

Three Sisters Soup

Preamble: This lesson is centered on the dramatic shift that took place in North America as the land was colonized. This shift moved away from the Indigenous culture of sharing and stewardship, and towards an economy based on private property. Forced relocation from traditional territories and food sources was devastating for Indigenous people and culture. The

Jigsaw Discussion: Student will use an excerpt written by an Indigenous Author to prompt their discussion. These can be handed out as a full section of reading, or cut into small chunks and distributed to groups.

Distribute sections of *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver. Students can attach their section to a mind map or large sheet of paper to carry out and record ideas from a group discussion using the following questions as prompts:

What are some of the key themes and ideas your section highlights?

How has our relationship with food changed since the Industrial Revolution?

Why is this important?

What are some things this has made you consider that you have never thought about, or questioned before?

What are some key points that you think are important to share with others?

Write down at least one quote from your section that you think is an important piece of information.

Once students are finished, they can hang their sheets of paper on the wall or leave them on their tables for a gallery walk.

Read: Excerpt from *The Gift of Strawberries* taken From “Braiding Sweetgrass” by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Students can follow along with their own copy.

Reflect: Have students complete a reflection based on the following questions:

Consider how we assign value to things in modern society. How can things be valuable in other ways than the dollar value?

How is our modern culture different from the Indigenous culture of North America (Turtle Island) before it was colonized?

How has our relationship with the land and our food changed as a result of colonization?

How has this changed our relationship with each other?

The session can be closed with a sharing circle to give students a chance to reflect on these ideas.

Extension Activity: as a class, or beforehand, make a pot of Three Sisters Soup to share with the class. See recipe below.

Three Sisters Soup

Amongst Aboriginal communities in central North America corn, beans and squash are known as the three sisters because when planted at the same time, in the same plot, work together to yield a larger crop than any of the three would produce alone. First, the corn sprouts up, providing a perfect stalk for the beans to climb up. Corn and beans grow upwards, while the squash is the last to spread out on the ground underneath. The combination of these three vegetables is delicious alone or all together and can be used in a variety of dishes. The addition of sage and sumac in this dish make it a wonderful warming soup for harvest time.

Serves 4-6

250 mL Kidney Beans

125mL corn

½ whole yam

½ whole sweet potato

¼ whole squash (butternut)

¼ white onion

1 tsp Sage

1 tsp Sumac

Salt and pepper to taste

1 Tbsp oil

1 Tbsp Vegetable stock or bullion

Procedure

1. Peel and chop vegetables into fine cubes (roughly the size of the end of your finger)
2. Add oil and onion to stock pot and fry over low heat for 5 mins
3. Add the remainder of the vegetables and sweat for an additional 5-8 minutes
4. Add sage and sumac (careful not to burn the spices)
5. Dissolve vegetable stock in 250 mL hot water and add to vegetables
6. Add an additional 8 cups water, or until the vegetables are well covered in water
7. Add corn and kidney beans, stir well.
8. Cover and simmer on medium/low for 20-30 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Note* if sumac is not available lemon or lime juice and paprika can be used as a substitute. Sumac is a different spice from the sumac shrub, which is poisonous!