



## MEXICAN FOOD

**Level:** middle school / 6-8 grade  
**Course:** home economics, social studies,  
Spanish

### Rationale

To provide students with analytical schemata for increased understanding of cultural foods and cultural materials. To introduce students to Mexican culture through food. To introduce students to the differences between Mexican chocolate and our own as well as the utensils used to make it. To have students practice their computer/research skills by looking up a recipe for Mexican chocolate on the Internet. Students will demonstrate their ability to translate by translating the recipes into English. Finally students will show creativity by inventing their own original recipe for Mexican chocolate.

### Objective

Students will show their ability to analyze several artifacts by answering various questions posed by the person introducing it thus showing their ability to see the artifacts as sources of information. Students will demonstrate their computerskills by looking up a recipe for Mexican chocolate using the Internet.

### Time Needed

one-two 55 minute sessions.

by  
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## Materials

Mexican chocolate, wooden *molinillo* or whisk (utensil used by Mexicans to whip their chocolate), milk, pan to heat the milk and chocolate in stove or hot plate, various ingredients to add to the recipe in order to change it

## Procedure

Present the artifacts using the handout, *Seven Ways to Look at an Artifact*. After the students have thoroughly discussed the two artifacts, have them look up the recipe for Mexican chocolate on the Internet using the URL: <http://gnn.com/cgi-bin/gnn/currency> Students then discuss the various recipes shown on the Internet, translate them and then come up with a new one of their own.

## Possible follow up activities

1. Students could make up artistic recipe cards with both the original recipe as well as their new ones so that others could make them in the future.
2. Students could start up a classroom recipe book on their favorite Mexican recipes or cocoa recipes from around the world.
3. Students could make up gift packages for either family members, friends, or locals in retirement homes or as a community service project.
4. Students could send American hot chocolate gift packages to their pen pals in Mexico.
5. Students could do a science project on the production and harvesting of cocoa.

## Handout

### *Seven Ways to Look at an Artifact*

From "Designing Your Exhibits: Seven Ways Look at an Artifact," by Fred Schroeder, University of Minnesota. Technical Leaflet #91 of the American Association for State and Local History.

1. How was it made? Identify the material and the process of manufacture.
2. How was it used? Determine the practical function of the artifact within its society, and its method of operation.
3. What was its environment? Define its specific context, and the type of artifacts with which it would be directly associated.
4. What comparisons can be made between it and other forms of the artifact from different time periods? Relate it to its relatives in the developmental history of the object within its culture.

5. What comparisons can be made between it and similar artifacts from other countries? Find cross-cultural analogues, and compare them as variations on a theme. Examine them as expressions of their cultures.
6. What influenced its design and decoration? Consider the degree to which such factors as practical use, historical development, changing environments, and cultural traditions (internal and external) may have affected the overall design of the object. Analyze any decorative elements, stylistic motifs, and trademarks.
7. What values does it represent? Determine, if possible, the meaning or meanings which the object had for its owners, such as aesthetic, religious, political, mythical, or didactic.

## Bibliography

<http://gnn.com/cgi-bin/gnn/>

(follow to Travel Resource, to Region, County, State, and City Guides, to Latin American and Caribbean, to Mexico not "Welcome to Mexico," to Historia, to Geografia, to Arte, to Economia, to Ciencia, to Deporte, to Turism, to Folklore, then under Folklore one can go on to other subtitles such as: Fiestas y Tradiciones, to Religion, to Musica, to Danza, to Tianguis y Mercados, to Charrería, to Picardía Mexicana, or to Cocina).

"Designing Your Exhibits: Seven Ways Look at an Artifact," by Fred Schroeder, University of Minnesota. Technical Leaflet #91 of the American Association for State and Local History.

"From the Americas to Europe, from the Sacred to the Sublime: A Brief History of Chocolate," lesson plan by Bayita Garoffolo O'Rourke, LADB URL: <http://ladb.unm.edu/www/projects/>