The State Fair of Texas Curriculum

Fair Food
Grade 7 Social Studies

Fair Fare
The Contributions of Culinary Artists
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In this lesson students will:
★ Examine the history of State Fair foods.
★ Explore examples of Spanish influence – and other cultures – on Texas foods.
★ Identify contributions made to the culinary arts by Texans.
★ Create a unique fair food for the Texas State Fair.

Standards
★ Social Studies TEKS: 7.18(C), 7.18(D), 7.20(C)
★ ELAR TEKS: 7.11(A), 7.12(D), 7.12(F)
★ Art TEKS: 7.1(A), 7.2(A), 7.2(B)

Before You Go
★ Write the words “Mexican Food” in the middle of a circle map. (Also included at the end of lesson.)
★ Give the students 30 seconds to brainstorm common Mexican Food dishes eaten in Texas such as burritos, tacos, and fajitas.
★ Explain that many of these items originated in Spain.
★ Tell the kids they will be exploring several cultural influences on Texas foods from countries across the world.
Plan Your Route.
★ Food stands are scattered throughout the State Fair of Texas.
★ Make your way through the fairgrounds observing the different foods.

Optional Materials to Bring
★ Smart Phone or Tablet
★ Pencil & Notepad

While You’re There
The objective of your visit is to gather information about cultures that have influenced Texas Fair foods and identify contributions made to the culinary arts.

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★ To get an overview of fair foods, read the following with a partner:
   * A Brief History of Fair Fare.
   * These Are the Craziest Fried Foods at the Texas State Fair.
   * The History of Texas Cuisine.
★ The State Fair holds a contest known as the Big Tex Choice Awards each year, highlighting the most unique, appetizing foods at the Fair.
   * Explore this website to review prize categories, past contest winners, and details about finalists.
   * Choose a previous finalist or winner, and research the prized food creation.
   * Describe the contributions the chef made to the culinary arts.
★ Pay close attention to how these foods look.
★ It is said that many people “eat with their eyes”. If something doesn’t look good, many will not even try it.
★ What makes the food look appetizing?
★ Do any of the foods at the State Fair look unappetizing? Why?

INVESTIGATING FAIR FOOD
★ As you walk through the fairgrounds, stop at multiple food vendors and observe the types of foods offered by concessionaires.
★ Stop at a minimum of three vendors and purchase a variety of fair foods.
★ Think about the various cultures that may have influenced the creation of the items you purchased.
★ Pay attention to the purchases made by fellow fairgoers. Are certain items more popular than others? Why?
★ Collect information about foods submitted to the Big Tex Choice Awards by interviewing vendors about their products.
★ Ask them to explain the process they went through to create the foods.
★ Inquire about the Big Tex Choice Awards, and consider the food categories for the items you’ve chosen.
★ Poll other fairgoers about the food items they think deserve to win.
★ You can use the Flisti website to create a Poll.
★ Jot down a few notes about your experiences.
★ Make a list of all the foods you sampled.
★ Describe how other countries may have influenced their creation.
★ Take photographs of the foods before eating them, and write captions.
TEACHER

DIGEST

Find a place to sit, so you can think and observe.
- Does the way the food looks impact the way it tastes?
- How do culinary arts impact culture?
- Should a food win if it doesn’t look appetizing but tastes delicious?
- Should there be a category in the Big Tex Choice Awards for “Most Culturally Influential Food”? Why or why not?
- Why doesn’t everyone consider chefs to be artists?

FAIR FOOD

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After the Fair
When you return to class following your State Fair visit, you will:
★ Write a blog summarizing your experiences at the State Fair.
★ Be sure to include information about various cultures that have influenced Texas foods.
★ Based on your research and experiences, create a State Fair food for the upcoming year.
★ Compose a drawing of your food.
★ Include color and description.
★ If possible, attempt to make your food!
★ Have a contest in which you and your peers vote on the most creative dish, and the best tasting dish.

GRADE Seven
SOCIAL STUDIES

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Circle Map®

http://capital.osd.wednet.edu/media/capital/information/technology/tm/circle.pdf