

**School Year:** 2008-2009

**Theme:** China

**Grade Level:** Seventh

**Time Required:** 1 hour

**# of Students:** whole class, 35 students

**Modified/ Adapted From:** Harvest of the Month, CDE Fruit and Vegetable Cards

*Note: this copy is a working copy and has not yet been approved by the Network  
For a Healthy California*



## China in the Garden

### Goal:

Students are introduced to fruits and vegetables that originated in China as well as wellness practices and the cultural significance of citrus through a multi-station activity.

### Objectives:

- 1- Students will be able to analyze the nutritional value of varied Chinese fruits and vegetables.
- 2- Students will be able to develop an insight into the cultural importance of citrus for Chinese New Year through an instructional read aloud.
- 3- Students will be able to learn about stress reduction techniques and perform basic tai chi breathing and stretching.

### Materials:

- Station 1: One each of the following veggie cards: bok choy, pumello, water spinach, bamboo shoot, mandarin, snow peas, kiwi, bitter melon, rambutan, lotus root  
White board with instructions
- Station 2: Citrus veggie cards  
Teacher instructions  
Excerpt from  
White board with directions  
Mandarins for tasting
- Station 3: Tai Chi instructions

### Background:

This lesson can be taught at the beginning or middle of a unit on China. I find it helpful when the students are at least familiar with the climate and topography of China.

### Procedure:

1. Set up the stations.
2. Meet the students in the classroom, and ask them to share out answers to the following questions:  
*What do you remember about agriculture in China? Staple food crops?*
3. Take the students out to the garden, and divide students into three groups.
4. Draw attention to each station location. Explain that the students will have 10 minutes at each station to complete the given task.
5. At each station, hold up the task card and read the overview.
6. Have the students go to their first station.
7. After 10 minutes, explain to students the rotation direction, and then ring the bell. Allow two minutes for passing and refocus.

8. After one more rotation, have all students come back to the tables.

### **Stations:**

Station 1: The teacher leads students in an instructional read aloud. Students answer response questions at appropriate times in their journals.

Station 2: Students use veggie cards to investigate Chinese fruits and vegetables, as well as analyzing nutrient values of each.

Station 3: Students are lead through introductory breathing and stretching techniques of Tai Chi.

### **Closing Discussion/Assessment:**

#### 3-2-1 Closing

Pose each question to the group that ended with that number. Have them practice with a partner what they are going to say and then share out.

3- Fruits or vegetables that were eaten in the ancient China

2-Ways agricultural advances changed life for people

1- Health practice in Ancient China

### **References:**

Holt World History Text, Medieval to Early Modern Times

CDE Fruit and Vegetable Cards

The Chinese Banquet Cookbook, Eileen Yin-Fei Lo, pg. 1

Harvest of the Month

### **Core Curriculum and Health Standards:**

Grade Level: Seventh

#### Social Studies

3.2 Describe agricultural, technological, and commercial developments during the Tang and Sung periods.

3.4 Understand the importance of both overland trade and maritime expeditions between China and other civilizations in the Mongol Ascendancy and Ming Dynasty.

#### Health

7/8.1.N.2 Identify nutrients and their relationship to health

7/8 1.N.6 Analyze the caloric and nutritional value of foods and beverages

7/8 7.M.26 Demonstrate effective coping mechanisms and strategies for managing stress

Originally Submitted by: Catherine Pearce

Reviewed by Registered Dietitian:

Reviewed by Certified Teacher:

## Station #1 Student Instructions

### Steps:

1. Finish the following sentence:

What did people eat in ancient China?

2. Listen to the read-aloud for the following questions:

What are foods that are believed to be powerful?

Why should there be bowls of oranges in the house at the beginning of the New Year?

3. Answer questions and share out.

4. Tasting tangelos (or other citrus).

### Read Aloud, Excerpt from *The Chinese Banquet Cookbook*:

"To most Chinese, food is more than food. It is ritual, symbolism. What is eaten, when, how often, in what season, in what order, are often dictated by the writings of Confucius, by that Ch'ing dynasty gastronomic philosopher Yuan Mei, by the religions of Buddhism and Taoism, and by mythological beliefs.

Eat noodles on your sixtieth birthday, for then you will live longer. Cut the white portion of chicken neatly and precisely or it will not be fit to eat. Be certain there are bowls of tangerines and oranges in your house so that you, and those to whom you offer them, will be assured of sweetness in life. Before the New Year offer food to your ancestors so that they will not be 'hungry ghosts.' Be certain that a pregnant woman is given stalks of ripe grain. When a baby is born its first bath must contain fresh garlic and the leaves of the wong pei, a kumquat like fruit. On the feast of the August Moon eat moon cakes filled with sweet lotus seed paste so that in your next incarnation you will be beautiful."

## Station #2 Student Instructions

### Steps

1. Choose a card.
2. Copy the name of your Chinese fruit or vegetable.
3. Draw a quick picture.
4. Check the nutrition information. What is the most significant vitamin or mineral?  
What do you think this vitamin or mineral does for your body?
5. Do at least 3 cards.

### Station #3 Tai Chi

Ask students what are the components to living a healthy life.

Most will say eat healthy, exercise. Lead them also to reducing stress, meditation.

Explain that one of the reasons so many centenarians are from China may be because of the belief in the mind/body connection.

Explain that a daily meditative practice for many people in China is called Tai Chi, which is also a form of martial arts. The routine practice of this art may help in stress reduction and positive health.

Have students form two lines with their arms out so they will have space to stretch.

Have students practice breathing in slowly on a three count, holding it for one and then releasing the breath slowly on a three count. Do this several times until all students are participating.

Explain to students that one way to stay healthy is to find a way to separate yourself from negative energy that comes your way. Have students make "scoops" with their hands and stretch their arms out in time with the breathing, imagining that they are pushing away any negative thoughts/energy they are feeling.

Do a similar exercise stretching upwards.

Explain that now that the students have pushed away any negativity, they are going to gather some positive energy from the sun in "sun salutation."

Have the students make scoops and gather the sun's energy while breathing in on the three count, then bringing it to the center with the exhale of the three count.

Circle up and have the students tell you one thing they learned that day about Chinese health and fitness.