



Live It & Learn It!

Lessons in Active Citizenship

★ Food for Thought

Tasty Bits of American History

★ New Student = New Friend

Something to Think About

☆ Your Voice Matters

Speak Up & Help Out



Lesson 1

Lesson 1: American Flavor - A Cultural Salad of Diversity

America was, and still is, an experiment in democracy. Many people who first came to settle in this new land were looking for freedom and dreamed of a better life. People from around the world continue to come to America, many for the same reasons. We celebrate the diversity they add to our communities, our state, and our country. The foods below are now part of our American diet thanks to the contributions from other cultures. Think of other ways peoples' customs and traditions have added to our American experience: language, music, sports, holidays...

Bagels – The bagel was originally made as a gift to the King of Poland. Eastern European Jewish immigrants brought them to America in the early 1900's.

Pretzels – Historians believe the pretzel came to America with the Mayflower in 1620.

Pizza – Italian immigrants sold pizzas in their neighborhood stores for some time. It was not until the soldiers who served in Italy returned from World War II that pizza became popular all over the country.

Doughnuts – It is thought that doughnuts were introduced into America by Dutch settlers. They also brought other desserts such as cookies, cream pie, and cobbler.

Peanuts – When Africans were brought to North America as slaves, they brought the peanut with them. They planted them throughout the southern United States.

Apples – The apple was brought to the United States by the Pilgrims.

Ice Cream – Ice cream was introduced in America by Quaker colonists who brought their recipes for ice cream with them when they immigrated.

Hot Dogs – Hot dogs had their start as a kind of sausage brought to America by German immigrants.



There are over 380 languages spoken the in the United States. The most common language is English. It is spoken by about 80% of the population. Other than English, Spanish is the most popular language, followed by Chinese, French and Tagalog, a language from the Philippines.

We have holidays in the United States that celebrate our American history and tradition, such as Fourth of July, Constitution Day, and Presidents' Day. However, there are also holidays that reflect the traditions of different cultures. These include holidays that come to us from other countries, for example Mardi Gras, Cinco de Mayo or Chinese New Year. There are holidays celebrated here that are part of the many religions followed by our citizens, for example, Christmas, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Kwanzaa.

Some people think that America is no longer a "melting pot" where everyone blends into the American culture. Since new people coming to the United States keep some of their traditions and culture, America is more like a "tossed salad". What do you think?



Sticky Situation

A new student has just arrived at your school and has been placed in your classroom. She is from another part of the United States. As you go over to introduce yourself at lunchtime, you hear several of your really good friends making fun of her because of her accent. Think of all of the things you could do in this situation. For example, you might join in with your friends and make fun of the new student. Make a list of what you could do and then decide what you would do.



Hear Ye!
Hear Ye!
Read more
about it!

Civic Literacy Links

American Flavor: A Cultural Salad of Diversity

I Am America by Charles Smith Jr.

Everybody Cooks Rice by Norah Dooley

One Green Apple by Eve Bunting

Immigration Stories: Scholastic:

<http://www.tacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration>

It's My Life: PBS Kids:

<http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/family/immigration>

Let's Hear Your Voices!

Do you have some ideas about how to make your school lunch program better? Is there something you would like added to the menu? Maybe there is something you hope to never see on the menu again.

Let's hear what you have to say!

- ★ Write a short paragraph on an index card. Remember to write in complete sentences and don't forget those capitals and punctuation marks.
- ★ When you are finished, post your card on the Student Voices Bulletin Board and check out the other ideas already there!

We're
CIVICS Kids

