

Food for thought



Lesson Plan

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| Lesson title | Food for thought |
| Learning objective | Pupils learn the difference between plants (specifically food plants) consumed in an ordinary way and those consumed during a ritual or in a special context; they also learn how sharing food and drink can create a sense of community. |
| Pupils will: | Understand that for believers there can be a difference between the same food eaten in a ritual or a day-to-day context. Be able to discuss how sharing food or drink with friends or family can make them feel like they belong to a group. |
| Key words | Ritual, sacred, prasad, fasting, holy communion, coffee houses, wheat, dates, coffee, chick pea |

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| <p>Introduction</p> <p>Remind the class about any previous lessons they have done on special days and/or special food. Show a picture of a vegetable or fruit dish that has special meaning for you, and that you can share with the class. E.g. "This is a blackberry tart, which my mother taught me to make. Now, when I make it, it reminds me of time I spent with her in the kitchen." Get the class to talk about foods that, when they taste them, remind them of something. For instance, a vegetable or fruit dish one of their relatives makes that is so special it always reminds them of that person when they eat it or even when they see it.</p> | <p>Personal images of food dishes or special family meals.</p> |
| <p>Activity 1</p> <p>Show the class some pictures of ordinary cakes and then some birthday cakes and wedding cakes (Resource 1). Ask the class to discuss what the difference is between these types of cake? What are the occasions on which the special cakes are eaten?</p> | <p>Resource 1: Pictures of an ordinary cake, a birthday cake and a wedding cake. Perhaps including personal photographs of a family birthday or celebration, or, if you are married, pictures of you cutting your wedding cake.</p> |

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| <p>Activity 2</p> <p>If there are any Hindu children in the class – or if the class has paid a visit to a Hindu temple (mandir) and received prasad – ask if anyone knows what prasad is? Explain how Hindus bring offerings of food and flowers to the mandir to have them blessed. In return, as they leave, they receive a gift of prasad as a blessing (Resource 2).</p> <p>In a similar way, Christians experience a blessing from Christ when they partake in the ritual of communion. Ask if any of the children in the class are Christian. What have they seen in church when the priest is praying over the bread and the wine? How do the believers behave when they are receiving communion? How is it different from eating a sandwich (Resource 3)?</p> <p>Reiterate the difference between eating something in a day-to-day context and eating it in a special or religious context.</p> | <p>Resource 2: Background information on Hinduism and food offerings.</p> <p>Resource 3: Information on the types of bread used during communion.</p> |
| <p>Activity 3</p> <p>Ask: do the pupils ever meet with their friends in a special place to talk and share ideas? Have they ever built a den or tree-house and stocked it with snacks?</p> <p>Tell the class what is known about the origins of coffee (Resource 4), that it came from either Arabia or Ethiopia and that the first coffee houses were in the Middle East. Explain that the Royal Society had its origin in a coffee club, and how members of the French Enlightenment used to meet and discuss their ideas in a Paris coffee house. Discuss how sharing food or drink and ideas in this way can both create a sense of community/ belonging and stimulate new ideas.</p> <p>Do members of the class belong to any clubs or on-line groups of people who share a similar hobby or interest? Do they learn new things by exchanging ideas in such a group? Break into groups and have a discussion point. Then, give each group something like a satsuma or other fruit to share, and another discussion point. Is there a difference in the discussion if you offer your neighbour a piece of fruit?</p> | <p>Resource 4: Background information on the origins of coffee and the 17th century coffee houses.</p> |



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| <p>Activity 4</p> <p>Break class into four groups. Give each a set of cards (Resource 5) and ask them to link the quotes to the relevant belief/plant, the food produced by the plant as used in a ritual or special context and the food in a day-to-day context.</p> <p>Ask pupils to choose a plant related to a specific ritual and to answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How could the ritual be redesigned if that particular plant became extinct? ■ What food/plant could be used as a substitute? ■ How do you think religious people would feel if this happened? | <p>Resource 5: Game with matching cards.</p> |
| <p>Plenary</p> <p>Summarise what has been learned so far.</p> <p>Questions you can ask include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What is the difference for a Christian between sharing a bread roll at dinner and eating bread during communion? ■ What is the difference for a Muslim between casually eating a date and eating one to break the fast during Ramadan? ■ What is the difference for a Hindu between eating a chickpea snack such as papri chaat and a laddu (chickpea sweet) that has been blessed (prasad)? What is the difference for a person drinking their morning coffee at breakfast, and for a person drinking coffee with others at a conference or meeting held to share new ideas or brainstorm a project? <p>Ask pupils to identify a plant that is used in a ritual or on an occasion that is important to them and/or their family, and answer the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe what this plant signifies or symbolises. ● If it is a food plant, does tasting this food remind you of those occasions? ● Describe the emotions and sensations you experience tasting this food or seeing this particular plant. | |

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Pupils may be able to:

1. Talk about a plant that is important to them and/or their family or religion.
2. Describe the occasion that features this plant/food and how it differs from other times when they eat this food/see this plant.
3. Talk about how this ritual makes them feel part of a group, e.g. family, friends, religious community.
4. Make links between this plant and their beliefs or the beliefs of their family.
5. Compare the way they use this plant on a special occasion with other rituals involving plants.

Resources