

LESSON 27



Foods From Around the World

Background

Although all people of the world eat food because it provides nutrients and energy, they get their nutrients from many different types of foods prepared in many different ways. In Italy, Mexico, China, and Ethiopia, the types of foods and patterns of eating differ greatly from those in the United States. Yet the traditional diets of each country provide the people with the nutrients they need to grow and stay healthy. In Italy, the midday meal is the largest meal of the day. It consists of several courses, including an appetizer course called *antipasto*. Evening meals are traditionally light. Pizza was first served in Naples, a city in southern Italy, as bread topped with tomatoes and mozzarella cheese. It is eaten as a light evening meal or as a snack. Traditional foods in Mexico include corn, tortillas, tomatoes, beans, rice, chocolate, and cheese. Canned milk and powdered milk are common. Traditionally, Mexicans eat breakfast, a main midday meal, and a light evening meal or snack. Tortillas are generally served at every meal as bread.

In China, especially in the southern regions, people usually eat rice with every meal. Many cooks prepare it each morning and keep it on the stove ready to eat all through the day. Along with rice, meals often include seafood, chicken, soybean products, noodles, and vegetables.

People in Ethiopia typically eat one main meal in the evening. Lentils, other beans, teff (a kind of grain), bread, potatoes, fruit, and vegetables are a big part of their diets.

Experimenting with dishes from other countries can bring excitement to a meal as well as provide a whole new range of foods that can fit into a healthy diet when the best choices are incorporated.

Estimated Teaching Time and Related Subject Areas

Estimated teaching time: 1 hour

Related subject areas: social studies, geography

Objectives

- Understand that different foods are eaten in different countries around the world.
- Identify foods from Mexico, China, Italy, and Ethiopia.
- Discuss what food groups the foods for each country belong in.
- Perform a safe workout while learning about multiethnic foods.

Materials

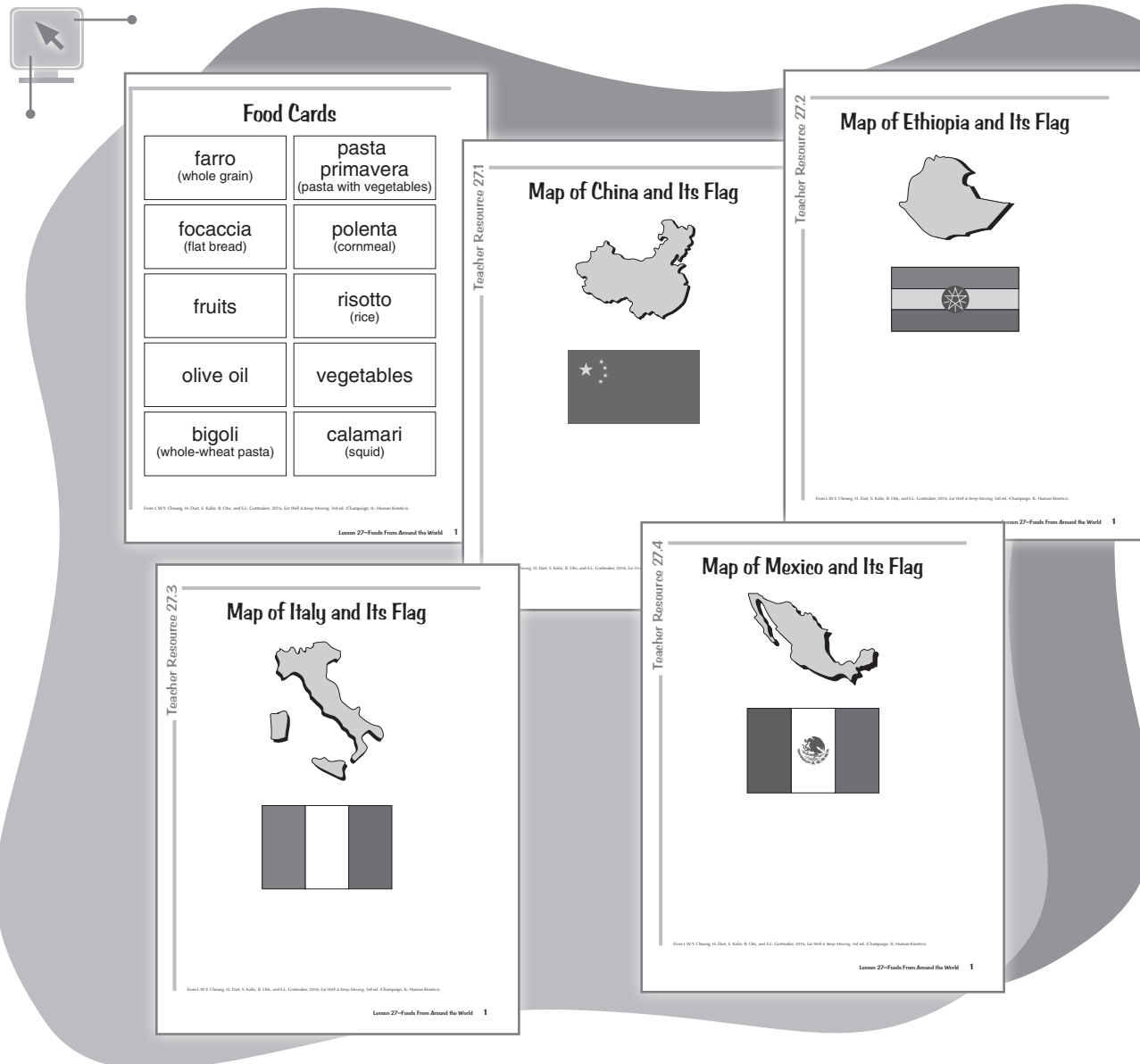
- Cards listing foods from each country (duplicate the cards to create four sets)
- Maps of Mexico, China, Italy, and Ethiopia (Teacher Resources 27.1 through 27.4)
- Four bags to hold the food cards

Procedure

As in previous lessons, this lesson should follow the format of the safe workout.

1. Lead the students through a warm-up.

Warm-up—The first part of the safe workout, in which slow movements get the body ready for the fitness activity.



2. Explain to the students that they are going to participate in a fitness activity focusing on foods from Italy, Mexico, China, and Ethiopia. Remind them that they should get at least one hour of physical activity every day.

Fitness activity—The part of the safe workout in which strength and endurance fitness exercises are performed.

3. Have the class form four groups.
4. The students will be walking in place nonstop while grouped in line in the center of the room.
5. Place the four maps on the floor in the four corners of the room. (This can be done beforehand.) Tell the students which map has been placed in which corner, or hang a sign above each map.
6. Place a bag of food cards in front of each group. (For a summary of the food cards and the food groups to which they belong, see table 27.1, Food Groups.)

7. Tell the students that on your signal, the first person in each line should take a food card out of his bag, walk or jog carefully to the map of the country from which that food comes, and place the card on it.
8. All students should continue to walk in place nonstop until all the food cards have been distributed on the maps. Remind the students to continue to move throughout the entire fitness activity.
9. After all the food cards have been placed on the maps, assign a country to each of the four groups. Have each group walk or jog over to its assigned map.
10. Lead the students in a cool-down and stretch.
Cool-down—The part of the safe workout in which your body slows down and recovers from the fitness activity.
Stretch—The last part of the safe workout, in which you do exercises that improve flexibility fitness.
11. Have each group review the foods placed on its map to make sure all the foods belong there. If the students in a group have questions about the placement of a food, they can ask you individually or bring their questions up with the entire class during step 12.
12. Move to each map in the room and discuss the foods of each country and the food groups to which they belong (see table 27.1). Discuss the Principles of Healthy Living—specifically, those related to eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and foods with healthy fat—and discuss which foods from each country best fit those principles. Also discuss combination foods (foods containing more than one food group). Remind students that not all the foods displayed are necessarily best-choice foods as-is. For example, choose a dish (pasta primavera), and ask what can be done to make it a more nutritious meal (it can be made with 100% whole-wheat pasta instead of white pasta).
13. Using the food cards, discuss how the eating habits and choices of people in these countries are different from or similar to the eating habits and food choices of people in the United States.

TABLE 27.1 Food Groups

ITALIAN FOOD CARDS	
Farro (whole grain)	Grain
Calamari (squid)	Protein
Bigoli (whole-wheat pasta* with anchovy sauce)	Protein; grain
Polenta (cornmeal)	Grain
Focaccia (flat bread*)	Grain
Risotto (rice*)	Grain
Fruits	Fruit
Vegetables	Vegetable
Olive oil	Healthy oil***
Pasta primavera (pasta* with vegetables)	Grain, vegetable

CHINESE FOOD CARDS

Bean sprouts	Vegetable
Fresh fruits	Fruit
Chicken (roasted, baked, steamed)	Protein
Mi fen (rice noodles*)	Grain
Vegetable lo mein (noodles*)	Grain, vegetable
Sautéed vegetables in peanut oil	Vegetable; healthy oil***
Chow fan (noodles*)	Grain
Tofu (bean curd)	Protein
Congee (rice* pudding)	Grain
Chinese cabbage	Vegetable
Fish	Protein
Brown rice	Grain

MEXICAN FOOD CARDS

Beans	Protein
Corn	Vegetable
Beans and rice*	Protein; grain
Pork**	Protein
Amaranth	Grain
Rice*	Grain
Salsa	Fruit, vegetable
Tortillas*	Grain
Cheese	Dairy
Tostadas*	Grain
Chicken enchiladas*	Protein; grain

ETHIOPIAN FOOD CARDS

Beans	Protein
Injera (whole-grain bread)	Grain
Fruits	Fruit
Lentils	Protein
Gomen (collard greens)	Vegetable
Misir wat (lentil stew)	Protein
Yams	Vegetable
Shero wat (pea stew)	Vegetable
Teff (whole grain)	Grain
Vegetables	Vegetable

*When possible, choose whole grains or foods made with minimally processed whole grains.

**Limit red meat; avoid bacon, cold cuts, and other processed meats.

***Healthy oil is not a food group, but these oils are a good source of healthy fat.

