Unit Topic: Food Cultures in China

Information of Audience:
(1) Each class is mixed with 9th to 12th graders who have one year experience of learning Chinese.
(2) Each class has 20 students approximately. Over ninety-five percent of students are Hmong ethnic group.
(3) Most Hmong high school students are experienced of preparing foods; since they often help their parents cook at home.

Unit Length: Five weeks with five class periods weekly

Rational for Selecting This Topic:
(1) Eating is part of our daily life. Most of my Hmong students love to eat and even know how to cook. Many of them cook dinner at home for their family. As learning a second language, this topic might evoke students’ interests to learn more culturally and help them to enter a Chinese-food culture world.
(2) Students often ask me if Chinese people eat dogs. By introducing this lesson to them, hopefully they will understand the beliefs and values behind the eating behaviors.

Goals:
Standard 2.1 “Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures of the Chinese-speaking world”
Standard 4.2 “Students demonstrate understanding of the concepts of culture through comparisons of Chinese culture with their own”
Understandings:
1. Students will understand the cultural beliefs influencing their eating and cooking behaviors.
2. Students will understand cultural aspects in food preparation and food enjoyments.
3. Students will understand food relating to cultural special occasion and festivals.
4. Students will consider to adapt and to modify their eating and cooking behaviors.
5. Students will be able to make connection with the community they are in through the cooking show.

Essential Questions:
1. What are the characteristics of Chinese food and what are cultural impacts on food preparation?
2. What and how beliefs influencing food preparation, cooking methods and eating behaviors?
3. How would you react to the cultural difference through cooking and eating?
4. What are the cultural myths about food in China?

Assessments:
1. Informal
   (1) Students will participate in the class activities
       a. Students will go to a computer lab and search for the assigned topics on Internet. They will then compare the eating and cooking cultures in Hmong, in China, and in the United States. The Venn diagram will be used in the comparison.
       b. Students will be tested the knowledge on words, phrases, and sentences that are related to eating and cooking cultures in China.
   (2) Student will use the rubrics of food balance on color, smell, taste in Chinese to rate the food that an instructor presents to them
   (3) Students will be assessed on verbal to say the name of the food, and the words on cooking methods when they go on a field trip to a Chinese grocery store to pick up the ingredients that they need for their cooking show
   (4) Students will be assessed on the food cultures in China when they are in group to prepare for the cooking show and the final debate on food culture in the United States and in China
   (5) Peer assessments: Students will use the same rubrics that they use to rate the foods prepared from the cooking show
2. Formal: a combined assessment to listening, speaking, reading and writing skills

(1) Cooking show: Prepare a Chinese dish
   a. Using one Chinese cooking method to prepare a dish
   b. Poster: Students will write down the name of the dish and ingredients that have used in the dish in Chinese characters on the poster. They will post it on the wall.
   c. Peer assessments: Students will use the same Chinese rubrics (color, smell, taste) to rate the dish prepared by classmates
   d. Diary: Each student will keep a simple diary on the cooking show in Chinese and then they will orally present to the whole class next day.

(2) Debate: Topic: “Chinese food concepts are better than the ones in the United States”
   a. Students will be divided into four groups of five. Two groups are pro and the other two groups are con.
   b. Students can use their notes and advance research on the topic. They can also prepare their arguments on index cards.
   c. Each group has only five minutes to state their opinions. Each group member has one minute to present one’s opinions.
   d. Each group has two minutes to give their counter “attack.”
   e. Reflection paper: After the debating, each student will write a three-to-five-hundreds reflection paper in English. Students are required to write about the points that s/he has argued in the debate.
Five-Week Cultural Learning Plans:

Week 1: Food Concepts
1. Five Elements: gold 金, wood 木, water 水, fire 火, earth 土
2. Yin 阴 / Yang 阳 related to food products
3. Cold 冷 / Hot 热 related to cooking methods and food materials

Week 2: Food for Life
1. Cooking methods: steam 蒸, pan fry 煎, stir fry 炒, deep fry 炸, roast 烤, boil 水煮
2. Cooking utensils: bamboo steamer 蒸笼, pan 平底锅, wok 炒菜锅, roast box 烤箱

Week 3: Food for Enjoyment
1. Three senses of Chinese cuisine: color 色, smell 香, taste 味
2. The good tidings of Chinese foods:
   (1) Birthday: long noodles represent a long life in Chinese tradition.
   (2) Wedding: lotus seeds and red dates tea symbolizes that the newly wed couple will bear children immediately.

Week 4: Food for Special Occasions
On the special events, foods are prepared and served differently.
1. Special occasions: birthday, wedding, funeral
2. Festival: Chinese New Year, Dragon Boat Festival (bamboo rice), Mid-Autumn festival (moon cake), Tomb-Sweeping Festival

Week 5: Conclusion
1. Food myth: fortune cookies, eating animals’ internal organs
2. Cooking show: students will prepare a Chinese dish
3. Debating: Topic: “Chinese food concepts are better than the ones in the United States”
Week 5 Learning Activities:

1. Ask students if they have ever received fortune cookies after finishing a meal at a Chinese restaurant. What do they think of the fortune cookies? How do they like?
2. Distribute fortune cookies to students and have them taste as well as ask what fortunes they get.
3. Tell the history of fortune cookies.
4. Since most students are Hmong, they already acquire the knowledge of what kind of foods they eat in their daily life. Therefore, students will do a research on what foods Chinese people and American people eat. They will make a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences among these food cultures. They will post the Venn diagram on the wall and explain what they find to the class.
5. Students may find Chinese people eating dogs and animals’ internal organs. Have students brainstorm why people eat these things.
6. Watch a video explaining the values and beliefs behind these eating behaviors. Discuss after the video as well as apply the prior knowledge that we learn from the first week (Yin/Yang, Five Elements).
7. Cooking show: Students will use one Chinese cooking method to prepare a dish with the considerations of “colors,” “smell,” and “taste.”
8. Students will write down the name of dish and ingredients used in the dish in Chinese characters on a poster. The poster will be posted on the wall.
9. Students will use the rubrics (See Appendix I) to rate the dishes that are prepared by other classmates.
10. Each student will express orally in Chinese of which dishes they like and how they like based on their rating.
11. Each student will keep a simple diary on the cooking show in Chinese and then they will orally present to the whole class next day.
12. Debate: Students will be divided into four groups of five. Two groups are pro and the other two groups are con. They can use their notes and advance research on the topic. They can also prepare their arguments on index cards.
13. Each group has five minutes to state their opinions, one minute to present one’s opinions, and two minutes to give their counter “attack.”
14. After the debating, each student will write a three-to-five-hundreds reflection paper in English. Students are required to write about the points that s/he has argued in the debate.
Appendix I: Rubrics for rating a dish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to rate</th>
<th>Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color 色</td>
<td>1. 很不好看</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. 不好看</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. 好看</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. 很好看</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smell 香</td>
<td>1. 很不好闻</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. 不好闻</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. 好闻</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. 很好闻</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste 味</td>
<td>1. 很不好吃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. 不好吃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. 好吃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. 很好吃</td>
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