The lesson plan provided in the following pages was used on Thursday, February 28, 2013 during a class meeting of Anthropology of Food: ANTH 1752. This class meets weekly for two-and-a-half hours, and the lesson plan is designed to fill the entirety of that time. With such a long class to fill, it is critical to employ a variety of teaching methods to keep students engaged and learning.

The first part of every class period is devoted to Practical Matters. For example, this class meeting was held after students participated in an anonymous mid-term course evaluation, and time at the beginning of class was devoted to providing feedback on these surveys. One common concern that students mentioned in their reviews was what I termed a “love-hate relationship” with the reading response assignments. Students complained that it was a lot of work, and that it was particularly difficult to fit everything in the one-page limit. Conversely, they also commented that the assignments forced them to read carefully, and admitted they were much better prepared for class discussion after completing the reading response assignment. I encouraged them to focus in on the key themes of the readings rather than “random facts” used as supporting evidence to the authors primary argument--this will improve the notes and help them save space.

Progressing to the lesson learning objectives, I refocus student attention on the day’s topic. This week began as they worked in small groups of four to define concepts that we would then unpack and discuss for the remainder of the class period. I use slides during each of my lessons to help organize the course content and help students follow the discussion. Slides are effective when students are working in small groups because I place the directions for the activity on the slide, providing a reference for students as they progress in small group discussion. They also provide an organizational anchor when students transition to other instructional models including mini lectures or large group discussion.

In discussion oriented classes, it is imperative that slides remain a teaching tool and not strict instructional format. Instructors need to be flexible, and respond to student discussion and interest as it emerges, and too frequently slides squash this type of organic learning. One strength of this lesson, was that I was able to respond to vivid class discussion, and refer to question prompts that I had planned to bring up in later slides, at an earlier point in the discussion. This meant that the lesson did not follow the structure I had envisioned when I created the slides, but I was able to ensure that all the salient topics were covered in the discussion.

Each week, class ends with a brief, three to five minute classroom assessment activity. This allows students to refocus their learning that day on a specific question, often relating course material to other classes, their desired careers, or personal experiences. When students have an opportunity to apply course content to their personal experience, they make more lasting and relevant connections.

Reflection: Aspects of this specific lesson that worked particularly well were the hands-on activity involving reading food labels, and the detailed discussions of the cultural factors that contribute to definitions of food. Students reflected on topics from previous lessons, explaining the difference between emic and etic definitions of food, and those definitions that they identified as ethnocentric. To break up the monotony of this long class, students examined the labels of a variety of snack foods. As they were reading labels, eating snacks, and talking in small groups, the discussion became very lively as they began to debate the differences between the “food” and “non-food” that they were consuming. Two periods of small group activity, punctuated with large group discussion helped to capture and maintain
the attention of the students, as evidenced by their enthusiastic discussion and my ability to get nearly every student to contribute to large group discussions. Students were clearly enjoying their learning as they laughed and shared food together.

One weakness of the lesson was that discussion evolved in a different order than I anticipated, causing the slides to be out of sequence. This was not a problem for me as I could ensure that all the salient topics were covered. However, the fact that I skipped slides because we had already addressed those topics, was disconcerting to some of the students. Some students said, “Wait! I didn’t get all of that!” Comments such as these confirm my suspicion that students place high value on the content of slides, sometimes to the detriment of their learning. I reassured students that they would be able to download the slides from CourseWeb after class, and reiterated that the slides covered topics we had already addressed, not topics that I felt we ran out of time for, or that were no longer important. Teaching with slides requires careful attention to student focus to ensure they do not become overly committed to the content of the slides at the expense of critical thinking. This provided an excellent moment for me to refer to the course learning objectives, and remind them that their critical thinking skills are what is important, not memorizing text printed on slides.
Lesson Plan and Reflection

February 28, 2013  6:00-8:30pm
Anthropology of Food 1752

Lesson Plan—PowerPoint Presentation Developed with this Lesson

Readings for this Session

González Turmo, Isabel. “The Concepts of Food and Non-food: Perspectives from Spain.” (CI)

Messer, Ellen. “Food Definitions and Boundaries: Eating Constraints and Human Identities.” (CI)

Hladik, Claude Marcel. “Salt as a ‘Non-food’: To What Extent do Gustatory Perceptions Determine Non-food vs Food Choices?” (CI)

Schiefenhövel, Wulf and Paul Blum. “Insects: Forgotten and Rediscovered as Food: Entomophagy among the Eipo, Highlands of West New Guinea and in Other Traditional Societies.” (CI)

Portalatín, María Jesús. “Eating Snot: Socially unacceptable but common: why?” (CI)

Macbeth, Helen et al. “Cannibalism: No myth, but why so rare?” (CI)

MacClancy, Jeremy. “Afterward: Earthy Realism: Geophagia in literature and art.” (CI)

Dylan Clark. The Raw & the Rotten: Punk Cuisine. (FAC)

Framing Questions/Comments Provided in Advance
How do we define what is food and what isn’t food? What types of non-food do we eat? Can you take a food and modify it to the extent that it is no longer a food? What changes a food from an editable product to an inedible product? How do we define food cross-culturally? To what extent does the procurement or preparation of the food determine what constitutes an edible foodstuff?

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills
1) Student is expected to have completed all the course readings
2) Some students will have prepared Reading Responses to these assignments and will be prepared to share what they have written, including questions for in-class discussion

Key Concepts/Terms for this Lesson
Food; non-food edible; inedible; “evidence-based” discussion and writing; GMO food; organic versus conventional; the politics of consumption; the cultural construction of “food”

Introduction to this Week’s Class Topic: Food and Non-Food 6:00
Practical Matters—Large Group Discussion

1) Reading Responses: Learning is Cumulative—remember this is part of your Field Journal assignment and I want to see how you progress in this work throughout the semester
2) Food and Nutrition Activities
3) Changes in syllabus based on Midterm Review on CourseWeb
   a. Cut down some of the readings—be sure to check CourseWeb to make sure you have the updated readings now
   b. Overwhelmingly good feedback on the films in class, on group activities, and on the reading responses forcing you to take good notes and come prepared to class
   c. Concern about difficulty of fitting reading responses on one page
      i. Use of space
      ii. Key themes rather than random facts

Learning Objectives—Instructor Lecture

Learning Objectives

- Define and explain ‘food’, ‘non-food’, ‘edible’ and ‘inedible’ as cultural constructs rather than definite terms
- Describe cultural factors that contribute to an item being labeled as food or non-food
- Link readings and discussion on explaining the concept of food to the theoretical underpinnings of this course—specifically Mary Douglas and Claude Levi-Strauss articles from Week 2
- Practice "Evidence-Based" Discussion—explain what this means and continue to develop the skills to use it in class discussions and in your writing.

Defining ‘Food’: Cultural Contexts Begin at 6:15-6:50—Small Group Activity

- Small group activity: Work in small groups of 4 and write down definitions for the following terms:
  o Food
  o Non-Food
  o Edible
  o Inedible
- Think about why you chose these definitions. How did you decide on these definitions?
- Share 2 or 3 examples of each definition with the class
Redefining Categories—Large Group Discussion

• Class Scenarios: Raise your hand if:
  o You would eat a leftover piece of chicken that you brought home from a restaurant but forgot to put in the refrigerator. It has been out of the refrigerator for 24 hours.
  o You would eat a pretzel that you dropped on the floor but picked up within 5 seconds
  o You would eat a carrot with some ranch dip on it that you dropped on the floor but picked it up within 5 seconds
  o A patron at a restaurant ordered the same burger as you but without cheese. The waiter brought it to the table and before the waiter left the table, the patron noticed that it had cheese on it and sent it back. The plate came back to the kitchen, and they brought that same plate out to you. Would you want it, or would you want a ‘fresh’ plate?
  o You would eat a bagel that was made entirely of GMO products and was more than 50% corn?

• How would Mary Douglas analyze your answer to the following questions?
• What cultural factors contribute to the definitions your groups came up with?
• When does something that is a ‘food’ become a ‘non-food’?

Break: 6:50-7:00—Have some snacks, but leave the packaging in tact for us to look at

Food Activity and Snack; 7:00-8:00—Small Group Activity

• Work with the same group you did before of 4 students.
• Take about 3-5 minutes with each food item
• Read the ingredients and think about the questions presented on the slide:

  - Work with your group. Pass these foods around and read the ingredients:
    - Is all of this food? Why?
    - Is there any ingredient that surprises you?
    - Compare and Contrast the ingredients of each of the foods
    - Is the food product that you see and eat distinct from the individual ingredients?

• Make notes on each of the food items
• As a class discuss the following questions:
• Go through each of the questions above and get examples from each group
• How do our definitions of edible and inedible counter our definitions of food and nonfood?
• What ‘non-foods’ are in these ‘foods’?
Food as a Cultural Construction—Large Group Discussion

• Is there anywhere in these definitions that you find personal disagreement with your food behaviors?
• Are there ‘foods’ that you would serve to other people if they came to eat at your house, but that you wouldn’t eat yourself?
• What things that are considered ‘foods’ in the definitions do you NOT eat?
  o Talk about religious beliefs and practices
  o Food allergies
  o Taste and preference
• Eating Cat—Example from Vanuatu
  o Aunt Lisa gave her cat away to someone who helped her do work on her house
  o The man at the cat—man Tanna vs man Pango
• Horse Meat
  o Example from the news currently
  o Horse meat from France being sold as ground beef
  o Would you eat that? Why or why not?
  o Is horsemeat a food?
• Bugs:
  o Table on 165;
  o Chocolate covered bee I ate. Have others eaten bugs before?
  o Ethnocentric bias in nutritional research 173
  o (CI 163-175)
• Snot (CI 177)
• “Trash” (FAC)
• GM Food (CI 59-61)
• Can you think of examples or topics from the readings that would challenge the definitions of food that you have written and discussed in your groups?

Link to Readings—Large Group Discussion

• How does Messer define food? Pg 53
• Are there examples form the readings that you think challenge our class definitions of ‘food’ and ‘non-food’?
• Are there any readings that discuss food where you disagree with the author’s argument?
• What foods were discussed that surprised you?

Why should we care about food and non-food?

• What does this tell us about cultural practices?
• What does this tell us about human health?
• Examples from the class
Lesson Plan and Reflection

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Lesson Plan

CAT: Classroom Assessment Techniques and In-Class Activity: Critical thinking and Analyzing Readings in the Context of the Food and Nutrition Activities 8:00-8:30

• Application Article—Evidence-Based Discussion—Individual Activity
  o Take out a sheet of paper and write for 10 minutes
  o Brief Paragraph
  o This builds on the activity we did last week. The papers were good, but I want you to be even more specific. Take the time to find a quote from one of the readings that will support your statement in your writing.
  o Again, this is practice for your Food and Nutrition Activities to help you think about what I mean when I ask you to analyze food and culture in the context of the readings, not just mention an author in passing

• Talk with your neighbor about what you wrote (10 minutes) —Small Group Activity
  o Explain your statements and analysis
  o Offer some advice and tips to each other about how you could strengthen your arguments
  o Feel free to make additional notes on papers based on your conversations.

• Share 3 or 4 examples with the class (5-10 minutes)—Large Group Discussion
  o Turn these in for me to read