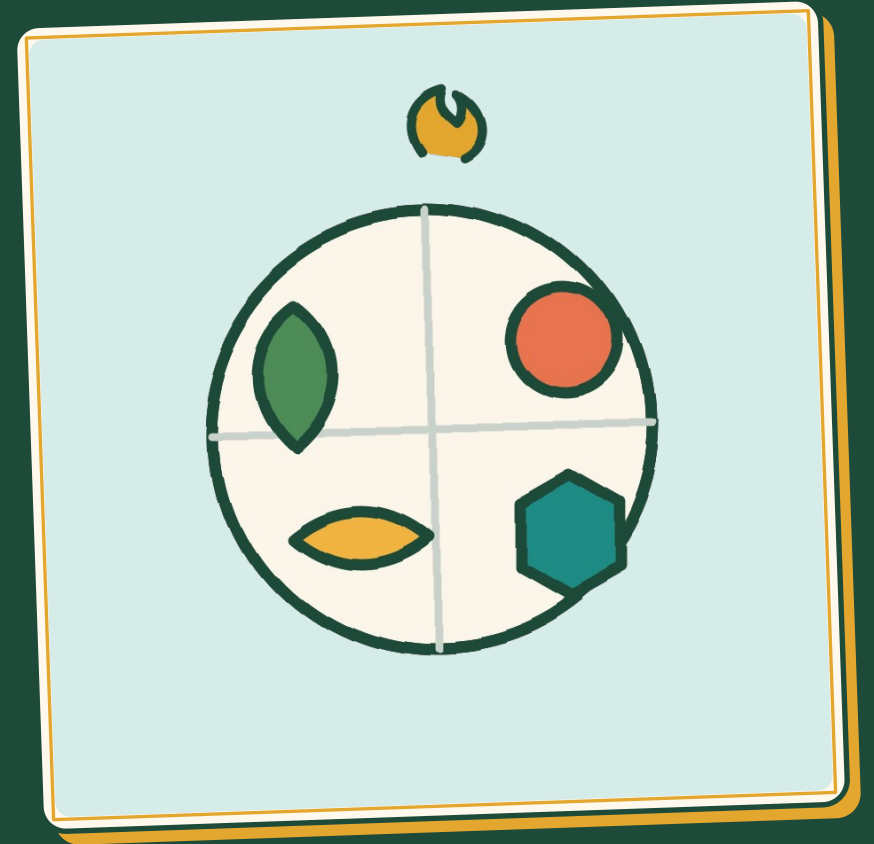


SCRATCH NUTRITION LAB · SESSION 5

Culture on **the** **Plate**

Diaspora, heritage, and nutritional identity

9:16 – 11:03 · Evans High School, Culinary Arts Level 3



HOW TODAY WORKS

Two halves.



69 min

9:16 - 10:25

Where your food came from, and what it was already doing right



38 min

10:25 - 11:03

Cultural Recipe Redesign — one dish, one change, defended

Today you do most of the talking. That is the design, not an accident.

What cultural foods do you eat regularly?

And do you think of them as healthy or unhealthy — and why?

Write the dish on the board. Then write healthy or unhealthy next to it, in their words. We are going to come back to that second column.

KEY CONCEPT

**Your body doesn't just digest nutrients.
It digests heritage.**

"Curry, jerk, cajun, sazón — they're all storytelling in edible form."

Every dish on that board arrived by a route. Somebody carried it, adapted it, and kept it alive with what they could get. That is not a footnote to the food — it is the food.

FOUR JARS, FOUR ROUTES

You already cooked the history.

These are the four blends in your manual. Each one is a different route through the diaspora.

JERK

**Caribbean heat,
Maroon legacy**

Bold, warm, and built to last. You made this one in November.

ADOBO

**Afro-Caribbean
and Latin
kitchens**

Smoky, earthy, timeless. The backbone — and the first thing you made all year.

CAJUN CREOLE

**Louisiana, by
way of
everywhere**

Smoky heat and herbal depth from paprika, cayenne and thyme.

BBQ DRY RUB

**The American
South**

Sweet brown sugar against smoky paprika, with a hint of cayenne.

Two of these are already in your cabinet, in a jar you filled yourself.

Take CTRL · Recipes 1–4 · Seasoning blends

Eight foods that crossed with the people.

You met these in the plant-forward session. Look at the right-hand column again.

Plantains

resistant starch · A · B6 ·
potassium

Sweet potato

beta-carotene · C · fiber

Okra

soluble fiber · blood sugar
moderator

Collard greens

calcium · K · sulforaphane

Black-eyed peas

folate · iron · fiber · zinc

Callaloo

calcium · iron · A and C

Yam

complex carbs · potassium ·
manganese

Bitter melon

documented blood-sugar
lowering

Nobody was reading a nutrition label in 1750. They were right anyway.

TWO DIFFERENT THINGS

Tradition and scarcity aren't the same story.

TRADITION

What a culture chose.

Techniques, seasonings and combinations carried on purpose, because they worked and because they tasted like home.

SCARCITY

What a culture was left with.

What got made when the good cuts, the fresh produce or the money were not there. It kept people alive. It is not the same as the tradition.

Both are real. Both are yours. Knowing which is which is how you decide what to keep and what to change.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS

How does it feel to learn that your food traditions carried nutritional wisdom all along?

And that it has been historically undervalued.

Okra

A soluble fiber people were eating for texture, that turns out to moderate blood sugar.

Collard greens

Calcium without dairy, in a pot that was on the stove every Sunday.

Black-eyed peas

Iron, zinc, folate and fiber, in the cheapest thing in the store.

This is a discussion, not a lecture. Let them answer it.

WHAT CHANGED

We live in an obesogenic culture.

A world built for overconsumption and undernourishment — which is a different problem from not having enough food.



**We scroll more than
we chew**



**We snack more than
we cook**



**We chase fullness
instead of
satisfaction**

"It's not about eating less — it's about living more intentionally."

WHAT THE RESEARCH FOUND

Cultural pride tracks with how you eat.

From my master's thesis — 133 Black college students, ages 18 to 24, at a Midwestern university.

133

Students in the study.

90%

Average score on "I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group."

56%

Average score on "When I feel hungry, I can easily choose healthy food" — the lowest of any confidence question.

Students with a stronger cultural identity rated their own diet as healthier. It is a connection, not proof that one causes the other — but it is why this session exists.

THE QUESTION FOR THE LAB

If you could redesign one traditional dish to make it more nutritious — without losing what makes it that dish — what would you change?

KEEP

The thing that makes it itself.

The seasoning. The technique. The reason it tastes like your house and not somebody else's.

CHANGE

One ingredient. Just one.

Swap the fat, cut the sodium, add the vegetable, change the cooking method. Small and defensible.

38 MINUTES • ON PAPER, THEN OUT LOUD

Cultural Recipe Redesign

Pick a dish from your own background. Change one thing. Defend it to the room.

01

Name the dish

Whose recipe is it? Who makes it in your family?

02

Name one change

One ingredient or one method. Not a rewrite.

03

Give the reason

What does the change do nutritionally? Use this year's vocabulary.

04

Prove it survives

Would the person who taught it to you still recognise it?

Question four is the real test. If it comes back unrecognisable, you didn't redesign it — you replaced it.

BEFORE YOU GO

Your food was never the **problem.**

Go back to that board from this morning — the one where half of you wrote unhealthy next to your own family's cooking. Look at it again.

Keep the tradition. Change what scarcity added.

Scratch Nutrition Lab × Evans High School

THIS WEEK'S RECIPE

Curry Chicken and Peppers

Caribbean and West African spice traditions