



Growing and Eating Food Around the World: The Story of Rice

Lesson written in partnership with
URBAN SCHOOL
FOOD
ALLIANCE

Grade Levels & Subject: Grades 3-5 English Language Arts

Lesson Duration: 50-60 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Objective: Students will create a narrative piece of writing that explains the sources and origins of rice and its journey from field to plate.

Food Education Standards:	Content Area Standards:	This lesson also aligns to:
FES 2: Foods have sources and origins.	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.A Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.	<p>CASEL Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Awareness • Self-Awareness • Relationship Skills <p>LFJ SJS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ID.3-5.3: I know that all my group identities are part of who I am, but none of them fully describes me and this is true for other people too. • DI.3-5.8: I want to know more about other people's lives and experiences, and I know how to ask questions respectfully and listen carefully and non-judgmentally.

LESSON SYNOPSIS

Students will learn about food sources and origins by watching how rice is grown and cooked in different ways around the world and then writing a story about the journey of a grain of rice from field to plate from the point of view of the rice.

LESSON PREPARATION

Prep Steps	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Arroz con Leche" with Chef Christopher Del Cid: https://vimeo.com/417668558 • Worksheet below - could be printed or recreated in your preferred online learning platform • Exit ticket - could be printed or recreated in your preferred online learning platform • Preview any supplemental videos you are choosing to show and have them ready to project and play (see Lesson Activities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing and drawing utensils
Assessments	Considerations (What adaptations are needed for diverse learners and/or varying dietary needs?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom to Cafeteria Exit Ticket • Have students read their stories to each and practice providing constructive feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with your school and/or district's allergy policies as well as any food restrictions for the students in your particular class. • Students can work in partners to brainstorm and orally rehearse their stories.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students can present their written stories or compile them into a class book. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider displaying visuals and a word bank to support students' writing. |
|---|---|

VOCABULARY

- absorb [ab-**sawrb**, -**zawrb**] (verb) - to take in or soak up (usually a liquid)
- agitate [**aj**-i-teyt] (verb) - to stir up
- consistency [kuh-**sis**-tuhn-see] (noun) - how thick, firm, or sticky a substance is
- equipment [ih-**kwip**-muhnt] (noun) - the tools or materials needed to complete a task
- incorporate [in-**kawr**-puh-reyt] (verb) - to blend or combine thoroughly
- ingredients [in-**gree**-dee-uhnts] (noun) - the different materials that make up a mixture
- periodically [peer-ee-**od**-ik-lee] (adverb) - to do something at regular intervals of time

LESSON ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION (5-10 minutes)

- Activate students' background knowledge about rice, asking "Has anyone ever had rice? How did you eat it?" Was it fried rice, rice and beans, chicken and rice, and/or in the school cafeteria? If students have difficulty thinking of specific dishes, teacher could show photos of common rice dishes on a slide/on the computer.
- List the different dishes (or show photos) and ask students where they have eaten these different types of rice dishes. This could be "at home, at a Mexican restaurant, with sushi, in the cafeteria..." No answer is wrong. If students are able to identify where a dish may have originated or is often eaten, that is great. The teacher could also prepare a few examples and where the dish originated. For example:
 - Sushi [**soo**-shee] from Japan
 - Rice and beans from West Africa, Brazil, and many other countries
 - Fried rice from China
 - Paella [pahy-**ey**-yuh] from Spain
 - Arroz con Leche (Rice Pudding) from Spain and Latin American cultures
 - Chicken Tikka ['ti:kə] Masala with Rice from India
 - Tahdig [**tah**-deeg] from Iran
 - Risotto [ri-**saw**-toh] from Italy
- After listing several examples, take a class poll to see how many people have had different types of rice dishes.

INSTRUCTION (40 minutes)

1. Tell students that today they will learn more about rice and the different ways it can be eaten, starting with how rice is grown. Videos below are several examples about growing rice, both in the US (Missouri) and in other countries.
 - "How Rice is Made" video by Deutz-Fahr
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JqEse7JffE>
 - "Remarkable Ride: How Does Rice Grow?" (in the United Kingdom) by Tesco Eat Happy Project
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxAEiHCErSA>
 - "Missouri Rice Farming" by Missouri Farm Bureau
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orwWM33drJw>
 - "Soar Over the Lush Rice Terraces of the Philippines" by National Geographic
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LqAJJoD-PpA>
 - *Teacher note: Choose one or two of these videos to show initially, depending on the time you have available. Then, consider showing the other videos as follow-up activities to reinforce learning and spark further discussions later in the day or week.*
2. Now that students understand a bit more about how rice is grown, think about how this one common ingredient is eaten in all sorts of ways around the world. Rice is a common ingredient in many countries and many cultures. It is a food that connects us! Explain also that foods have sources and origins. Rice is a food that is grown and eaten in many different places, and in different ways, and they can be important to that person's culture, memories, and family.
3. Tell students that they are now going to watch a video about one way to prepare rice that is popular in Spanish and Latin American cooking: "Arroz con Leche" with Chef Christopher Del Cid: <https://vimeo.com/417668558>
4. Play video from the beginning. Pause at different points of the video (timestamps are indicated below) and invite discussion and engagement with the following prompts:
 - *Teacher note: You can decide which prompts to use and which ones to skip depending on your students and the time you have available.*
 - i. At 0:14:
 1. Chef Christopher is about to show us a dish called Arroz con Leche. The name of the dish is in Spanish, do you know what it means?

Arroz is rice, con is with, and leche is milk. So it's rice with milk.

a. Teacher note: Students who speak Spanish may want to share this knowledge with the class if they choose to do so.

ii. At 01:20:

1. Chef Christopher just showed us all the ingredients of the dish. Which ingredients are you familiar with, and which ones are new to you? Where do you think he might have gotten these ingredients?

iii. At 05:07:

1. We could add raisins, maple syrup, cocoa powder, and other ingredients to the dish! What would you add to the Arroz con Leche if you were the one cooking it?

iv. At the end:

1. Chef Christopher mentioned that this dish reminds him of home. Who do you think might have made it for him before? What dishes remind you of your home?

v. Teacher note: Use your discretion and take cues from your students to add quick movement/brain breaks throughout the video as well.

5. Optionally, students (and/or the teacher) could learn more about the history of Arroz con Leche through research online or perhaps through students and students' families.
6. Work with students to write a short story about Arroz con Leche - *from the viewpoint of the rice* - starting from where it was grown to how it ended up in the Arroz con Leche! Let students know it's important to think about the narrator of the story - and for this story, it will be a grain of rice!
7. Write the first part of the story for modeling and with help from students. Then, have students finish the story on their own. If they need help about the steps of Arroz con Leche, they can reference the video. (see example below). Model watching the video and then rewatching while pausing to take notes.

Example of modeled/teacher-led pre-writing and paragraph using information from this video: "How Rice is Made" video by Deutz-Fahr

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JqEse7JffE>

Pre-Writing Brainstorm:

What are the steps of growing and harvesting rice?

- Tractors make sure that the field is level with no bumps.
- Rice seeds are planted in mud.
- Rice is grown in fields called paddy fields that are covered with water.
- The sun keeps the water and plants warm at night.
- Plants sprout and grow.
- Water is removed from the field.
- A combine separates the stalks and the grains.
- Grains are refined (milled or ground) and are ready to be eaten.

*Example of first paragraph about growing rice from the viewpoint of a grain of rice:
Before I was born, my farmers made sure the land where I would grow would be nice and flat. Then, when the field was a little wet, I was planted as a seed in the mud! You may not think that mud would be a good place to grow - but it's perfect for a rice plant like the one I came from! I grew up in a rice paddy which is a field that is flooded with water. This water is warmed by the sun during the day and keeps me nice and warm at night. Next, the rice plant I grew up on grew big and strong. After, the water was removed from my paddy and a big tractor called a combine picked all of the rice plants, including the one where I was growing. Then, a cool machine separated me and the other grains from the stalks - I missed the stalks, but I appreciated my freedom! Last, my outer shell was ground a little to make me ready for my next adventure and ready to be part of a delicious dish!*

8. Optionally, depending on the ability level of the students and timing, model the story of a grain of rice from field to plate and then have students choose their favorite rice dish and tell its "story."

CLOSING (teacher discretion)

1. Students can share their findings with their stories with classmates. For older students, classmates could peer review their classmates' writing and offer feedback or ask questions. If appropriate, encourage students to take a photo the next time they eat rice. If they make a rice dish, ask them to also notice where the rice is from -this is usually listed on the bag of dry rice near the nutrition label as a "product of xx country"

EXTENSION IDEAS

- Check out Pilot Light's [Food Education Center](#) for free food education lessons and resources for home and school.
- **Content Integration:**
 - Literacy: Read nonfiction passages about the sources and origins of other foods, or more about rice itself. Some possible texts:
 - <https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/rice/353717>
 - <https://easyscienceforkids.com/rice/>
 - <https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/rice/276721>
 - Math: Use the ingredients in the Arroz con Leche recipe to talk about ratios.
 - Science: Discuss the idea of absorption - as the rice heated up, it absorbed the liquid in the pot. What are some other examples of this process taking place in real life?
 - Social Studies: Trace the country of origin of various rice dishes, and mark them on the world map.
 - SEL: Talk about a rice dish that is special to your family and why, or talk about feeling words that could describe how the grain of rice is feeling in your story.

REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

Activities that worked	Topics to revisit	Community extension opportunities

SAMPLE

RECIPE FROM VIDEO

Video: "Arroz con Leche" with Chef Christopher Del Cid: <https://vimeo.com/417668558>

Arroz con Leche

Serves 5

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups of white rice (most white rice will do the trick!)
- 2 cups of water
- 1 ½ cups of milk (your choice of skim-whole)
- ¾ cup of evaporated milk
- ½ cup of condensed milk
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 tsp of vanilla extract
- Optional ingredients: ½ cup raisins, ½ tsp ground clove (or 2-3 whole), 1 star anise, and/or granulated sugar for sweetness
- Topping suggestions: feel free to get creative and make this your own, and serve in small bowls!
 - Banana slices, blueberries, strawberries, and peach slices
 - Dash of cinnamon and/or cocoa powder

Materials:

- Heat source
- Medium pot with lid
- 1 cup and ½ cup measuring cups
- 1 tsp measuring spoon
- Stirring spoon

Preparation:

1. First, make sure you clear your working area and that you've gathered all necessary ingredients.
2. Grab a medium pot and add the two cups of water, the rice, and the cinnamon stick.

3. Place a lid on the pot, set the heat on high, and wait until you bring the water to a boil.
4. When the water is boiling, bring the heat down to medium low and keep the lid closed.
5. Let the rice simmer for 10 minutes or until most of the water has evaporated.
6. Add 1 ½ cups of milk + the ¾ cups of evaporated milk + ½ cups of condensed milk + 1 tsp of vanilla extract.
 - a. If desired, this would be the time to add the ½ cup of raisins, the ½ tsp of ground clove (or whole clove), star anise, and/or sugar!
7. Using the stirring spoon, mix ingredients together gently as you're adding them, then continue to stir slowly, allowing the mixture to thicken. Allow about 8 minutes. Adjust the heat accordingly.
8. After those 8 minutes have passed, turn off the heat and allow the rice to sit and cool down, keeping the lid closed during this time. Wait about 10 minutes.
9. Serve and enjoy!

Name: _____



The Story of Rice

As a class, we will write a story about how rice moves from the fields to our plate. We will write this from the point of view of a grain of rice! You will finish writing the story by describing how the grain of rice is made into Arroz con Leche or another rice dish!

Pre-Writing Brainstorm:

What are the steps of growing and harvesting rice?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

What are the steps of the rice recipe?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

8.

Let's write our story together - remember it is from the point of view of the character.

SAMPLE