Lesson Title: What is the Difference Between German from Russia Food and German from Germany Food?

Target Audience: German III/IV

Grade Level: 11th through 12th Grade

Skills Needed: Basic Knowledge of the German Language, Knowledge of using a German Dictionary, Knowledge of ND History or Family History.

Materials and Handouts: Schmeckfest (the video), The Knoepfla Handout (See Below), George Rath Article, Computers for internet.

Lesson Objectives:

--To introduce to the students who the Germans from Russia were and how their identity is partially associated with their food customs.

--To have them compare the recipes or experiences that they already know of knoepfla with what is traditionally served in Germany today as spaetzle.

--To use translation of a recipe to learn more food terminology in German.

Topic Overview: We will look at how the food customs of the Germans from Russia compare and contrast to the food from Germany itself. We will learn a little more about the Germans from Russia themselves and what prompted them eat the food they did.

Lesson Description and Procedures:

This will be a multi-day project

1st Day

11:00--Start the day off with talking about what they know already about their own backgrounds. Questions to ask: What do they view themselves as? What is their identity? What customs or traditions help them to remember their identity or show their identity? Is food associated with cultural awareness? What do they know of one of the largest immigrant groups to North Dakota?

11:05—Divide them into groups to compile lists of what they know about the food of the Germans from Russia.

11:10—Share lists and compile a master list on the board and describe what German from Russia Foods they know about, describing each. (ex. Strudels—eaten with main dish, Knoepfla—little dumplings, Kaesknoepfla—cheese buttons, Halupzie—cabbage rolls, Borscht—vegetable soup, Fleischkuechla— deep-fried meat pie, Kuchen—custard and fruit tart, Pfeffernuess—spice cookie, Platschinda—dessert turnovers, Dumplings, etc.) Questions to ask: How do these foods vary in your family (if you come from this background)? Would the recipes vary from family to family?
11:25—Have them brainstorm in groups again to focus on the food of Germany that we have already talked about (this is previous knowledge built from years of talking about it). Have them create a list of what German food they know.

11:30—Share the list and compile a master list on the board of the foods from Germany. (ex. Wiener Schnitzel—deep-fried pork cutlet, Sausage, Sauerkraut—sauer cabbage, Potatoes, Sauerbraten—sweet and sauer beef roast, Spaetzle—little dumplings, Turkish Food, Kuchen—all cakes, Tortes, Strudels—dessert only.)

11:40—Have them return to their groups and have them compare and contrast the two lists of foods and reason why things are similar and why they may be different.

11:45—Return to the main group to discuss their findings.

11:50—Assign them to read the George Rath article on who the Germans from Russia are (at least a first glimpse). Have them write ten facts that they didn’t previously know before reading the article to share in class tomorrow.

2nd Day

11:00—Open with discussion on the article and listing the facts learned from the Rath article. Questions to ask: What were the primary forces or “movers” behind each of the religious communities in coming to America? Did they ever return to Russia? How were some of the new settlements in America named? Did the Germans from Russia ask for any preferential treatment from the government?

11:25—Start watching Schmeckfest and ask them to especially watch Ms. Johnson making Strudla and Knoepfla and Ms. Bachmeier making Cheese Buttons.

3rd Day

11:00—Finish watching Schmeckfest

11:35—Debrief on the movie. Questions to ask: How does thing movie reinforce our opinions discussed on the first day of this lesson and how does it change them? How were Knoepfla made? What did you think of the Watermelon Pickles? How were the Cheese Buttons made? Did you notice that the food brought back memories to the people in the film? How is food associated with memory? How is food associated with identity?

11:40—Assign them to write, in German, what their memories of food from childhood are and how they associate them with a person, event, or other memory (8 sentences in German, watch for word order and vocabulary). Also they need to bring in two printed recipes from: 
http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/foods/recipe/doughindex.html
to share with the class tomorrow. They need to bring one version of Spaetzle (Knoepfla) and another recipe of their choice.

4th Day

11:00—Collect the 8 sentence Assignment from yesterday.

11:05—Share the chosen recipe from the website. Why did you pick it? What is interesting about it? Does it reflect anything about the German from Russia background?

11:10—Share the Knoepfla recipes. What is it? Is it special in any way? Why would the Germans from Russia make this? Is it in Germany today?

11:20—Give them the Knoepfla Recipe Handout in German and have them translate it into English using their dictionaries. This is a recipe directly from a German website. This will be due tomorrow.

5th Day

11:00—Answer any questions on translations and collect the Translation.

11:05—Questions to ask: How does the translated recipe compare or contrast with the recipe they printed from the Germans from Russia website? How does the food of Germany today compare with the food of the Germans from Russia? How did the similar yet differing history of the groups affect their cooking? How does it reflect how they view themselves today?

Wrap-up any loose ends and questions.

Follow-up Exercises: We could use other videos and recipes to go further into this. We could also reserve the Foods Room to make Knoepfla together.

Bibliography


Knoephla Handout

The Story you didn’t want to know, but now do.

Knoephla, also spelled knephla, is a type of dumpling, commonly used in soups. The word is related to the modern German Knöpfle, meaning little knob/button. Traditional knoephla soup is a thick chicken and potato soup, almost to the point of being a stew. It is particularly common in the U.S. states of Minnesota, South Dakota, and North Dakota, where there was significant German-Russian settlement.

Spätzle (also Spätzli or Knöpfle) are egg noodles/dumplings typically found in cuisine from southern Germany and regions of neighboring countries, such as Austria, Switzerland, France (e.g. Alsace) and Italy (e.g. Bolzano-Bozen).

The geographic origin of Spätzle is not precisely known; various regions claim to be the originators of the dish. Written references to Spätzle have been found in documents dating from 1725, although medieval illustrations are believed to place Spätzle at an even earlier date.

Today, Spätzle are largely considered a "Swabian specialty" and are generally associated with the German states of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. The estimated annual production of Spätzle in Germany is approximately 40,000 tons, which does not include Spätzle made by individual households. The leading German producer is Herrman, which produces approximately 13,000 tons per year. Premade Spätzle are also available internationally from companies such as Maggi, a division of Nestlé.

The linguistic origin of "Spätzle" is also not known; it is debated whether the name is of German or Italian origin. Two prevalent theories are as follows:

German origin: Before the invention and utilization of mechanical devices, Spätzle noodles were shaped by hand or with a spoon. The shape of the resulting noodles was thought to resemble that of sparrows (German: Spatzen), which, consequently, lead to the use of the diminutive "Spätzle" (meaning small sparrows).

Italian origin: "Spätzle" is also believed to have derived from the Italian “spezzato”, which loosely means "pieces cut into thin strips" ("pezzo" means piece and “spezzare” means to cut into pieces), as the dough was cut into pieces during preparation. It is conjectured that the word “spezzato” was later germanized by the Swabians into the current "Spätzle".

Spätzle are fabricated by grating or scraping dough into boiling water and continuously sieving out the batches that are cooked. The consistency of the dough and the device used to form the noodles (e.g. by hand, ricer, etc) greatly effect the resulting noodles. Common variants are lentil-shaped "button" Spätzle (Knöpfle) and elongated, more noodle-like Spätzle.

Spätzle dough typically consists of few ingredients, including eggs, flour, and salt. It is not uncommon for recipes to add water or milk to produce a thinner dough. In addition to salt, spices such
as nutmeg may also be used. As a speciality sometimes minced pork liver or spinach is added to the dough.

Spätzle typically accompany meat dishes prepared with a sauce or gravy, such as rouladen. Spätzle with lentils and fine-skinned, frankfurter-style sausages The most traditional, minimalist approach involves serving Spätzle with butter and bread crumbs. (Article taken from Wikipedia)

Translate the following recipe onto another piece of paper:

Spätzle in Rahm

Zutaten:

200 g Mehl
2 Eier
150 g saure Sahne
Pfeffer, Salz
Muskatnuß
30 g Schalotten
Knoblauch
20 g Butter
6 EL Brühe
1 EL Petersilie

*EL--Esslöfel