

# Healthy Eating à la Carte

**Pillar(s): Healthy Eating and Positive Social Environments**

**Division I**

**Grades: 1-3**

**Core Curriculum Connections: Social Studies**

**I. Rationale:** As part of the Social Studies curriculum, students learn to recognize the uniqueness of their own community and that of other communities, while simultaneously developing an appreciation for this cultural diversity. Food plays a major role in the physical, spiritual, personal, social, and cultural aspects of living. This activity allows students take a creative approach in identifying cultural diversity as it exists in the foods they eat. They plan and design restaurant-style menus of foreign, exotic, weird, wacky and even futuristic foods.

## **II. Activity Objectives:**

*The students will be able to:*

- identify and select nutritious foods to create a well-balanced meal.
- plan a well-balanced daily menu.
- develop an appreciation for foods from a variety of cultures.

## **III. Curriculum Outcomes: Social Studies**

**GRADE 1: Citizenship: Belonging and Connecting**

**General Outcome 1.1:**

- **My World: Home, School, and Community**

**GRADE 2: Communities in Canada**

**General Outcome 2.1:**

- **Canada's Dynamic Communities**

**GRADE 3: Connecting with the World**

**General Outcome 3.1:**

- **Communities in the World**

## **IV. Materials:**

- art supplies (pens, colored paper, glue, etc.)
- cook books and magazines
- sample restaurant menus

**V. Procedure:** see activity description on the following page.

# Background — For the Teacher

Food is essential to human survival. Of course, we need food for our physical well-being. It is required for the growth and maintenance of the human body. But beyond the “purely physical,” food plays a major role to the spiritual, personal, social and cultural aspects of living.

In this activity students explore the significant role that food plays in their everyday lives. In planning a fun and funky menu, they will consider the physical need for food. For example, are all the basic food groups and essential nutritional components present? They will also consider the spiritual, personal, social and cultural roles that food plays in our daily lives. This will allow them to discover to just how far-reaching and all-encompassing agricultural diversity is.

Some things to consider:

- The **personal** significance of food. Eating good food, things that are healthy and tasty.
- The **social** significance of food. Munchies at social gatherings are ice-breakers. Eating with others can give us a connection to those with whom we are not 100 percent familiar. Food is a common ground for us all to stand - and chow - on.
- The **cultural and traditional** significance of food. In our homes and communities, we eat foods which have roots in family and tradition. These foods give us a feeling of unity with our kin. A world of 5.6 billion people can tend to be a little overwhelming and impersonal. Food can help break barriers and create ties.
- The **religious** significance of food. At religious celebrations we eat foods that bring a greater meaning to the event at hand. Foods can be symbolic, literal, personal, spiritual, and so on.

## Procedure

### Preparation & Introduction

1. Gather all the required materials and review agricultural diversity with your students.
2. Introduce the topic at hand. What is food, and why is it so important to our everyday living?

### Activity

3. Have your students make their own lists of meals. What is healthy for them? What is good to eat? What is bizarre? What is exotic and foreign? What do you eat at religious events? What do you eat in social situations? Make sure students consider:
  - a. Foods that meet the nutritional requirements of a well-balanced meal.
  - b. Foods that are representative of agricultural diversity.
4. Show the students a sample menu.
5. The students will choose the top meals on their lists and will design a typical restaurant-style menu. (Consider: Appetizers, hors-d'oeuvres, soups, salads, side dishes, main courses, desserts, coffee and other beverages.)

### Conclusion

6. Have the students present their menus and discuss them with the class.

## For Discussion

1. Why did you choose the meal that you did?
2. What does the food you chose mean to you?
3. Why did you choose the menu format that you did?
4. What have you learned about agricultural diversity through this activity?



