gastronomy (ga-str/on-o-me) means the art or science of good food.

Make a list of all the words you can make from the letters in **gastronomy**.

Lots of sayings include references to food. See how many you know. Fill in the blanks to the sayings listed below:

1. Don't cry over spilt _____.
2. It's as flat as a _____.
3. They are like two _____ in a pod.
4. It's a piece of _____.
5. An _____ a day keeps the doctor away.
6. Life is a bowl full of _____.
7. Pretty please with _____ on top.
8. You can't have your _____ and eat it too.

Below is a list of what these expressions mean. Read the meanings. Match the sayings to their meanings by putting the number of the saying by its meaning.

Meanings:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| A. You can't have everything you want. | _____ |
| B. You can't worry about what's done and past. | _____ |
| C. An extra special way of asking for something. | _____ |
| D. Eating good foods will keep you healthy. | _____ |
| E. A task that is simple to do. | _____ |
| F. Something that has no hills or bumps. | _____ |
| G. Two people who look or act the same. | _____ |
| H. A care free, happy life. | _____ |
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GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

B. Interviews and Oral Histories:

Ask a parent, grandparent, or an older member of your community to tell you what he or she knows or remembers about food traditions from his or her childhood. Start by asking the questions listed below. Then make up some questions of your own. Write down his or her answers. Compare them to your own experience.

Your name: _____ Age: _____

Birthplace: _____ Current Residence: _____

Name of person interviewed: _____ Age: _____

Birthplace: _____ Current Residence: _____

1. What was considered junk food when you were my age? How much did it cost?

2. What foods were usually eaten at a typical meal?

3. What foods did you make at home rather than buy at the store?

4. What kinds of food would you have at your birthday party?

5. What was your favorite food as a child? And now?

Try to make up some questions of your own.



Did any of their answers surprise you? Compare them to your own experiences.

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

C. Collecting Family Recipes

Ask an older member of your family to tell you about some traditional recipes which have been handed down from one generation to the next. Pick one of the recipes and fill in the form below.

Your Name: _____

Name of Person Interviewed: _____

Place of Birth: _____ Current Residence: _____

How are you related to this person? _____



NAME OF RECIPE: _____

Cultural Origin Associated with Recipe: _____

LIST OF INGREDIENTS:

DIRECTIONS: _____

Where did the recipe come from?

Is this food made any day or on special occasions only?

Why do you think this recipe been handed down in your family?

Why did you choose this recipe?

Who makes this recipe now? Tell us about the cook or baker.



Now you and your classmates can assemble a cookbook with your family recipes. Include a paragraph which describes the cook who prepares it and why you chose the recipe.

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

D. Ritual and Symbolic Foods: A Passover Seder

Passover is a Jewish holiday celebrating the freeing of the Israelites from slavery. Long ago—thousands of years ago—the Jews were enslaved by the Egyptian Pharaoh who treated them very badly. According to Jewish tradition, God sent Moses and his brother Aaron to plead with the Pharaoh to let the Jews go free. He refused and as punishment God made the Egyptian people suffer through diseases and storms and even thousands of frogs jumping everywhere. He sent nine different plagues, but still the Pharaoh refused to let the Jews go free. The tenth and final plague God sent was that every first born male child in every family would be killed if Pharaoh did not release the Jews. As the story goes, God told Jewish families to mark their doorway with a special sign so that the angel of death would **pass over** their homes and spare their sons. Pharaoh himself was a first born child and fearing for his own life, he gave in and freed the Jews from slavery and ordered them to leave Egypt. Because the Jews had to leave quickly, the bread they were making did not have time to rise before being baked. As a result, the bread came out flat and crisp like a cracker. They called it **matzoh**. Every year on the anniversary of their liberation, Jewish families all around the world celebrate **Passover, the festival of freedom**, for eight days. On the first and second nights of **Passover**, a special meal called a **Seder** is served, except in Israel where the **Seder** is held on the first night only. The **Seder** meal follows the same order each time. The **Haggadah**, which tells the story of the exodus of the Jews from Egypt, is read during the **Seder**. The centerpiece of the **Seder** meal is the **Seder plate** on which special foods symbolizing the Jewish experience in Egypt are placed. And instead of bread, **matzoh**, called the bread of affliction, is eaten for the eight days of Passover.

The Seder Plate:



1. A Seder plate features special foods including a bone, an egg, a sprig of parsley, bitter herbs such as horseradish, and a mixture of chopped apples and nuts called **charoset (har-o-set)**. Also on the **Seder** table are 3 pieces of matzoh and a bowl of salt water. Identify the special foods on the Seder plate.

2. The special foods symbolize the Jewish experience in Egypt. Read each passage and write down the name of the food item used to

symbolize it.

A. A symbol of the clay or mortar used by the Jewish slaves in Egypt to construct buildings for the Pharaoh. _____

B. This food symbolizes their bitter and cruel treatment.

C. This food symbolizes the new growth of plants and renewal. _____

It is dipped in salt water before it is eaten. What do you think the salt water represents? _____

D. This food symbolizes the lamb eaten at the first Passover meal. _____

E. This food symbolizes life. _____

3. What do you think the Jewish people are reminded of by eating matzoh during Passover?

4. Matzoh is one kind of symbolic bread. Can you think of any other kinds of symbolic breads or breads that are eaten on special occasions?

5. Many of the foods on the Seder plate are ones we might eat every day. What do you think makes them special on this day?

6. The Seder plate includes an egg. What is another holiday which includes eggs? Describe how eggs fit into this other celebration.

Do these eggs have a special meaning?

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: EVALUATION

Subject(s) Taught: _____

Grade Level: _____

Please check which activities you used:

- ☐ Gallery Hunt
- ☐ The Language of Food
- ☐ Interviews and Oral Histories
- ☐ Collecting Family Recipes
- ☐ Ritual and Symbolic Foods: A Passover Seder
- ☐ Discussion Questions

Which ones? _____

- ☐ Suggested Activities

Which ones? _____

Which activities were most useful for your grade level and subject matter taught?

Which were least useful?

Please make any comments or suggestions for improving the activities or the Teacher Resource Guide in general:

Please suggest other subject areas you would like to see **TAUNY** develop:

Return forms with the Guide or mail to TAUNY, P.O. Box 665, Canton, NY 13617

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the aesthetics of food presentation. Refer to the gallery hunt and ask students to discuss their choices of which foods looked good and which ones looked bad. Here students will gain an understanding of their own aesthetic standards.
2. Discuss the meaning of the expression “I made it from scratch.” What does it mean and why do we place a value on homemade products?
3. Which food events pictured in the exhibit have you participated in? Discuss the food served at special occasions celebrated by your family or community. How did the foods get chosen?
4. The section on Children and Food Customs depicts children’s roles in food preparation and consumption. Ask students to discuss their own experiences tending a garden, preserving produce, picking berries, making jam, hunting or fishing, etc. What do they like about participating in these activities?
5. The exhibit features a Thanksgiving dinner celebration. Ask the students to make a list of the foods served at their Thanksgiving dinner. Discuss the similarities and differences. Why do we have the same kinds of food every year? Discuss Thanksgiving and other harvest festivals.
6. A section of the exhibit discusses the relationship between food and ethnic identity. Review the groups mentioned in the exhibit. Ask students to identify which group(s) they belong to and what foods they associate with that group(s).
7. Ask students to list the expressions used by parents to encourage them to eat food they don’t like. Have students ask their parents the same question. Compare the responses. Are there traditional expressions within the family?
8. The exhibit features a special section entitled “Men’s Food Customs.” Discuss why men were singled out as a group and the relationship of gender roles to food gathering, preparation, presentation, and consumption. Why isn’t there a single panel devoted to women’s food customs?
9. Now that the students have viewed the exhibit and completed the activities, discuss the premise of the exhibit that food traditions “help us say who we are and what is important to us.”

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Ask your local museum educator or curator (if one is not available ask an individual with a collection of old kitchen utensils) to bring to the classroom a selection of historical implements used to prepare food such as an apple peeler, cherry pitter, cider press, or butter churn. Create a small display. Ask students to identify the objects by creating a “whatsit” game. Discuss how the objects were used. Reproductions of old mail order catalogues are useful references for exploring the range of kitchen utensils and their cost. Compare to today’s utensils.
2. Invite family or community members to come into the classroom to discuss and, if possible, prepare a food item which is part of their tradition. Have the children prepare questions to ask the visitor about his or her foodways traditions.
3. Prepare an ethnic meal featuring foods from various cultural groups represented in the classroom. Have the students research the range of traditional expressions practiced by the ethnic groups.
4. Contact a member of the local Jewish community and ask her or him to share memories of Passover. Prepare a model Passover Seder for the children and tell the story of Passover, eating the symbolic foods as they are mentioned in the text.
5. Conduct a workshop on egg decorating. Look at patterns and techniques associated with different countries and cultures.
6. Visit a sugar bush. Help gather sap and watch it turn into syrup. Collect recipes using maple syrup. Prepare the same food item using cane sugar and maple syrup. Compare the taste and texture.
7. Create a harvest display in your classroom or on the school grounds. Organize a scarecrow making event and invite a local farmer or gardener to talk about the function of scarecrows. Have the students document other examples of harvest figures or seasonal yard art in their communities. Prepare a display. Discuss why people decorate their yards.

GOOD FOOD, SERVED RIGHT: SUGGESTED READINGS FOR STUDENTS

Burns, Diane. *Sugaring Season: Making Maple Syrup*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 1990.

Cuyler, Margery. *The All-Around Pumpkin Book*. Holt & Co., 1980. (4-6)

Lasky, Kathryn. *Sugaring Time*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1983.

Paterson, Diane. *Eat!* Dial Press, 1975.

Penner, Lucille Recht. *Eating the Plates: A Pilgrim Book of Food and Manners*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1991.

Saypol, Judyth Robbins and Madeline Wikler. *My Very Own Haggadah*. Revised ed. Rockville, MD: Kar-Ben Copies, Inc., 1983.

Walker, Barbara Muhs. *The Little House Cookbook; Frontier Foods from Laura Ingalls Wilder's Classic Stories*. Harper & Row, 1979. (5 & up)

SUGGESTED READINGS FOR TEACHERS

Belanus, Betty J. *Folklore in the Classroom*. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1986. (Available from the Bureau, 140 North Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204. 317-232-2537. \$5)

Brown, Linda Keller and Kay Mussell, eds. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984.

Camp, Charles. *American Foodways: What, When, Why and How We Eat in America*. Little Rock, AR: August House, 1989.

Folk Arts in the Classroom: Changing the Relationship between Schools and Communities. A Report from the National Roundtable on Folk Arts in the Classrooms, 1993. (Available from Bank Street/City Lore Center for Folk Arts in Education, Bank Street College of Education, 610 W. 112th Street, New York, NY 10025. 212-875-4492. Contact: Nina Jaffe.)

Humphrey, Theodore C. and Lin T. Humphrey, eds. *"We Gather Together": Food and Festival in American Life*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1988. (See Sharon Sherman, "The Passover Seder: Ritual Dynamics, Foodways, and Family Folklore." 27-42.

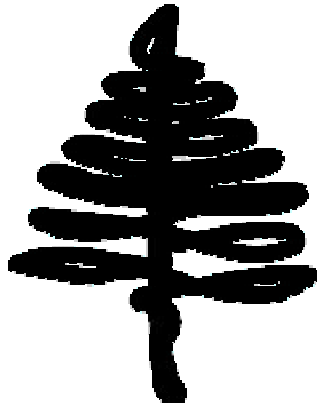
New York Folklore. Special Issue: Folk Arts in Education. 13/#3-4 (1987): 1-48.

Zeitlin, Steven J., Amy J. Kotkin, and Holly Cutting Baker. *A Celebration of American Family Folklore*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982.

CREDITS:

Good Food, Served Right Teacher Resource Guide was developed by Melissa Ladenheim, Staff Folklorist, Traditional Arts in Upstate New York. This project was supported by Kraft Foods, Inc. and by the Folk & Traditional Arts Program at the National Endowment for the Arts.

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TAUNY (Traditional Arts in Upstate New York) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to serving the public's understanding and appreciation of folk life and folk arts in northern New York State. **TAUNY** is located at 13 West Street, P.O. Box 665, Canton, NY 13617. Phone (315) 385-4289.

