

**Tracing our roots through the living memory of food-An Inquiry into Ethnoecology and
Identity**

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Context

With the topic of ethnoecology of Indigenous foods, I want my 2nd graders to be able to trace one food or ingredient that connects them to their ancestral identity. This inquiry-based social studies unit will require students to analyze food systems and how they impact their daily diet. They will also examine how diets and foods have changed over time due to historical events, colonization and forced assimilation.

I want students to be able to trace their Indigenous roots by closely examining the ingredients or food of their choice and the role that it plays in their identity, ancestral connection, culture, traditions, or environment. Students will become social citizens as they explore this topic more deeply, beginning with an examination of the current food systems and reflecting on how they engage with and relate to food today.

Through inquiry based learning my 2nd grade students will look closely at food production and consumption systems that are currently available to them. In this process, I want students to examine and understand the global geographical connections to food and how their food choices are shaped by geography, economics, and ecology. They will need to reflect on how the flow of food makes its way into their daily meals and diets.

We will then turn to the historical aspect of food systems and examine how these systems have changed over time and why. In this social studies history lesson, we will touch on the economics, geography, and the historical trauma that has shaped and disrupted access to traditional food production and consumption. During this lesson, I want students to reflect on and question how major historical events created fractures in sovereign food systems.

I will encourage students to reflect on their own family's story with food and how those stories are still living with memories that connect us to our ancestral past. These connections can be traced back through many aspects of our living culture, such as traditions, values, songs, language, ceremonies, preparation methods, and gathering practices.

Students will need to draw on any TEK (traditional ecological knowledge) that can be shared about a traditional food or explore other reasons a particular food item draws them closer to their ancestors. To deepen their understanding, students will conduct intergenerational interviews with family members or community members. These interviews will be at the heart of this lesson, helping students discover from a primary source how important shared traditional knowledge is to their food heritage.

Students will ask questions such as:

- What kind of environment does their food require to grow or be produced?

- Is there any special ecological knowledge connected to this food?
- Are there spiritual or cultural practices tied to this food item or ingredient?

As a final part of this unit, students will apply their newly gained knowledge about their ancestral connection to their chosen food or ingredient as a way to reconnect and reengage with traditional foods. They will have the opportunity to be creative in reflecting on how they want to reintroduce or celebrate this traditional knowledge. During this portion of the lesson, students will develop, create, grow, practice, and display their knowledge about the ethnoecology of their selected food.

We will be planning a community celebration, where students will share what they have learned and offer that reconnection back during a presentation. This project will embrace cultural identity and revitalization, while engaging students in thinking about food sovereignty practices.

This unit's objectives echo what is happening on a larger scale, as many tribes are reclaiming their own food identity and food sovereignty. Several tribes are moving towards reclaiming and restoring ancestral traditional ecological knowledge by offering alternative pathways, such as youth and community education. For example, at the Flagstaff Native Herb Festival, Carrie Calisay Cannon, a fulltime ethnobotanist, and elder Jorigine Paya of the Hualapai, presented on a youth project that educates Hualapai children and Grand Canyon community members about the importance of local and traditional foods. Through this project, traditional knowledge is shared with Indigenous youth through experiential learning, storytelling, and community shared knowledge. Students practice alongside elders to harvest, gather, and prepare local food sources while learning the cultural significance of their surrounding environment (Cannon & Paya, 2025). Many organizations and communities are creating these opportunities as a bridge and a reconnection with intergenerational learning.

School and classroom

This unit will be developed with my 2nd graders in mind, a diverse group of students at Jefferson Elementary School in Winslow, Arizona. The student population consists of 30.67% Native American Indian or Alaska Native, 42.27% Hispanic Latino, 13.4% Mixed Races, and 12.89% Redacted (<https://azreportcards.azed.gov/schools/detail/5601>).

The district is dedicated to Indian Education programs that focus on closing achievement gaps, supported by additional funding from Title VI Indian education and Johnson O'Malley programs. Since this will be my first year as a 2nd grade teacher at Jefferson, I do not yet have information about how the school and district specifically utilize this financial support.

The town of Winslow is a unique location because it borders the Navajo Nation to the south and it sits on ancestral Hopi land. The Hopi reservation is about 70 miles north of Winslow, but the Hopi

Tribe has purchased land bordering the city of Winslow. The Hopi housing development creates opportunities for Hopi families to live, work, and seek education in the closest city near their homeland (<https://htha.org/programs>). Winslow also offers a residential hall for Native American students in junior high and high school (<https://wrhinc.org/for-parents>).

When creating this curriculum, I considered how Indigenous food systems play a powerful role in the lives of my Indigenous students, in particular, the relationship of corn to the Hopi. “Corn enters into nearly every aspect of traditional Hopi life” (Mihesuah & Hoover, 2019). I am thinking about community events in Winslow that connect to cultural food traditions. One example is the celebration of Dia de los Muertos, a Mexican holiday that honors and remembers deceased loved ones. Given my classroom demographics, I can see this celebration connecting with many of my Hispanic/Latino Students.

During Dia de los Muertos, an Ofrenda (offering table) is created by loved ones to honor the deceased with many traditional foods or foods that reflect the tastes of those being remembered. The beauty of this practice is similar to what I hope to build in my curriculum: a bridge between ancestral spirits and foods that continue to cross over into the living. I want students to celebrate and remember these connections to their ancestors through the food that they have researched. I plan to implement this social studies unit to align with the timing of the celebration of Dia de los Muertos, giving students an opportunity to honor their ancestral connection through the food that they choose to reengage with.

This type of education and revitalization is referenced several times in the book *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States Restoring Cultural Knowledge Protecting Environment and Regaining Health*, edited by Devon A. Mihesuah and Elizabeth Hoover, with a foreword by Winona LaDuke. The book highlights how the historical impacts have forever fractured Indigenous sovereign food systems, while also showing how communities are working toward restoration and reconnection.

Since I will be responsible for teaching all subjects, I want this social studies unit to align with several identified Arizona social studies standards as well as several Diné standards.

First, students will act as social scientists, researching foods relevant to the present while also learning about the civilizations, societies, cultures, innovations, and histories that have influenced food systems and continue to shape the modern world.

This unit will address the following **Arizona Social Studies Standards**.

- 2.SP3.1 Identifying facts and concepts associated with the food with any compelling facts and creating supporting questions. This standard will be addressed as students gather facts about their cultural food relationship.

- 2.SP3.2 Determine and use various kinds of sources to answer compelling and supporting questions as students will be doing research and interviews as primary and secondary resources.
- 2.SP3.3 as they will help to generate questions about a source as it relates to an event or development of traditional food practices.
- 2.SP3.4 as students gather relevant information from one or two sources.
- 2.SP3.5 Students will need to ask and answer questions about explanations and or arguments.
- 2.SP3.6 Present a summary of an argument or explanation using print, oral, or digital technology or other creative formats of what they have learned from their primary/secondary source.

This curriculum will also integrate the core discipline descriptors like economical, geographical, and historical stands of social studies.

In addition, it will incorporate **Diné standards-history strand:**

- Diné bibee' é'ool'łłł dóó ádahóót'įįdígíí shįł nįįgo ádííńisht'i' dooleeł. I will understand historical/factual events, people and symbols that influence my family.
- Concept 4- Yoolkáál nilíinii bináhidizííd dóó nináháhááh nihee hólónígíí shįł bééhózin dooleeł- I will understand time passage and chronology, specific to Diné culture and tradition.
- PO.4. Hodeeyáádaá' dóó díishjįįjį' ádahóót'įįdígíí baa ákonisin dooleeł.- I will identify historical events in different eras.

Rationale

As an experienced teacher, I understand the importance and value of culturally responsive lessons for students of all backgrounds. I have witnessed how culturally responsive pedagogical practice supports students of diverse identities in finding a sense of belonging and feeling affirmed among their peers in the classroom-and hopefully, beyond, as they relate to others in their wider community. Culturally responsive lesson planning is a proven practice, backed by research and long-standing success, that has been shown to be highly effective.

“There is extensive evidence and research about achievement test scores, grade promotion rates, graduation rates, and other common indicators of school success where students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds experience poorer educational outcomes than their peers.” (Bennett et al., 2004; Conchas & Noguera, 2004; Sanders, 2000).

I believe that through this topic of Indigenous foods, all students- regardless of backgrounds- can access and relate to the content. Food is a universal cornerstone of all cultures and often plays a

significant role in community life, deeply connected to cultural arts, traditions, and values of a people. Exploring food also naturally connects us to the historical relationship to the community, land, and our ancestors.

The first learning objective in my lesson is understanding how food is grown, distributed, and consumed in today's systems. This helps students reflect on their current relationship to food and themselves. One becomes aware of self-identity as an anchor standard to many of the K-3 Diné learning standards. This is such an important aspect of early childhood development that I want to ensure that all students feel comfortable in self-identification, and this may include a mini lesson to challenge misconceptions about food identity or cultural appropriations of foods. Establishing this framework is essential so students feel safe sharing their own cultural food identity. As [Solid-ground.org](https://solid-ground.org) reminds us, we want students to remember “don’t yuk my yum.”

Through my second learning objective- reflecting on how foods have changed over time- I will engage students in a deeper understanding of cultural identity before and after historical trauma that led to a colonized food system. By constructing a historical timeline, students will connect major events in the Southwest to their families’ own history of food access, systems, and identity.

The third objective- conducting intergenerational interviews- serves as a bridge for healing and deeper learning. By speaking with family or community members, students will access primary knowledge about Indigenous foods and traditions.

Finally, the culminating project will reengage students with traditional foods, allowing them to recognize all aspects of food- growing, harvesting, gathering, foraging, hunting, preserving, serving, and consuming- reflect a deeper cultural identity that connects the present to the past. These elements of cultural identification may be expressed through practices such as ceremonies, songs, dances, or other artistic forms. This will naturally lead into the final objective: students think creatively to synthesize what they have learned to re-engage with traditional food in a personally meaningful way.

I am also aware of potential challenges. Some students may be experiencing food insecurity. Research shows that American Indians have higher levels of food insecurity when compared to the US Average. In 2008, nearly 25% of AI/AN households were food insecure (Miheuah & Hoover, 2019). To address this, I plan to connect students and families with local resources, such as the local farmers market that partners with the Little Roadies program, where children who participate in a free health education class receive \$2 tokens for fresh produce. I may also arrange visits to or from the local community garden or food bank to show how these systems fill gaps in access.

Food insecurities also raise questions about healthy versus unhealthy foods. The book Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States-Restoring Cultural Knowledge Protecting Environments and

Regaining Health, highlights disparities that Indigenous communities face, including limited access to affordable, nutritious food; language and knowledge loss; cultural disconnect; and climate change. These systemic challenges have created a gap between Indigenous food sovereignty and present-day food systems.

I will also anticipate that some students may struggle to identify a food with direct cultural relevance, but this unit's inquiry-based structure allows for the flexibility to make any kind of food connection. Students may engage at the level that they feel comfortable, exploring and self-identifying with a cultural relationship. For these students who cannot identify a culturally significant food, the process of researching and interviewing will still provide meaningful insights. They may investigate the history, geography, economics, culture, and ecology of a food item to build new knowledge. This knowledge, even without a strong cultural tie, can still be shared and valued through their final reconnection project.

My positionality in approaching this topic is grounded in my own experiential knowledge. Growing up in rural southwest Colorado, my family relied on a balance of supermarket food and homegrown harvests, foraging, and livestock. Although I am of Irish descent and not Indigenous, I view myself as an ally for Indigenous education. I strive to build a culturally responsive community in my classroom, continually educating myself to better understand my students' cultures and needs.

For the past 17 years, I have taught in a school with a diverse population of Indigenous students, an experience that has afforded me the opportunity to learn from my students and their families. I remain committed to daily growth in cultural knowledge, as I believe that education and understanding are key to creating a peaceful future.

Last year, I expanded my learning by participating in the INE programs at NAU. Through the Diné Institute, I discovered how important Traditional Ecological Knowledge is to understanding our world. Through that educational opportunity I can directly relate that knowledge into this year's topic of Ethnoecology of Indigenous food. The shared Indigenous knowledge, my personal experiences, and ongoing research have informed my design of this unit. My goal for the pursuit of cultural knowledge is to have students feel confident that the carefully developed outcomes reflect their identity and sustained cultural knowledge.

Instructional Guide

The purpose of this unit is to use the topic of ethnoecology of Indigenous foods as a delivery for a social studies unit that addresses how historical events have changed the relationship to Indigenous foods. Students will begin this process by bringing in a food item or ingredient that they feel they relate to and identify with. I fully anticipate that students will bring in items from what is described as the "food

swamp” by Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States (Mihesuah & Hoover, 2019). The authors argue that the term “food desert” is a misnomer because desert ecosystem is full of life whereas what we are experiencing is closer to a “food swamp” or “food apartheid” -areas saturated with highly processed food leading to “#diabesity” a term coined for diabetes and obesity that are both on the rise (Mihesuah & Hoover, 2019, p. 173).

To guide the structure of this unit, I plan to use the Navajo educational philosophy of learning (Nitsáhákees, Nahat’a, Iiná, and Sihasin). I was introduced to this framework through the Diné Institute at NAU (<https://www.dinecollege.edu/about-us/educational-philosophy/>). Beginning with (Nitsáhákees), students will reflect on the food they are eating daily. As an entry point, I will invite students to bring in a food item or ingredient that they identify with and share in a show-and-tell activity. During this activity, the class will generate questions about each food item, which I will record on a piece of chart paper. Example questions might include: How is that food prepared? Who prepares the food? What value does it bring to their life? This activity will spark curiosity and inquiry.

Next, I will read aloud the book *How did that get into my Lunchbox? The story of food by Christine Butterworth* to help students understand modern food systems. We will then create a world food map from the food brought by students. This visual representation will allow us to revisit and answer some of the initial questions generated during the show-and-tell activity.

On day two, we will move into key vocabulary words and background knowledge, including terms that relate to the history- “colonization,” “assimilation,” and identifying Indigenous tribes within the southwest. To build the historical understanding, I will create a pre-made map of the United States with images of historically known Indigenous foods. (corn, beans, squash, prickly pear, bison, salmon, mesquite) Then attached to strings, I will introduce historical events- European colonization (1492-1600), the Indian Removal Act and forced relocation (1830-1868). I will read a couple of excerpts from Trail of Tears, The Long Walk-These painful events lead to starvation, exposure, and disease. I will also include images of allotment and assimilation policies (1870-1960) (Park, 2021). I will cut the strings from the newly built Indigenous food map to symbolize the disruption of Indigenous foodways. This interactive activity will help students visualize how historical trauma fractured traditional food systems. To close, I will read aloud Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story by Kevin Noble Maillard, who highlights both the cultural resilience and the painful history embedded in food. This lesson will specifically address several Diné standards: PO 4. I will name, recall events, and dates relevant to my current family culture and traditions. Concept 2 - I will understand historical events, people, and symbols with significant ties to my family PO 1. I will identify my family history and their livelihood. PO 4 I will identify historical events in different eras.

In lesson three, we move into *Nahat’a* (planning). Students will explore the essential question: What is one food or ingredient that helps identify who you are? Using the 2.SP3.1 Identify facts and concepts

associated with compelling and supporting questions. 2.SP3.4, as students will start to think about how to gather relevant information from one or two sources about their chosen food item. Students will research their chosen food item guided by a teacher-created research questionnaire. The questions will address history, economics, culture, geography, and, as a bonus, the science or ecology of the food. I will model how to conduct this research by modeling for the class how to collect secondary information about the food of their choice. Students can work independently or collaboratively to conduct research. 2.SP3.2 determine and use various kinds of sources to answer compelling and supporting questions. As a closing activity, we will modify or create questions for the primary source research portion of the lesson. Students will be directed to spend fall break finding someone to interview about their food or ingredient of choice.

Lesson five centers on *liná* (living). Students will use the class developed interview questions to gather oral histories and stories about their food item. This step bridges historical research with living cultural knowledge. 2.SP3.4 (gathering relevant information) and 2.SP3.5 (asking and answering questions about explanations). Some examples of interview questions may include: How does _____ connect you to your family, language, land, kinship, spirituality, values? Why do you think that one ingredient speaks to who they are? 2.SP3.3 Students will need to generate questions about a source as it relates to an event or development of the food item. 2.SP3.4 Gather relevant information from one or two sources.

Finally, the unit culminates with *Sihasin* (assuring). Choosing from a choice board that includes options such as writing, art, dance, music, gardening, poster, or a recipe. Students will need to find a way to highlight one of the social studies disciplinary key concept skills. **History:** What is the history of this food? **Economics:** How much(value) of the food item? Was the food bought, sold or traded? **Culture:** Any significance to a culture? **Geography:** Where is the food product grown or produced? This project will allow students to reclaim and re-engage with the chosen food as an expression of identity and cultural continuity. Ideally, this work will culminate in a community celebration where students present their projects as offerings of learning and remembrance, similar to the ofrendas of Dia de los Muertos.

Throughout the unit, I will integrate culturally responsive and sustaining practices by: Centering Indigenous knowledge systems and philosophies of learning (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009). Providing multiple entry points for students of diverse backgrounds to connect through food as a universal cultural cornerstone. Incorporating intergenerational knowledge through interviews and community partnerships. Using inquiry-based, student-driven approaches that honor curiosity and build identity development.

The assessments in this unit include participation in inquiry and discussion, completion of the research guide, interviews, and the final creative project. Together, these assessments measure not only the content knowledge but also personal growth, cultural understanding, and the ability to synthesize multiple perspectives.

By grouping this unit in Indigenous food sovereignty and the Diné philosophy of education, I aim to help students build connections between food, history, culture, and identity, while also creating a framework for culturally sustaining and responsive teaching.

Lesson 1: Topics/Subject Matter: Introduction to Personal and Cultural Connections to Food -2nd grade

Focus: Nitsáhákees (Thinking)

Instructional Strategies- Inquiry- Based Learning: Where does food come from-and what story does it tell? Use of Storytelling and Oral Tradition

Learning Objectives: Students will begin to explore and reflect on their personal and cultural connections to food by identifying food items or ingredients that are meaningful to them. . They will spark inquiry into food systems, culture, and self-identity.

Materials: Chart paper, marker, student-selected food items or ingredients for show and tell, Book: *How did that Get Into My Lunchbox? The Story of Food* by Christine Butterworth, World Map, Sticky notes of pins for mapping food

Procedure:

1. **Nitsáhákees (Thinking) Activity:** Begin by inviting students to silently reflect on the foods they eat daily. Prompt them to consider which foods they feel connected to, either because of taste, family tradition, or personal preference.
2. **Show-and-Tell Sharing:** Students bring in a food item or ingredient that they identify with and share it with the class. Encourage them to explain why they chose that food and what it means to them.
3. **Class Inquiry Generation:** As students present, record their observations and questions on chart paper. Example questions might include: How is this food prepared? Who usually prepares this food?What value or meaning does it bring to your life?
Where does this food come from originally?

Read-Aloud: Introduce *How Did That Get Into My Lunchbox? The Story of Food* by Christine Butterworth. Pause throughout the story to ask guiding questions:

How does food travel from farms to our lunchboxes?

Why do some foods cost more or less than others?

What connections can we make between what we eat and where it comes from?

1. **World Food Map Activity:** Using a large world map or poster board, have students place their food items on the map according to their geographic origin. If possible, use sticky notes, pins, or string to connect each food to its location. Encourage students to revisit questions recorded during the show-and-tell and see if any are answered through this mapping activity.

Reflection: Conclude the lesson with a short class discussion. Prompt students to think about: What surprised you about where our foods come from?
Did you learn something new about another student's food?
How do these foods connect to your life, culture, or family?

Assessment: Participation in class discussion, contribution to inquiry questions, and helping to identify or research the placement of their shared food onto the world map.

Lesson 2: Exploring Historical Food Systems - 2nd grade

Focus: *Nahat'a (Planning) – Analyzing and Connecting*

Instructional Strategies- Inquiry- Based Learning Where does food come from-and what story does it tell? Use of Storytelling and Oral Tradition

Objective: Students will investigate how historical events and colonization affected Indigenous food systems. They will compare past and present foods, identify disruptions caused by historical events, and plan questions for further research.

Vocabulary:

History, Geography, Economics, Culture

Indigenous

Colonization

Assimilation

Materials: Large map of the United States or the Southwest region

Photos or illustrations of traditional Indigenous foods (corn, beans, squash, prickly pear, yucca, mesquite beans, walnuts, salmon, bison, etc.)

Yarn or string to attach foods to the map

Chart paper and markers

Timeline of key historical events (1492–1600, 1830–1868, 1870–1960)

Sticky notes

Procedure:

- 1. Introduction and Reflection:** begin by reviewing a tribal map of the United States with pinned food resources that are staples and main food sources for Indigenous Tribes across the U.S. Emphasize that food also had value with trade and connection to other tribes even beyond the U.S. borders. What do you think has happened to these foods over time?
- 2. Historical Food Map:**
Prepare to attach yarn or strings with the historical events to the foods that are on the displayed historical tribe map. Introduce the timeline of key historical events, including European colonization, forced removals, and assimilation policies. Keep explanations age-appropriate, emphasizing the impact on food sources.
- 3. Interactive String demonstration-** as each historical event is discussed, cut the string to visualize how colonization and disease, displacement, and assimilation disrupted Indigenous food systems. What happens when these connections are broken?
- 4. Discussion and Question generation:** How did relocation affect the foods people could grow or access? Which foods disappeared? How has this affected families and communities?
- 5. Read-Aloud Connection:**
Read *Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story* by Kevin Noble Maillard.
Discuss how new foods and recipes emerged as a result of historical events.
- 6. Reflection and Planning:** Have students reflect in journals or small groups on one food they want to research more deeply. Prompt them to consider: “Which food tells a story about your history or culture?” This sets up the independent research and interview phase for subsequent lessons.

Assessment: Participation in class discussion, contribution to inquiry questions, and helping to identify or research the placement of food/historical events onto the map. Observation of student reflections on disrupting food systems.

Standard Alignment:

The state standards that will be addressed are: 2.SP3.1 Identify facts and concepts associated with compelling and supporting questions. 2.SP3.2 I want students to determine and use various kinds of sources to answer compelling and supporting questions. 2.SP3.4 Gather relevant information from one or two sources. 2.SP3.6 Present a summary of an argument or explanation using print, oral, or digital technology or other creative formats.

Diné standards

PO 4 I will name, recall events, and dates relevant to my current family culture and traditions.

Concept 2 - I will understand historical events, people, and symbols with significant ties to my family PO 1. I will identify my family history and their livelihood. PO 4 I will identify historical events in different eras.

Lesson 3: Living Knowledge Through Research and Family Interviews-2nd grade

Focus: Iiná (Living) – Applying Learning to Life

Instructional Strategies- Inquiry- Based Learning Where does food come from-and what story does it tell? Use of Storytelling and Oral Tradition

Objective:

Students will begin independent research on a chosen food or ingredient and prepare intergenerational interview questions. They will connect classroom inquiry with lived experiences, community knowledge, and family traditions.

Vocabulary:

History, Geography, Economics, Culture

Indigenous

Colonization

Assimilation

Materials: Chart paper with questions, Student/teacher- created interview question forms, Student computers for research on foods, Family letter explaining interview activity

Procedure:

1. Revisit the food map with the broken strings from lesson 2

Ask- Do you want to research more about food that is traditional but still important to us today?

Remind students that we are learning from primary- people, experts, elder, real photos and secondary resources- books, internet.

2. Students choose a focus food: Allow students to select one food or ingredient to learn more about.
3. Independent Research Workshop: provide access to books, online kid-friendly resources. Students gather 2-3 facts about their food- history, geography, cultural use, or science/ecology. Record Food Research
4. Preparing Interview Questions: Model some prepared questions and ask if students want to make any changes to the interview questions.
5. Role-play the interview process in class with a peer.

Closing: Share- with a brief circle students can share one thing they're excited to learn from their interview.

Assessment: Completion of food research Fact Find, participation

Culturally Responsive Practices

- Collaboration with families and elders
- Value of Indigenous language, values, and songs
- Integration of community and storytelling
- Celebrating and validating students' home language, food practice and intergenerational knowledge.

Lesson 4: Assurance through reclamation and Creative Expression -2nd grade

Focus: Sii Hasin (Assurance) – Bringing Learning Full Circle

Instructional Strategies- Inquiry-Based Learning: Where does food come from-and what story does it tell? Use of Storytelling and Oral Tradition

Objective: Students will synthesize their research and interviews to create a final project that reclaims their connection to a traditional food or ingredient. They will present their project to classmates, families, and community members, affirming cultural identity and honoring food as living knowledge.

Vocabulary:

History, Geography, Economics, Culture

Indigenous

Colonization

Assimilation

Materials and Resources: Completed family Research Questionnaires, choice board for final projects, art supplies, musical instruments, planting materials, poster boards, markers, and set up of Ofrenda space.

Procedure: 1. Opening Circle- what have you found out from the living memory, history, and identity of your food? Now we are going to share what we have learned with the class and community.

2. Introducing the Final Project- show the choice board of the final project options.

Emphasize that projects must include at least one fact from research and one insight from interviews, and something that relates to history, economics, geography, or cultural relevance to the food.

3. 2-3 class periods for work time on projects.

4. Invite families and community members as guests for the project gallery or performances.

Ofrenda- style to offer synthesized products to honor ancestral connections.

Closing- what did you learn about yourself and your family through food? How has this project changed the way you think about food and eating? What traditions do you want to keep alive?

My Research

What is one ingredient or food item that plays an important role in identifying you?

1. **History:** What is the history of this food?

2. **Economics:** How much is this food item? Was the food bought, sold or traded?

3. **Culture:** Any significance to a culture?

4. **Geography:** Where is the food product grown or produced?

EXTRA:

5. **Science** of their food by researching any special environmental needs and farming practices required to grow or produce.

Assessment

SCORING RUBRIC

	1	2	3	4
HISTORY				
GEOGRAPHY				
CULTURE				
ECONOMIC UNDERSTANDING				
OTHER SHARED KNOWLEDGE				

Choice Board

	History, economics, geography	Research Fact	Interview Insight	
Grow it Make a poster about how the food grow, or plant a seed and show how to care for your plant.				
Sing about it Create a song or find a song to practice about your food of choice.				
Dance about it Create a dance or find a dance that plays and important role or tell a story about the food of choice				
Art Project Find a creative way of drawing, painting or molding something discovered about you food of choice				
Storytelling Create or share a story that presents new gained knowledge about the food of choice.				
Recipe Card Share a display or demonstration of how to create or apply the food of choice in a recipe				

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Possible Interview questions:

Family & Cultural Connections

1. What does this food mean to our family?
2. Do you remember eating this food when you were little?
3. Is this food connected to a special family tradition, holiday, or ceremony?
4. Who usually prepares this food in our family?
5. Do you remember who first taught you about this food?

History & Storytelling

6. How long has our family eaten this food?
7. Where did this food come from before it reached us?
8. Do you know any stories, songs, or memories connected to this food?
9. Has this food changed over time (ingredients, recipes, or preparation)?
10. How did our ancestors get this food (growing, foraging, hunting, trading, or buying)?

Geography & Ecology

11. Where does this food grow or come from?
12. Does it need special weather, land, or water to grow?
13. Do we still grow, gather, or cook it the same way today?

Health & Well-being

14. Do you think this food is healthy for us? Why?

15. How is it different from foods we buy in stores today?

Identity & Reflection

16. How does this food connect us to our land, language, or culture?

17. Why do you think it is important to remember this food?

18. If you could share this food with someone new, what would you want them to know about it?