

V. Food and Family in Waterbury

Subject(s):

Time Needed: 50 minute class and/or lunch hour

Objectives:

- ✓ create new ways of identifying culture
- ✓ learn from and appreciate other cultures
- ✓ participate in family activity--specifically food preparation
- ✓ involve parents and/or guardians in school curriculum

Areas/Disciplines Covered:

American Studies (food, family structures)
Cultural Studies (cultural traditions)
Ethnic Studies (identity, race, ethnicity)
History (US, local, cultural)
Mathematics (measuring, temperature)

Materials:

- ingredients needed for dish (provided by family)
- plates and eating utensils for class plus guests
- beverages
- dish name and list of ingredients from each participating parent/guardian on recipe cards
- map of Waterbury neighborhoods
- map of the world
- “menu” which represents all the dishes with short biographies on where they came from, which family, etc.
- homework assignment worksheet

Procedure:

This project will take some advance notice. Write a short letter to the parents for the children to take home that outlines the project. Something like:

Dear Parent,

We are currently studying Waterbury neighborhoods in class. As a way to represent the diversity of experience and cultures in our class and city, we would like to invite you to participate in our “foods of Waterbury” day. We ask all parents (*or you may ask a sampling*) to spend an evening with their child making a dish that is special to your family. That dish should be brought to school with your child on **[add date here]** in order to share with the class. An appropriate amount of food would be enough for 20 children to sample (small portions). Please send with your child a recipe card with the name of the dish and the ingredients because I will be asking them for that information in order to compile a menu for the day of the meal.

Thank you.

The day before the event, make sure that you have the following:

- a list of the dishes with information from each student; include on that list ingredients so that you may avoid allergic reactions
- parent helpers to serve and monitor the students
- all eating utensils

1. Begin by displaying the dishes in a buffet style. Start class discussion by asking the students “What is your favorite meal?” and “Why?” Discuss with the students the different foods on “Brass City Life”. Would they like to eat the sugar snow described by Natalie Dunsmoor in Bunker Hill?

2. Ask each child who brought a dish to stand and briefly tell the class why s/he brought that dish, where it’s from, which neighborhood they’re from (in Waterbury) and why the dish is special to her/his family.

3. After the students have finished their description, point out on the maps where the dishes originated from and where the student resides. Draw feedback from the students by asking them questions such as “What other dishes come from this region?” “What other groups of people live in this neighborhood?”

4. Have the students stand in line and wait to be served by each parent helper. Make sure that the helpers know what is in each dish and that they ask each student if they have any allergy to any of the ingredients.

5. End by thanking everyone who participated (esp. your helpers) and passing out assignment sheet “Special Foods I Eat” due the following session.

Related Resources:

“Special Foods I Eat” worksheet