



LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Grade Level: 3rd-5th

Lesson Duration: 2-5 class periods

Exhibition Theme: Community

Curriculum Connections: Visual Art, Design, English Language Arts and Literacy



Summary:

Communities are at the heart of any society. They give people shared values, identities, and a sense of place and belonging. This can take many forms, but one of the most important and universal means of bringing people together is food.

This lesson will allow students to explore the diverse ways food helps build and shape communities. They will engage with three pieces of art from the *Art of Food* exhibition that illustrate these connections, and they will envision their own food-based community by designing an original food truck.



LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Essential Questions:

- What is a community?
- How does food help build and shape communities?
- How are food and art connected to the culture of a community?

Objectives:

Students will...

- Discuss the different elements that make up a community.
- Understand the connection between food and community.
- Brainstorm different types of communities.
- Develop interpretations of selected art pieces.
- Compare and contrast the depiction of community and food in a series of art pieces using visual evidence.
- Create an original design for a food truck.
- Articulate the connection between their food truck and the communities it serves.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards:

VA.CR.1.4a, VA.RE.7.4b, VA.CN.10.4

Arizona College and Career Ready Standards - English Language Arts:

4.W.2, 4.W.4, 1.SL.5, 4.SL.1, 4.SL.4



LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Materials:

- Images from *Art of Food* exhibition
- Design Your Own Food Truck worksheet
- Drawing materials (pencils, colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc.)
- Internet access (optional)

What is community?:

Open with a discussion by asking the students this question. Try to get them thinking beyond the obvious—communities can be formed in many different ways. Once the students have come to a definition they like, extend the discussion by having them brainstorm different types of communities. For example, a community could be based on a shared cultural background, or a shared love of a sport. Record their ideas for the class to reference.

Engaging with Art:

When the students have a good understanding of the theme, introduce the selected art pieces from the *Art of Food* exhibition. These pieces will help the students understand how food can create communities.

LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Image 1:

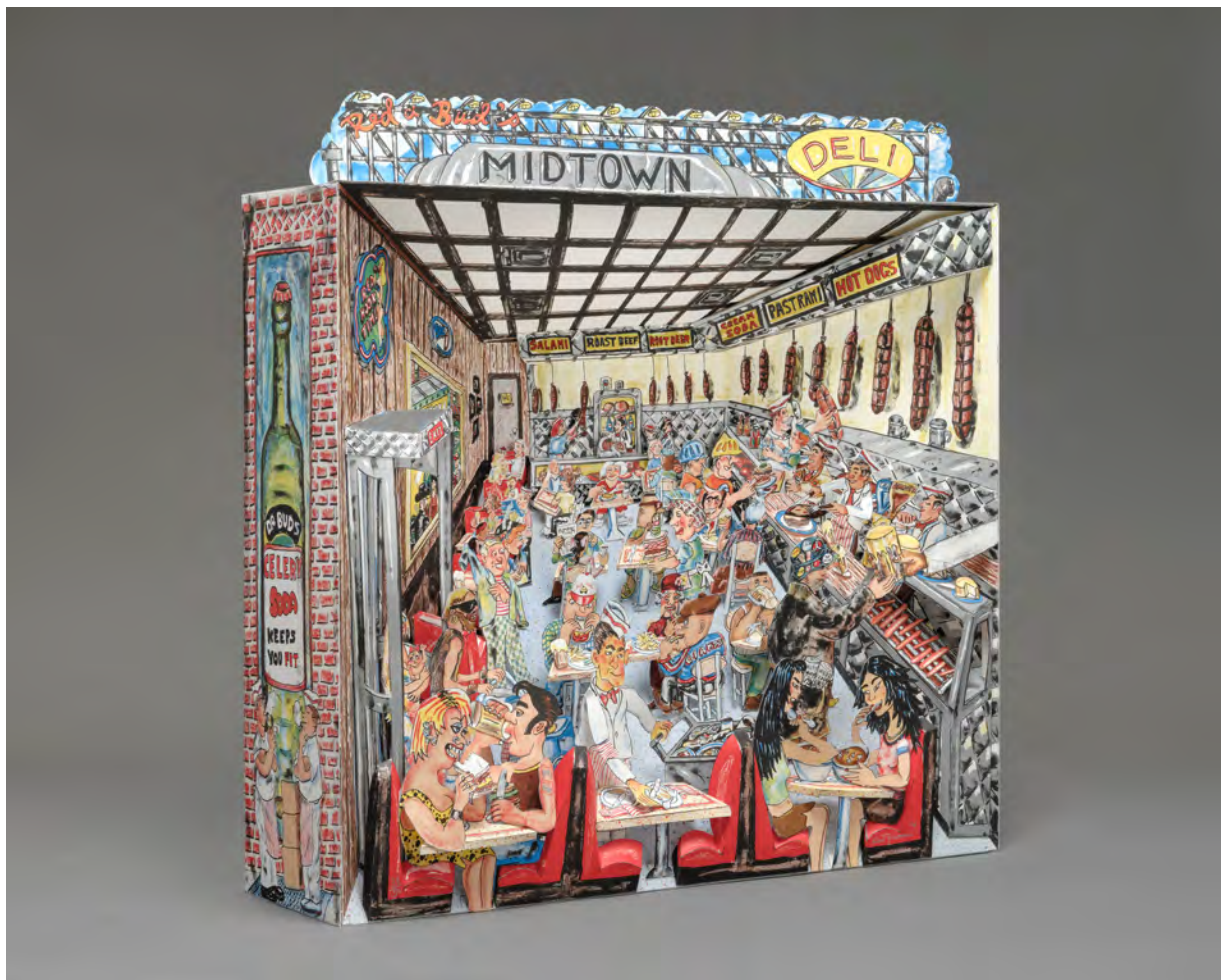


Hung Liu, (Chinese, 1948-2021), *Women Working: Millstone*, 1999, color softground and spitbite aquatint etching with scrape and burnish, edition 29/35, 40 ¾ x 54 ½ in.; Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer
Image: Strode Photographic



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Image 2:



Red Grooms (American, b. 1937), *Deli*, 2004, three dimensional lithograph, edition 38/50, 29 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 28 x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.,
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Image: Aaron Wessling Photography



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Image 3:



Claes Oldenburg (American, b. Sweden 1929), *Wedding Souvenir*, 1966, cast plaster and white paint, 5 ½ x 6 ½ x 2 ¼ in., Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer (HIPM)
Image: Aaron Wessling Photography



LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Start with Hung Liu's piece, *Women Working: Millstone*. Have the students discuss the work, using the following questions as a guide:

- What do you see? What is the subject?
- What is going on in the piece? What makes you say that?
- How does the artist represent community? What kind of community is represented?
- What role does food play in this image?

Use the same procedure with the next two artworks, having the students compare and contrast their observations for each one using visual evidence.

How are the representations of food and community similar? How are they different? What might be the reason for that? For example, the connection to community in Oldenburg's *Wedding Souvenir* may be less obvious than the other two. If they get stuck, encourage the students to consider the title and think about the settings and circumstances in which a person might eat that type of food.

Designing a Food-Based Community:

Food trucks are a great example of how food and community are intertwined. These mobile eateries benefit their communities by boosting the local economy, supporting small businesses, and introducing diverse, creative cuisines. Many food trucks source their ingredients from local food producers and partner with other businesses to draw in customers. They increase food access, and they can help to revitalize neighborhoods by providing inexpensive, delicious fare in unique locations. Food trucks bring people together in public spaces and encourage sociable settings.



LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Successful trucks build loyal followings on social media and other platforms. They offer a more accessible, less expensive way for creative chefs to share their food with their community. This art extension (adapted from Alyssa Agin's lesson [Designing and Creating a Food Truck Model](#)) enables the students to envision their own food truck. The activity can be done individually or in small groups.

Step 1: Introduce the concept of food trucks for those who may be unfamiliar, and show the students some examples of successful food trucks. This will expose them to a few different design approaches. Here are a few articles with great examples:

- [10 of the world's coolest food trucks](#)
- [16 Food Trucks With Sinfully Delicious Designs](#)
- [The 10 most popular food trucks in America](#)
- You can find examples from the greater Tucson area in the Local Food Resources section of this lesson.

Step 2: Once the students get a general idea of the different possibilities, they should begin their own project. They can use a food truck design template, or they can create their own. Any drawing materials (pencils, markers, colored pencils, crayons) will work. They should be thinking about things like logo, color scheme, font, etc. And of course, they should be creating their design based on the type of food they want to serve. Have them collect the information about their food truck on the Design Your Own Food Truck worksheet.



LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Step 3: It is up to you how long the students spend on their designs. Once they are finished, students can present their food trucks to the class. They should be able to talk about the visual aspects of their design, the name of their truck, the food they are serving, where they plan to source their ingredients, and the location of their truck. You can have the students vote on their favorite designs, or talk about where they would most want to eat.

Writing Extension (Optional):

If you want to extend the lesson further, any of the following prompts can be used to expand the students' thinking through writing.

1. Write a one page reflection exploring the communities your food truck serves. What cultural community (or communities) does your menu represent? What geographical community does your truck serve? What kind of social community do you want to create with your food truck?
2. Create a flyer and/or social media post advertising your food truck. Who is your audience? What information needs to be included? How will the design draw people in?
3. Pretend that you are a newspaper reporter assigned to the Food section. Write a feature on your food truck. As you're writing the article, think about these questions: What makes your food special? How does your food truck support the community? How does it bring people together? Why is it newsworthy?



DESIGN YOUR OWN FOOD TRUCK

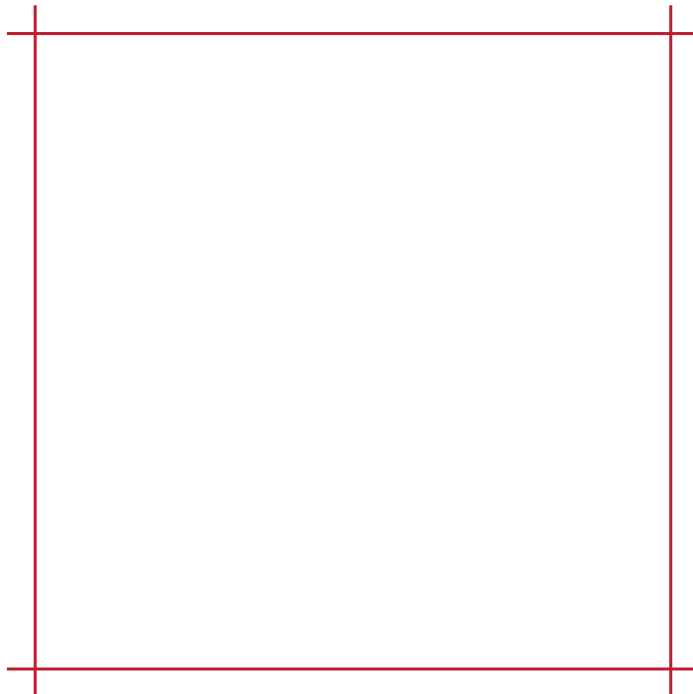


Use this worksheet to keep track of your ideas!

What is the name of your food truck? How did you pick the name?

What type of food are you serving? How did you choose the items on your menu?

Where are you located? Where are you going to park your truck? Are you going to sell your food at any special events?



Draw the logo of your food truck here



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His Family Foundation

DESIGN YOUR OWN FOOD TRUCK



Where will you get the ingredients for your food? Think creatively!

Name(s):

Date:



LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Local Food Resources (Greater Tucson Area):

Community Organizations:

- [Community and School Garden Program](#)
- [Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona](#)
- [Community Gardens of Tucson](#)
- [Food Conspiracy Co-Op](#)
- [Historic 4th Avenue Coalition](#)
- [Ishkashitaa Refugee Network](#)
- [Native Seeds/SEARCH](#)
- [The Garden Kitchen](#)
- [Tucson Community Supported Agriculture](#)
- [UA Campus Pantry](#)
- [University of Arizona Community Garden](#)

Farmers' Markets:

- [Earth Made Farmers' Markets](#)
- [FoodInRoot Farmers' Markets](#)
- [Heirloom Farmers' Markets](#)
- [Santa Cruz River Farmers' Market](#)

Food Trucks:

- [Best Food Trucks in Tucson](#)
- [Eastside Marketplace Rally](#)
- [Tucson Food Trucks](#)
- [Tucson Food Truck Roundup](#)
- [Women Food Truck Owners of Southern Arizona](#)



LESSON 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH FOOD

Festivals and Events:

- [All Souls Procession](#)
- [Fourth Avenue Street Fair](#)
- [Picture Rocks Food Fest](#)
- [Tucson Greek Festival](#)
- [Tucson Meet Yourself](#)

Food Producers:

- [Apple Annie's Orchard & Farm](#)
- [Bean Tree Farm](#)
- [BKW Farms](#)
- [Desert Harvesters](#)
- [Las Milpitas de Cottonwood](#)
- [Merchant's Garden](#)
- [Mission Garden Project](#)
- [San Xavier Co-op Farm](#)
- [Tucson Village Farm](#)



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Lesson Vocabulary:

Community - a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals

Culture - the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group

Food access - determined among consumers by the spatial accessibility and affordability of food retailers—specifically such factors as travel time to shopping, availability of healthy foods, and food prices—relative to the access to transportation and socioeconomic resources of food buyers

Food truck - a large vehicle equipped with facilities for cooking and selling food

Subject - the main idea that is represented in the artwork

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External Resources:

Agin, A. (n.d.). *Designing and creating a food truck model*. CTE Online California. <https://www.cteonline.org/lesson-plans/yn3vpn/designing-and-creating-a-food-truck-model>

Cobian, G. (2021, February 20). Tucson food trucks overcome challenges during the pandemic. *The Daily Wildcat*.
<https://www.wildcat.arizona.edu/article/2021/02/a-pandemic-foodtruck>

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<https://www.art-is-fun.com/subjects-in-art#:~:text=The%20term%20subjects%20in%20art,the%20essence%20of%20the%20piece>

McHugh, B. (2016, September 12). Food trucks unite the community and bring convenience to the West Campus. *The State Press*.
<https://www.statepress.com/article/2016/09/spcampus-west-campus-food-trucks-asu-wandering-donkey-fletcher-lawn>

Pleasant Hill, IA. (n.d.). *Community food systems: Food trucks*. Pleasant Hill. <https://www.pleasanthilliowa.org/DocumentCenter/View/1008/Food-Trucks?bidId=>