

Lesson Plan: Kaffee- und Teegesellschaften

Subject

German: Level I-IV (with adjustments), German Cultural Studies

Duration

Varies

Objectives

By the end of this unit, all students will have learned about:

- Working with authentic, historical material.
- The processes of assimilation and acculturation in an immigrant group, using German-Americans as an example.
- German-American food traditions, especially “coffee and tea time.”

In addition, all students will have experienced:

- Learning across subject lines and cooperating with other school classes.
- The relevance of family and community history and cultural traditions.

With regard to German-language instruction (depending on level), students will also be able to:

- Recognize and use German vocabulary related to food and food traditions, in particular “coffee and tea time.”
- Read simple, transcribed recipes and text passages from a historic cookbook (Levels I and II).
- Read recipes and text passages in *Fraktur* (Levels III and higher).
- Convert German units of measurement to American ones and vice versa.
- Deal with basic language structures in German recipes (tenses, word order, etc.).
- Hold their own historic “*Kaffeegesellschaft*”

Resources and Materials Needed

- Teacher Resources I and II (“[The Story of Immigration Told through Cookbooks](#)” and “[Kaffee- und Teegesellschaften](#)”) for teacher information or as student handouts.
- Teacher Resource III “[Interpreting Historic Cookbooks](#).”
- Historic German-American cookbooks: Excerpts can be found at [Kochbuch für die Deutschen in Amerika](#).

Introductory Activities

- Partner interviews (student handouts [1a in English](#) or [1b in German](#))
 - Follow-up activities:
 - Students randomly ask each other the same questions in front of the whole class, by tossing a ball to each other.
 - Students create lists of cake ingredients and verbs that have to do with baking and eating cake, making and drinking tea/coffee.
- Overview of historic German-American cookbooks ([Teacher Resource I](#)): The teacher might want to have the students read the text.
 - Follow-up activities:
 - Classroom discussion on immigrant groups in Wisconsin in the late nineteenth century, German publishing companies in Wisconsin, what cookbooks reveal about society, etc.
- Overview of the German tradition of *Kaffeetrinken* or *Kaffeegesellschaften* ([Teacher Resource II](#)). Teacher might want to present the facts or have students read the text themselves.
 - Follow-up activity:
 - Students discuss how this German tradition compares with American ones.

Working with Text

Activity I: Kaffeegesellschaften: Erste Art and/or Herren-und Damen-Thees

Students read text [Kaffeegesellschaften: Erste Art](#) and/or [Herren-und Damen-Thees](#). Lower level students might want to read only selected parts of the [transcribed text](#), while higher level students might be able to read the text in its original *Fraktur*.

1. **First reading:** students underline all words they can find that have to do with food or drink.
2. **Partner or small group activity:** Students make different lists of words they find in the text. Different groups could be assigned different lists. These lists will be shared with the whole class:
 - a. Names of cakes.
 - b. Other foods.
 - c. Words that have to do with setting a table.
3. **Web activity:** Students (individually or in pairs) try to find the recipes for the dishes mentioned in the text at [Kochbuch für die Deutschen in Amerika](#). After that, students will group recipes according to which of these foods they have actually tried, heard of or never heard of.

Activity II: Recipes

The teacher selects recipes from the Max Kade Institute website or has students select their own from the site. These should be recipes that are mentioned in the “Kaffeegesellschaft” section or similar ones.

1. **Individual or Partner Work:** Students will read recipes and make lists of ingredients they know and do not know.
 - a. Which of these ingredients strike students as ‘German,’ ‘American’ or ‘typical for the nineteenth century?’
 - b. Students will make a list of the different units of measurement used.

2. **Partner or Group Work:** Students will create their own menu for a *Kaffeegesellschaft* from these recipes.

Listening Comprehension

Activity I: Aber bitte mit Sahne

Students will listen to Udo Jürgens's "Aber bitte mit Sahne."

Text: <http://www.udojuergens.de/cd/songtext/aberbitte.htm>

Midi: <http://www.udojuergens.de> klick on music → midi → Aber bitte mit Sahne

1. **First listening:** Students write down the names of all the foods they can understand as well as the names of people and verbs that have to do with eating. In a follow-up group activity, students make lists of these words.
2. **Second listening:** Students read the text with words blacked out, then listen to the song again and fill in the words.
3. **Discussion topic:** What message does Udo Jürgens try to convey with his song?

Hands-on Activities

Activity I: Making the Product

An individual student will choose one or two recipes and make the dish at home.

Activity II: Being a TV Chef

An individual student or two partners demonstrate how to make a dish from one of the old recipes in front of the class. The student should talk through the various stages of the food preparations. Two students should engage in meaningful dialogue on the subject.

Activity III: Being Martha Stewart

A student (possibly with a partner) demonstrates in front of the class how to properly set a table for a *Kaffee- or Theegesellschaft* according to Henriette Davidis's nineteenth century etiquette. While doing this, s/he describes the different stages of the process.

Group Activities

Activity I: Have a *Kaffeegesellschaft*

A group of students act out a *Kaffeegesellschaft*. This should include a hostess, someone who is serving food and a few guests. Students engage in appropriate conversations about the serving of the food and drinks, engage in small talk, etc.

Community and Research Activities

Activity I: Interviewing a Grandparent

Students interview their parents, grandparents or an old family friend about food traditions from their childhood, especially with regard to cakes and desserts. They then write a short summary and report it to the class. Lower levels could do this in English, higher levels in German.

Activity II: Sharing an Old Family Recipe with a German Friend

Students pretend that a German friend wants to know about traditional American cakes and desserts and write out an old family recipe in German to send him/her. Attention should be paid to the conversion of measurements, oven temperatures, etc. This could be a good exercise to review numbers, including digits.

Activity III: Comparing German-American with Old American Cookbooks

Students research old American cookbooks, which they can find in local libraries, at historical societies and sometimes even in their own homes. They will compare cake recipes in American cookbooks with those in the German-American one:

- What kind of cakes and desserts can be found in both cookbooks?
- What kind of cakes and desserts can only be found in the American or the German-American cookbook?
- Are there any ingredients that show up exclusively in one of the cookbooks?
- Is there a similar section to the “Kaffeegesellschaften” in the American cookbook? If so, what would it be and how does it differ?
- Does the American cookbook include advice on how to properly entertain, set a table, etc.? If so, how does it differ from the “Kaffee- und Theegesellschaften” text?

Activity IV: Comparing Old German-American Cookbooks with Modern German Cookbooks.

Students will compare cake and dessert recipes from the historic German-American cookbooks with recipes in general modern German cookbooks and *Backbücher*. They will answer similar questions to the ones under Activity III. Also, in looking at recipes that do not show up in modern cookbooks anymore, they will try to decide if the item in the German-American cookbook was added as a result of acculturation to the new world, or if it is a dish that has simply disappeared over time. Many modern German recipes can be found on the web (see Resources, below).

Connecting with other Classes and Groups in School

Activity I: Historic Bake Sale

German students team up with a Family and Consumer Education class to make many of the historic recipes. This could be a great fundraiser.

Activity II: Historic International Food Bazaar

German students or the German Club join students of other world languages or cultural clubs in putting on a historic international food bazaar. This could be part of a larger multicultural school event.

Assessment

Many of the above activities can be used and adjusted for assessment purposes.

Resources

1. Max Kade Institute Web Page: <http://www.wisc.edu/mki>

2. Other Sources on the Web:

- The Food Time Line: <http://www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food.html>
- The Culinary Time Line: <http://www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food1.html>
- Modern German Recipes:
 - <http://www.backen-rezepte.de>
 - <http://www.kochendatenbank.de>
- German Coffee and Cake Traditions:
 - Die Bergische Kaffeetafel: <http://www.berg.net/region/wermelskirchen/freizeit/kaffeetafel.htm>
 - Kaffee, Kuchen und Kultur: http://www.cookinglight.com/articles/get_article.asp?aID=9943&AreaID=5

3. Lesson Plans on the Web

- List of Plans: <http://www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food2a.html#diversity>
- Kindergarten: Bread around the World: <http://www.prof-dev.okcps.k12.ok.us/coreunits/kinderbread.htm>
- Middle School: Cultures and Cuisines Research <http://www.prof-dev.okcps.k12.ok.us/coreunits/kinderbread.htm>
- Grades 7/8: History through the Study of Cookbooks http://askeric.org/cgi-bin/printlessons.cgi/Virtual/Lessons/Social_Studies/US_History/USH0201.html

4. Publications

- Reomig Goree, Sue and Joanne Asala, eds. *German Recipes: Old World Amana Recipes and Photographs*
- Maas Weaver, Nevilee, ed. *Rezepte-German-Texan Culinary Art*. A collection of heritage recipes from the early nineteenth century originally written in German and translated into English.

5. Henriette Davidis

- Davidis-Abend mit Menu: http://www.hgv-sprockhoevel.de/Veranstaltungen/Davidis/hauptteil_davidis.html
- Davidis Museum: <http://www.henriette-davidis-musem.de>
- Burgi Kühnemann, *Rauchfleischlichkeiten & Mockturteltauben: Heinrich Heine und Henriette Davidis ins Bild gesetzt* (1997)
- **Kochbuchmuseum Dortmund:** http://www.museendortmund.de/Kochbuchmuseum/04_samm.htm