



LaST Themed projects

Food

- Harvest time
- All about apples
- Our Food memories
- British Cuisine
- Poetry
- Christmas dinner around the world

We trialled these resources in Burnham in the Autumn term of 2022 with children from Year 5. We found there was enough material for several weeks.

We made up a Food folder for the school to keep and added information each week. We also planned to create a recipe book but unfortunately we ran out of time to complete this. However this is definitely something we would like to do in the future.

NB *We are mindful that FOOD may **not** be a suitable topic in certain situations, for example if you are aware of children or adults for whom food and/or mealtimes, for whatever reason, may be a sensitive subject. If you consider this may apply within your group please choose another resource from the **LaST** Toolkit.*

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Topic 1 - Harvest time

This topic explores some of the traditions associated with harvest time. Whilst the focus is mainly on British traditions there is also some information about harvest celebrations around the world and there is the opportunity for everyone to share their stories about harvest time and what it means to them.

Children and older people should work in small groups for this topic. You may find there is sufficient material for two weeks.

For this topic you will need

- i) Several copies of the Harvest Time Factsheet
- ii) Several copies of the Harvest Time Quiz
- iii) One copy of the Harvest Time Quiz Answers
- iv) Several copies of the Harvest Time Wordsearch
- v) One copy of the Harvest Time Wordsearch Answers
- vi) Several copies of Harvest Acrostic Poem
- vii) Plain paper, pencils, coloured pencils (for illustrating poems)

Working in small groups the adults and children should take turns to read from the Harvest time factsheet. Encourage everyone to share thoughts as they are reading. The children may like to jot down some key points as there will be a quiz afterwards.

Collect in the factsheets when everyone has finished reading and hand out the Harvest time Quiz. If some of the groups finish an activity before the others you can hand out the Wordsearch or the Harvest Acrostic poem.

Go through the Quiz answers, perhaps whilst having some refreshments. Take time also to ask everyone about any special traditions or memories that they associate with harvest time.

After refreshments, continue with the Wordsearch and/or Harvest Acrostic Poem.

As an alternative or additional group activity you could spend a few minutes finding how many words you can make out of the word HARVEST.

Topic 1 - Harvest time



Hay bales in Gloucestershire - August 2022

Since ancient times thanksgiving ceremonies and celebrations have taken place all around the world at harvest time. A successful harvest was essential for a community to survive the winter months and all sorts of traditions have developed around this very important time of the year.

In Britain the tradition of celebrating Harvest Festival in churches as we know it today began in 1843, when the Reverend Robert Hawker invited parishioners to a special thanksgiving service for the harvest at his church at Morwenstow in Cornwall. Victorian hymns such as "We plough the fields and scatter", "Come ye thankful people, come" and "All things bright and beautiful" helped to popularise his idea of harvest festival and spread the annual custom of decorating churches with home-grown produce.

In Britain harvest festivals are traditionally now held on the Sunday closest to the Harvest Moon. The Harvest Moon is the name given to the full Moon that occurs closest to the Autumn Equinox. In the northern hemisphere the Autumn Equinox usually occurs around 22nd /23rd September. At this time the sun passes directly over the Equator and day and night are of equal length. Most years the Harvest Moon also occurs in September but it can occur in October. Unlike other full Moons, the Harvest Moon rises at nearly the same time, around sunset, for several evenings in a row. This results in **an** abundance of bright moonlight early in the evening, which was traditionally a great help to farmers harvesting their crops.

In the past in Britain there used to be celebrations at the beginning of the Harvest season as well as at the end. On 1st August farmers gave loaves of bread from the new wheat crop to their local church in a tradition known as Lammass, meaning 'loaf Mass'. The loaves were then used as the Communion bread during a special mass thanking God for the harvest.

At the start of the harvest, communities would appoint a strong and respected man of the village as their 'Lord of the Harvest'. He would be responsible for negotiating the harvest wages and organising the fieldworkers. The end of the harvest was celebrated with a big meal called a harvest supper, eaten on Michaelmas Day, 29th September. The 'Lord of the Harvest' sat at the head of the table. It was traditional for a goose stuffed with apples to be served along with a variety of vegetables.

The harvest supper was sometimes known as a "Mell-supper". The last patch of corn or wheat standing in the fields was known as the "Mell" or "Neck" and cutting it signified the end of the work of harvest and the beginning of the feast. There seems to have been a feeling that it was bad luck to be the person to cut the last stand of corn. The farmer and his workers would race against the harvesters on other farms to be first to complete the harvest, shouting to announce they had finished. In some counties, the last stand of corn would be cut by the workers throwing their sickles at it until it was all down, in others the reapers would take it in turns to be blindfolded and sweep a scythe to and fro until all of the Mell was cut down.

There are many regional harvest customs connected with bringing in corn or other cereal crops, for example, 'Hollaing Largesse'. Traditionally if a stranger passed a field in East Anglia where people were harvesting, the reapers would form a circle and shout 'Holla Lar! Holla Lar! Holla Lar-Jess!' The stranger would then be expected to make a donation to them to help pay for their harvest supper!



Crying The Neck is a harvest festival tradition that was once common in Devon and Cornwall. The tradition declined following the invention of machines such as the combine harvester but was revived in Cornwall in the early twentieth century by the Old Cornwall Society.

One of the reapers cuts the last sheaf of corn with a scythe and holds it aloft, shouting 'I have 'un! I have 'un! I have 'un!' The other farmworkers reply 'what 'ave 'ee? What 'ave 'ee? What 'ave 'ee?'. The reply is 'A neck! A neck! A neck!' Then everyone joins in shouting 'Hurrah! Hurrah for the neck!'

Crying the Neck at Tremayne Farm in Cornwall in 2009¹

Another custom attached to the last sheaf of the harvest was the creation of corn dollies which were shapes woven from the last handful of corn stalks. Traditionally it was believed that the spirit of the corn lived amongst the crop and that the harvest made it effectively homeless. The corn dolly was believed to provide a home for the spirit and it was often given the place of honour at the harvest supper. It would then be kept until the Spring when it would be ploughed into the first furrow of the new season, in the hope that this would bless the new season's crop.

Before farming was mechanised corn dollies were made in many European countries and they were created in all sorts of shapes and sizes – here are just a few examples from different parts of England:



*Corn dolly,
Suffolk Horseshoe*



*Corn dollies,
Cambridgeshire handbells*



*Corn dolly,
Stafford knot ²*

Harvest traditions around the world

All over the world people have traditionally celebrated at harvest time. These various harvest festivals are observed with different names and in different seasons and with a variety of customs and traditions but at their heart all of them are an opportunity for people to come together and to give thanks.

Two examples are the **Mid-Autumn Festival** and **Thanksgiving**.

The Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival or Mooncake Festival, is a traditional festival celebrated in Chinese culture. Similar holidays are celebrated in Japan (*Tsukimi*), Korea (*Chuseok*), Vietnam (*Tết Trung Thu*), and other countries in East and Southeast Asia. Dating back over 3000 years the Mid-Autumn Festival is one of the most important holidays in Chinese culture. It is likely to have its origins in ancient worship practices of the moon and served as a harvest festival to express gratitude to the gods.

The festival is held on the 15th day of the 8th month of the traditional Chinese calendar which corresponds to mid-September to early October of the Gregorian calendar. On this day, the Chinese believe that the Moon is at its brightest and fullest size, coinciding with harvest time in the middle of Autumn.

It is a time for families and friends to celebrate together. Lanterns of all size and shapes are carried and displayed as symbolic beacons that light people's path to prosperity and good fortune.

Making and sharing mooncakes is another tradition of this festival. These are a rich pastry typically filled with sweet-bean, egg yolk, meat or lotus-seed paste. In Chinese culture, a round shape symbolizes completeness and reunion so the sharing and eating of round mooncakes among family members during the week of the festival signifies the completeness and unity of families.



Typical mooncakes ³

Thanksgiving Day is an annual national holiday in the United States and Canada



which originated as a day of giving thanks for the harvest and other blessings of the past year. It is celebrated on the second Monday of October in Canada and on the fourth Thursday of November in the United States. Family and friends gather for a Thanksgiving meal which traditionally includes turkey, cranberries and pumpkin pie.

A typical North American Thanksgiving Dinner ⁴

Parades and football games also have long associations with the Thanksgiving holiday. New York City's Thanksgiving Day Parade presented by Macy's department store since 1924, is the largest and most famous, attracting some 2 to 3 million spectators along its two and a half mile route and drawing an enormous television audience. It typically features marching bands, performers, elaborate floats conveying various celebrities and giant balloons shaped like cartoon characters.

.....

Farming in many parts of the world today is very different to how it was when harvest celebrations began and mechanisation has meant that far fewer people are directly involved at harvest time. However harvest time provides an important opportunity for us to give thanks for having enough food to eat. It can also be a time to help those who are not so fortunate and to reflect on what we can all do to protect the environment for future generations.

How do you celebrate harvest time?

With thanks to Mandy Barrow for permission to include information from Project Britain website <http://www.projectbritain.com/Harvest.html> and to Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvest_festival

Harvest time Quiz (15 possible points)

1. When and where did the tradition of celebrating harvest festival in churches begin in England? (2 points)
2. In which English county might you still hear farmworkers shouting “A neck, A neck, A neck” ? (1 point)
3. When are harvest festivals now traditionally held in Britain? (1 point)
4. How does the harvest moon differ from other full moons and why was it traditionally a great help to farmers? (2 points)
5. When is the annual Thanksgiving day held in Canada? (1 point)
6. What is the name of the special food eaten in China at the mid-Autumn festival and what shape are they? (2 points)
7. What is the significance of their shape? (1 point)
8. Why did people traditionally make corn dollies? (1 point)
9. What did people traditionally do with corn dollies in the Spring and why? (2 points)
10. On what date was a Harvest Supper traditionally held in Britain and what food was traditionally served? (2 points)

Harvest time Quiz Answers (15 possible points)

1. When and where did the tradition of celebrating harvest festival in churches begin in England? (2 points)

In 1843, at Morwenstow in Cornwall (when the Rev. Robert Hawker invited parishioners to a special thanksgiving service for the harvest at his church)

2. In which English county might you still hear farmworkers shouting “A neck, A neck, A neck” ? (1 point)

Cornwall

3. When are harvest festivals now traditionally held in Britain? (1 point)

On the Sunday closest to the Harvest Moon

4. How does the harvest moon differ from other full moons and why was it traditionally a great help to farmers? (2 points)

For several evenings in a row it rises at nearly the same time, very close to sunset, and so gave extra light to farmers at end of day

5. When is the annual Thanksgiving day held in Canada? (1 point)

Second Monday of October

6. What is the name of the special food eaten in China at the mid-Autumn festival and what shape are they? (2 points)

Mooncakes – round

7. What is the significance of their shape? (1 point)

a round shape symbolizes completeness and reunion – completeness and unity of the family

8. Why did people traditionally make corn dollies? (1 point)

To provide a home for the spirit of the corn over the winter

9. What did people traditionally do with corn dollies in the Spring and why? (2 points)

Ploughed into the first furrow of the new season, in the hope that this would bless the new season's crop.

10. On what date was a Harvest Supper traditionally held in Britain and what food was traditionally served? (2 points)

29th September Goose stuffed with apples

Harvest Word Scramble

Can you unscramble these 10 words associated with Harvest time?

1. CBITNEAOLRES _____
2. GAIKSNGVHNT _____
3. RNSIODTITA _____
4. EHSCTY _____
5. GUPHOL _____
6. OCONEMKA _____
7. ORNC ILOESLD _____
8. GTOINHLMO _____
9. SOCSMUT _____
10. EAFSMRR _____

Harvest Word Scramble Answers

1. CBITNEAOLRES Celebrations
2. GAIKSNGVHNT Thanksgiving
3. RNSIODTITA Traditions
4. EHSCTY Scythe
5. GUPHOL Plough
6. OCONEMKA Mooncake
7. ORNC ILOESLD Corn dollies
8. GTOINHLMO Moonlight
9. SOCSMUT Customs
10. EAFSMRR Farmers

An acrostic poem for harvest time

Can you write a harvest themed poem where the first letter of each line spells out the word Harvest?

H

A

R

V

E

S

T

Harvest Time - Photographs Acknowledgements

1. *Crying the Neck, 2009* - Talskiddy at en.wikipedia, CC BY 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons
2. *Corn dollies* - Renata, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
3. *Moon cakes* - misbehave, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons
4. *Thanksgiving dinner* - Ms Jones from California, USA, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Topic 2

All about apples

This topic explores different aspects of apples, from their origins in central Asia thousands of years ago to their many health benefits and different ways to be eaten. If possible try and provide a variety of apples for everyone to try. In our group we had one child who had never eaten apple pie or crumble whilst another was able to describe the ingredients in a delicious apple pie he had recently enjoyed in a restaurant.

For this topic you will need

- i) Several copies of the All About Apples Factsheet
- ii) Several copies of the All About Apples Word Scramble
- iii) One copy of Word Scramble Answers
- iv) Plain paper, pencils, coloured pencils
- v) A selection of apples for eating and drawing



Working in small groups the adults and children should take turns to read from the All about Apples factsheet which includes a few questions for everyone to think about and discuss.

When everyone has finished the factsheet give out some slices of apples for everyone to try.

Have a whole group discussion about the different apples. Do people have a favourite? What apple recipes do people enjoy cooking and/or eating!

Give out the Apple Word Scramble and also plain paper for drawing pictures of apples.

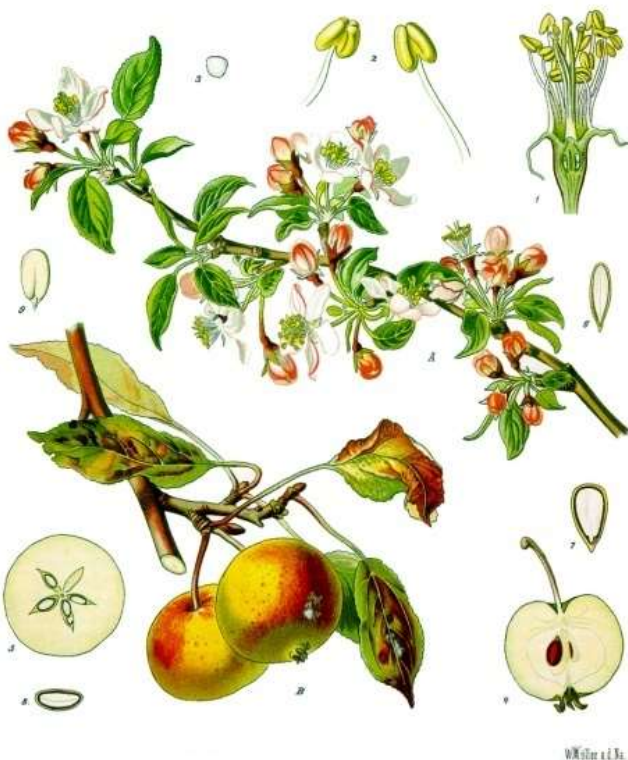
Topic 2

All about apples

An apple is an edible fruit produced by an apple tree (*Malus domestica*). Apple trees originated many thousands of years ago at the foot of the **Tian Shan Mountains of Kazakhstan** in central Asia where its wild ancestor, *Malus sieversii*, is still found today.

Scientists believe that birds and bears would have transported apple seeds out of Kazakhstan long before humans started to cultivate them but by 2000 BC apples had reached the eastern Mediterranean, probably carried by merchants and travellers down the prehistoric trade routes which crossed the Middle East.

As apples spread around the world, different varieties emerged to cope with their new environments. The Romans added to this range by deliberately breeding apples for taste and size. Roman writers like Virgil who was born in 70 BC were able to list two dozen varieties of apple.



The Romans practised the skill of grafting – selectively breeding apples they wanted, based on their size and taste. Grafting is the process of taking a cutting from your chosen apple variety and attaching it on to a rootstock (young roots and trunk) from another tree. This is necessary as apple trees grown from seed will not grow true to their parent fruit. Grafting is a skill still used for almost all apple trees grown today.

Fruit and flowers of Malus domestica

Illustration with thanks to: Franz Eugen Köhler, Köhler's Medizinal-Pflanzen, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Information with thanks to <https://www.theorchardproject.org.uk/blog/where-do-apples-come-from/>

Worldwide there are now more than 7,500 known cultivars of apples. A cultivar is a type of plant that people have bred for desired traits. Different cultivars of apples are developed for various tastes and uses, including cooking, eating raw, and cider production. Although there are thousands of varieties of apples, only a small number are widely known and used today.

Apple Day - In 1990 a Dorset based charity called Common Ground, launched Apple Day which now takes place on 21st October each year. The first Apple Day celebrations in 1990 were held in the old Apple Market in London's Covent Garden and brought fruit to the market after 16 years' absence. There were forty stalls including fruit growers and nurseries producing and selling a wide variety of apples and trees, apple juice and cider-makers, as well as writers and illustrators of books about apples. Since 1990 Apple Day celebrations have been held in cities, towns and villages around the United Kingdom and by the year 2000 the day was celebrated in more than 600 events.

From the start Apple Day was intended to be both a celebration and a demonstration of the variety we are in danger of losing, not simply in apples, but in the richness and diversity of landscape, ecology and culture too. In linking particular apples with their place of origin, Common Ground hope that orchards will be recognized and conserved for their contribution to local distinctiveness, including the rich diversity of wildlife they support.



About two thirds of Britain's orchards have been lost since the 1950's and with it many cultural associations - horticultural skills, recipes, songs and customs and many local varieties of fruit.

The creation of Community Orchards offers one way of keeping orchards alive. This is Burnham Community Orchard in Burnham Park in Buckinghamshire.

Do you know if there is a Community Orchard near where you live?

Apple Day information with thanks to <https://www.commonground.org.uk/apple-day/>

Health benefits of eating apples

The popular phrase “an apple a day keeps the doctor away” has its roots in an old Welsh saying that first appeared in print back in 1866. Originally it was “Eat an apple on going to bed and you’ll keep the doctor from earning his bread!”

In his 2022 BBC radio series “Just one thing” Dr Michael Mosley explained how research has shown there may well be some truth in this old saying.....

“Eating apples regularly is linked to a reduced risk of cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. This is because apples are packed full of goodies – fibre, vitamins and important chemical compounds called flavonoids. Flavonoids are concentrated in the skin of apples. They're produced by plants to protect them from stress, sunlight and disease. Amazingly, by eating these plants, you can acquire similar protective effects!

One of the ways that scientists think flavonoids can have a beneficial effect on our bodies is by increasing the production of an amazing molecule called nitric oxide. It can regulate blood pressure, maintain blood vessel health, and have a number of beneficial effects on your body. You should eat the whole apple for the most benefit: our bodies need both the flavonoids in the skin and the fibre in the flesh.”

This is because *“Eating the whole apple can change how your gut digests the flavonoids! The fibre decreases the absorption of flavonoids in the small intestine and increases the amount that reaches the large intestine, where they are broken down by the gut bacteria there. Furthermore, both flavonoids and fibre can increase the quantity of good bacteria and decrease the quantity of harmful bacteria in the gut! It’s literally good bacteria food. A fibre called pectin in apples, for example, acts like a “prebiotic”. It helps nourish the good health-promoting bacteria in your gut..... These helpful bacteria can reduce inflammation and help fight off harmful organisms that might cause disease....*

The good news is that cooking your apples won’t diminish the beneficial flavonoid content, because flavonoids are relatively stable compounds. So whether you’re enjoying a raw apple as a midday snack or having a few baked into a crumble – leave the skin on and enjoy the benefits that apples will give you for your gut, your blood vessels, cholesterol levels and your brain.”

So it seems that eating an apple a day really can help keep the doctor away!

Information with thanks to:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/VBjMTXkNDQjD4wRTWL8nqK/how-an-apple-a-day-really-can-keep-the-doctor-away>

What is your favourite type of apple?

Can you describe a favourite recipe which includes apples?

Apples Word Scramble

Can you unscramble these 10 varieties of apple?

1. KPNI YDLA _____
2. RYNGNA IHSTM _____
3. ZJZA _____
4. LRAYO LAAG _____
5. XSCO EORGAN NIPPPI _____
6. REALYMB _____
7. ERD PNIERC _____
8. OCTESREWR EMNRAAIP _____
9. NURRBBEA _____
10. YRIOSDVEC _____

Apples Word Scramble Answers

1. KPNI YDLA Pink Lady
2. RYNGNA IHSTM Granny Smith
3. ZJZA Jazz
4. LRAYO LAAG Royal Gala
5. XSCO EORGAN NIPPPI Cox's Orange Pippin
6. REALYMB Bramley
7. ERD PNIERC Red Prince
8. OCTESREWR EMNRAAIP Worcester Pearmain
9. NURRBBEA Braeburn
10. YRIOSDVEC Discovery

Topic 3

Our Food Memories

This topic provides an opportunity for the older people and children to share thoughts and memories about food and meal times and to consider how things have changed over the years.

For this topic you will need

- i) Several copies of the Food Memories questions
- ii) Plain paper, pencils
- iii) Several copies of A – Z Food Game

For this activity the children and older people should work in pairs if possible so that they can take turns interviewing one another. If this is not possible work in small groups but make sure that everyone gets the opportunity to join in. Encourage the children and adults to write down what they learn from each other.

When you feel that everyone has had enough time for the interviews, have a whole group discussion about the ways in which things have changed over the years with regard for example to:

- Types of food people eat
- Where people eat
- Who prepares meals
- School dinners

If there is time after refreshments play the A – Z Food Game. The children and older people should work in small groups for this activity. A letter of the alphabet is chosen randomly and each group then tries to think of a word beginning with that letter for each of the categories on the list. The aim is to try and think of something that other groups will not have thought of as you will only get a point for your answer if no other group has the same word for that category. Repeat with another letter if there is time.

Topic 3

Our Food Memories

First the children will interview the adults to find out as much as possible about their childhood mealtime memories.

1. Who generally prepared the meals in your home when you were a child?
2. In which room of the house did you generally eat your meals when you were a child?
3. Who did you generally eat your meals with when you were a child?
4. What would you have generally eaten for breakfast when you were a child?
5. What was a typical meal on a Sunday when you were a child?
6. Did you sometimes have meals at other people's houses? – perhaps you went to your grandparents' or to a friend's house – what do you remember about these occasions?

7. Did you sometimes go out to restaurants or cafes when you were a child? If so, what do you remember about these occasions?

8. Did you have school dinners when you were a child? Yes/No

If No, what did you eat instead?

If Yes, were there some school dinners that you particularly enjoyed? Can you describe them?

Were there some school dinners that you particularly disliked? Can you explain why?

9. How has the sort of food you eat changed over your lifetime?

10. Are there some foods that you eat now that you would never have eaten when you were a child?

11. Are there some meals that you still enjoy that you also enjoyed as a child?

Questions for the adults to ask the children

1. How do you think things have changed with regard to mealtimes and the sorts of food people eat now compared to when we were your age?

2. Are there some foods that you enjoy now that you did not like when you were younger?

3. Do you have school dinners or packed lunches?

3. Who generally prepares the meals in your family?

4. Do you sometimes help to prepare meals at home?

A – Z Food Game – You get a point if no one else has the same word as you for that category

CATEGORY	LETTER	LETTER	LETTER
A vegetable			
A fruit			
A herb or spice			
Something you would enjoy in a sandwich			
Something you like to eat for breakfast			
Something you have never eaten			
Something you would like to eat on your birthday			
SCORE			

Topic 4 - British Cuisine

This topic looks at how and why the food we eat in Britain has changed over the years. For this activity the children and older people should work in small groups.

For this topic you will need

- i) Several copies of the British Cuisine Factsheet
- ii) Several copies of the British Cuisine Quiz
- iii) One copy of the British Cuisine Quiz Answers
- iv) Several copies of Fruit and Vegetables Word search
- v) One copy of Fruit and Vegetables Word search Answers
- vi) Plain paper, pencils, coloured pencils

Working in small groups the adults and children should take turns to read and discuss the British Cuisine Factsheet. The children may like to jot down some key points as there will be a quiz afterwards. Encourage them to talk to one another about some of the different types of food that are mentioned e.g. have they tried kedgeree – do they like curry etc? How about toad in the hole or bubble and squeak?

Collect the factsheets in when everyone has finished reading and give out the British Cuisine Quiz.

If some of the groups finish an activity before the others you can hand out the Word search.

After refreshments go through the Quiz answers and then continue with the Word search.

If you have time to spare the children, and adults if they wish, could draw a picture of a favourite meal.

British Cuisine

Dishes like roast beef, fish and chips, apple pie and trifle are what many people think of as traditional British cuisine. But British cuisine has distinctive national varieties in the form of English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish cuisines as well as many regional variations.



Just one example of this variety can be seen in the number of names we have for bread rolls in England! A round white roll is frequently known as a barm in Greater Manchester, a bread cake in Yorkshire, a bread bun in the north east of England, an oven bottom in Lancashire and a batch in Warwickshire, to name but a few!

A basket of bread rolls ¹

The history of Britain has played a large part in its traditions, its culture and its food and many of the things that we eat and drink today have their origins thousands of years ago and thousands of miles away.

10,000 to 4000 years BC, hunter-gatherers would have exploited the huge range of edible species that are native to the British Isles. This included hunting wild animals and birds, gathering leaves, roots and fruit from plants, and catching fish and shellfish. Domestic animals and plants were first brought to the British Isles from Europe in about **4000 BC**, heralding the start of the Neolithic period. As well as keeping domesticated animals such as cattle, pigs and sheep, people were by now cultivating crops such as wheat and barley.

In the **Bronze Age** from 2200 to 800 BC, a wider variety of crops and vegetables were grown in some of the earliest permanent fields. These included beans, peas and spelt wheat.

Between 43 and 400 AD **the Romans** brought a variety of exotic foods to Britain, including game (rabbits, pheasants, brown hare), vegetables (cabbage, leeks, onions, turnips), fruit (grapes) and nuts (walnuts). They also introduced herbs and flavourings such as garlic, pepper, basil and thyme. The Romans were also prolific road builders and their new roads allowed the easy transportation of produce throughout the country for the first time.

Then came **the Saxons** who were excellent farmers and cultivated a wide variety of herbs which were used for many medicinal purposes as well as for cooking.

The **Vikings and Danes** brought us their techniques for smoking and drying fish and even today the North East coasts of England and Scotland pride themselves on their kippers.

In **Tudor times**, new kinds of food started to arrive in Britain due to the increase in trade and the discovery of new lands. These included spices from the Far East, sugar from the Caribbean, coffee and cocoa from South America and tea from India. Potatoes from America also began to be widely grown. Turkeys were also introduced to Britain in the 1500's but their use for Christmas dinner, with Christmas pudding for dessert, was a 19th-century innovation.

The growth of the **British Empire** brought new tastes and flavours to Britain, influenced in particular by India's elaborate food tradition which uses strong spices and herbs. Traditional British cuisine was modified with the addition of Indian-style spices and ingredients such as rice, creating dishes such as kedgeree which is a version of the Indian dish Khichri and was first brought back to Britain by members of the East India Company in the late 18th Century.



Kedgeree is made of cooked, flaked fish (traditionally smoked haddock), boiled rice, parsley, hard-boiled eggs, curry powder, butter or cream and occasionally sultanas. The dish can be eaten hot or cold.

Kedgeree, a popular breakfast dish in the Victorian era ²

In the 20th Century the First and Second World Wars interrupted food supply. Rationing was introduced with the aim of ensuring fair shares for all at a time of national food shortage. Rationing continued for nearly ten years after the Second World War ended. In some respects it was stricter than during wartime so that a whole generation was raised without easy access to many previously common ingredients which possibly contributed to a decline of British cuisine.

However there was a growing interest in foreign food and in recipe books such as Elizabeth David's "*A Book of Mediterranean Food*" even though the ingredients were often impossible to find in post war Britain.

By the 1960s foreign holidays and foreign-style restaurants in Britain widened the popularity of foreign cuisine. From the 1970s, the availability and range of good quality

fresh products increased and the British population became more willing and more able to vary its diet. This movement was assisted by celebrity chefs – on television and in their books – such as Fanny Cradock, Clement Freud, Robert Carrier, Gary Rhodes, Delia Smith, Gordon Ramsay, Ainsley Harriott, Nigella Lawson and Jamie Oliver.

Curry became popular in Britain by the 1970s when some restaurants that originally catered mainly to Indian customers found that their clientele was diversifying. Chicken tikka masala, a mildly spiced dish in a creamy sauce, was invented around 1971 in Britain and has been called "a true British national dish."



Chicken tikka masala is composed of boneless chunks of chicken marinated in spices and yogurt that are roasted in an oven, served in a creamy sauce. A tomato and coriander sauce is common, but no recipe for chicken tikka masala is standard and one survey found that of 48 different recipes, the only common ingredient was chicken. The sauce and chicken pieces may be coloured orange using foodstuffs such as turmeric, paprika, tomato purée or with food dye. Whilst the origin of the dish is not certain, chicken tikka masala's popularity has continued to grow and it is served in restaurants around the world.

*Chicken tikka masala and naan bread*³

British culinary preferences have continued to evolve in the 21st century. The variety of foods that are now available to us reflect the ethnic diversity of Britain today. By comparison many people in a 2021 survey had never eaten such traditional British favourites as toad in the hole, spotted dick, Scotch eggs, black pudding, or bubble and squeak and a minority did not believe these dishes existed.

Another important change is in the increased numbers of people following vegan, vegetarian or flexitarian diets. A You Gov report in 2021 indicated that 10% of the UK population did not eat meat. Those seeking to avoid meat are becoming increasingly well catered for, with the food delivery service Deliveroo showing that around 15,000 restaurants across the UK added plant-based dishes to their standard menus in 2021.

Information with thanks to:

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/stonehenge/history-and-stories/history/food-and-feasting-at-stonehenge/food-timeline/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_cuisine and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_cuisine

<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/society/articles-reports/2022/01/20/meet-britains-vegans-and-vegetarians>

British Cuisine Quiz (20 possible points)

1. Where might you eat an oven bottom? 1 point
2. When, and from where, were domestic animals and plants first brought to the British Isles? 2 points
3. Can you name two types of vegetable and one type of fruit that the Romans brought to Britain? 3 points
4. When were turkeys introduced to Britain? 1 point
5. What variety of fish is traditionally included in kedgeree? 1 point
6. Can you name 3 other ingredients in kedgeree? 3 points
7. What percentage of the UK population did not eat meat in 2021? 1 point
8. Can you name two things that may be used to colour the chicken and sauce in chicken tikka masala? 2 points
9. Here are the first names and surnames of five celebrity chefs but they have got jumbled up. Can you unjumble them? 5 points
Clement Oliver, Gordon Lawson, Nigella Smith, Jamie Ramsay, Delia Freud
10. According to Deliveroo, approximately how many restaurants in the UK had added plant based dishes to their standard menus in 2021? 1 point

British Cuisine Quiz Answers 20 possible points

1. Where might you eat an oven bottom? **Lancashire** 1 point
2. When, and from where, were domestic animals and plants first brought to the British Isles? **from Europe in about 4000 BC** 2 points
3. Can you name two types of vegetable and one type of fruit that the Romans brought to Britain **Veg - (2 of cabbage, leeks, onions, turnips), Fruit - (grapes)**
Max 3 points
4. When were turkeys introduced to Britain? **1500's** 1 point
5. What variety of fish is traditionally included in kedgerree?
Smoked haddock – 1 point
6. Can you name 3 other ingredients in kedgerree? Max 3 points
1 point for any of the following – up to 3 maximum
rice, parsley, hard-boiled eggs, curry powder, butter, cream and sultanas.
7. What percentage of the UK population did not eat meat in 2021? 1 point
10%
8. Can you name two things that may be used to colour the chicken and sauce in chicken tikka masala? 1 point for any of the following
turmeric, paprika, tomato purée or food dye Max 2 points
9. Here are the first names and surnames of five celebrity chefs but they have got jumbled up. Can you unjumble them? 5 points
Clement Oliver, Gordon Lawson, Nigella Smith, Jamie Ramsay, Delia Freud
Clement Freud, Gordon Ramsay, Nigella Lawson, Jamie Oliver, Delia Smith
10. According to Deliveroo, approximately how many restaurants in the UK had added plant based dishes to their standard menus in 2021? 1 point
15,000

Fruit and Vegetables Wordsearch

Can you find 20 fruit and vegetables hidden here?

R Y N C A U L I F L O W E R S U P
A E J V G M O S C E A G G Y H M E
P I B S I M R T K O R V A Q R K B
A G L M A J S O A A U N O A E X R
W G A O U P H P P M T R D C W X C
A C U D C C P E I J O I G Q A C D
T M B N I C U L N N S T N E A D T
E K E T T D O C E H A L X N T U O
R P R V O A C R L Q I C A W L T M
M A G A O C U L B M O N H F L B E
E O I P R H W D N G A O M E Q X W
L J N J T Z W Y J B V P T V K N Y
O V E Z E A P F N W Y T H P I T L
N Q P T E H Y P V E U J G Q R E T
U L B I B O V A D C Y Y G Y S J P
O A M U S T A S E L P P A E N I P
G R A P E F R U I T P I N S R A P

Lettuce	Beetroot	Radish	Banana
Apple	Spinach	Artichoke	Parsnip
Tomato	Broccoli	Cauliflower	Grapefruit
Satsuma	Watermelon	Pineapple	Courgette
Grape	Avocado	Aubergine	Cucumber

Fruit and Vegetables Wordsearch Answers

R Y N C A U L I F L O W E R S U P
A E J V G M O S C E A G G Y H M E
P I B S I M R T K O R V A Q R K B
A G L M A J S O A A U N O A E X R
W G A O U P H P P M T R D C W X C
A C U D C C P E I J O I G Q A C D
T M B N I C U L N N S T N E A D T
E K E T T D O C E H A L X N T U O
R P R V O A C R L Q I C A W L T M
M A G A O C U L B M O N H F L B E
E O I P R H W D N G A O M E Q X W
L J N J T Z W Y J B V P T V K N Y
O V E Z E A P F N W Y T H P I T L
N Q P T E H Y P V E U J G Q R E T
U L B I B O V A D C Y Y G Y S J P
O A M U S T A S E L P P A E N I P
G R A P E F R U I T P I N S R A P

Lettuce Beetroot Radish Banana Apple Spinach

Artichoke Parsnip Tomato Broccoli Cauliflower

Grapefruit Satsuma Watermelon Pineapple Courgette

Grape Avocado Aubergine Cucumber

British Cuisine Photograph Acknowledgements

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Kedgeree - *User: Justinc, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

Chicken tikka masala - *Michael Hays, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

Topic 5 - Food poetry

We have had some very special afternoons reading poetry, often around the time of National Poetry Day in October. For copyright reasons it is not possible to reproduce the poems here but you should be able to find them through the links below.

Food themed poems – Here is a selection that we have enjoyed

Eating Words by Katherine Hauth

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/91102/eating-words>

Toasting Marshmallows by Kristine O’Connell George

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/54680/toasting-marshmallows>

Plum by Tony Mitton

<https://childrens.poetryarchive.org/poem/plum/>

Chocolate cake by Michael Rosen

<https://allpoetry.com/poem/14374208-Chocolate-Cake-by-Michael-Rosen>

Hottest Food Ever by Kenn Nesbitt

<https://poetry4kids.com/poems/hottest-food-ever/>

Bramble from “The Lost Words” by Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris

https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/assets/000/000/954/BramblePoster_original_original.pdf

We have also had fun writing our own poems and before doing this we have all enjoyed reading Tony Mitton’s “**Instructions for Growing Poetry**”

<https://childrens.poetryarchive.org/poem/instructions-for-growing-poetry/>

Many thanks to Russell from Perry House for permission to include his poem “Mum’s a winner!”

I’ve come home from school, I’ve just had a terrible day
Mum tells me “Do your homework. Get changed before you go out to play
The day gets worse! I let in 6 goals playing football in the park
My Dad shouts with a big loud voice “Come in son before it gets dark”
The smell hits me whilst I’m walking back home…….
Mum’s made shepherd’s pie. Now I don’t feel quite so alone!
The bad day’s been forgotten. My belly’s full up
Thanks Mum, you have just won the best Mums’ cup!



Topic 6 - Christmas dinner around the world

This topic looks at some of the traditions surrounding food at Christmas time. It hopefully provides an opportunity for everyone to think about and appreciate their own traditions whilst also gaining an awareness of the similarities and differences in Christmas meals and celebrations around the world.

For this activity the children and older people should work in small groups.

For this topic you will need

- i) Several copies of the Christmas dinner around the world Factsheet
- ii) Several copies of the Christmas dinner around the world Crossword
- iii) One copy of the Crossword Answers
- iv) One copy of suggestions for extra activities
- v) Several copies of Christmas Acrostic Poem
- vi) Plain paper, pencils, coloured pencils
- vii) Perhaps some Christmas treats e.g. mince pies, panettone, satsumas

Working in small groups the adults and children should take turns to read and discuss the Christmas dinner around the world Factsheet. Be mindful that you may have adults or children with very different experiences including some who do not celebrate around Christmas time. They may like to talk about the special food that is associated with very important times in their year.

Collect in the factsheets once everyone has finished reading and give out the Christmas dinner around the world crossword.

If possible have some Christmas treats available for people to try.

After refreshments go through the Crossword answers. Hopefully there will also be time for some simple Christmas games (see Suggestions for extra activities) or you could encourage everyone to have a go at writing a Christmas Food acrostic poem.

Topic 6 - Christmas dinner around the world



Christmas dinner in the United Kingdom is traditionally eaten around lunchtime on Christmas Day and consists of roast turkey and all the trimmings followed by Christmas pudding and mince pies.

A traditional Christmas dinner in the UK ¹

Turkeys were introduced to England in the 16th Century although roast goose continued to be very popular until Victorian times. In England turkeys were bred almost exclusively in Norfolk up until the 20th century. In the 17th century, turkeys were walked from Norfolk to the London markets in great flocks of 500 birds or more. Their feet were sometimes bandaged to protect them. Upon arrival in London, they had to be fattened up for several days before market.

Christmas pudding has its origins in medieval England although the first reference to Christmas pudding in a recipe book is in Eliza Acton's bestselling book "Modern Cookery for Private Families" which was published in 1845.

There are many traditions associated with the making and serving of Christmas pudding. The last Sunday of the Church Year, the Sunday before Advent, is often called '**Stir-up Sunday**'. This is the traditional day for everyone in the family to take a turn at stirring the Christmas pudding, whilst making a secret wish. There are several associated traditions. A Christmas pudding is traditionally made with 13 ingredients to represent Christ and His Disciples. A proper Christmas pudding is always stirred from East to West in honour of the three Wise Men who travelled from the East to visit the baby Jesus.

A coin was traditionally added to the ingredients and cooked in the pudding. It was



supposed to bring wealth to whoever found it on their plate on Christmas Day. The traditional coin was an old silver sixpence or threepenny bit. Other traditional additions to the pudding included a ring, to foretell a marriage, and a thimble for a lucky life. On Christmas Day the pudding is traditionally decorated with a spray of holly, then doused in brandy, flamed, and brought to the table ceremonially.

A Christmas pudding being flamed after brandy has been poured over it ²

In 1843, Charles Dickens describes the scene in his famous novel **A Christmas Carol**:

“Mrs Cratchit left the room alone – too nervous to bear witnesses – to take the pudding up and bring it in... Hallo! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper which smells like a washing-day. That was the cloth. A smell like an eating-house and a pastrycook's next door to each other, with a laundress's next door to that. That was the pudding. In half a minute Mrs Cratchit entered – flushed, but smiling proudly – with the pudding, like a speckled cannon-ball, so hard and firm, blazing in half of half-a-quarter of ignited brandy, and bedight with Christmas holly stuck into the top”.



A plate of mince pies ³

Mince pies became a regular part of Christmas celebrations as early as the 16th century. At that time, they contained shredded meat as well as the usual mixture of dried fruits.

It was also considered important to add three spices (cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg) for the three gifts given to Jesus by the three Wise Men.

There are a number of other traditions and superstitions surrounding mince pies.

- It was thought lucky to eat one mince pie on each of the Twelve days of Christmas. Alternatively, to refuse one would lead to bad luck.
- The mincemeat mixture should only be stirred in a clockwise direction. To stir it anticlockwise is believed to bring bad luck for the coming year.
- A wish should be made whilst eating one's first mince pie of the festive season, and mince pies should always be eaten in silence.
- It is considered very unlucky to cut a mince pie with a knife.

Around the world there are many other traditions associated with Christmas dinner. In many countries the main Christmas meal is eaten on Christmas Eve instead of on Christmas Day whilst in Eastern Orthodox Church countries like Ukraine, Christmas is traditionally celebrated on 6th or 7th January. This date follows the Julian Calendar which predates the more widely used Gregorian calendar.

In Ukraine there are 12 traditional and symbolic dishes served at the Christmas meal on 6th January, including a sweet grain pudding called *kutia*, a meatless borsch beet soup and *varenyky*, a type of dumpling stuffed with cabbage and potatoes.



A Christmas card showing a twelve dish Christmas Eve supper ⁴

In many European countries the main Christmas meal is eaten on the evening of 24th December with fish often featuring as an important part of the meal, for example The Feast of the Seven Fishes (*Festa dei Sette Pesci*) in Italy. The dinner consists of a



seven-course menu featuring seafood dishes like carp, octopus, clams, mussels and even fried eel! The final course is reserved for classic Italian desserts like *panettone* or homemade tiramisu. The long tradition of eating seafood on Christmas Eve dates from the Roman Catholic tradition of abstaining from eating meat on the eve of a feast day.

A typical Italian panettone ⁵

In Australia Christmas dinner is generally based on the traditional English Christmas meal. However, due to Christmas falling in the heat of the Southern Hemisphere's summer, meats such as ham, turkey and chicken are sometimes served cold with cranberry sauce, accompanied by side salads or roast vegetables. Barbecues are also a popular way of avoiding the heat of the oven. Seafood such as prawns, lobster, oysters and crayfish are common as are barbecued cuts of steak or chicken. Trifle is also a favourite in Australia at Christmas time as is panettone which has been introduced by Italian Australians.

In India people cook a variety of foods at Christmas time. The Kerala Christian community is the largest Christianity community in India and their celebrations begin on Christmas Eve. Pork Vindaloo, Beef Stew, and Mappas (fish curry) are the common

dishes served during Christmas dinner. All Keralites , including Hindus and Muslims, celebrate Christmas and share sweets and gifts and participate in carols and town celebrations. Plum cake is a famous dessert in Kerala and family come together and cut the cake after the midnight mass.

In countries without a long Christian tradition, the Christmas meal may be more heavily influenced by popular culture. An example of this is in Japan, where a successful advertising campaign in the 1970s made eating at KFC around Christmas a national custom. Its chicken meals are so popular during the season that stores take reservations months in advance!

What do you think you will be eating for your Christmas dinner?

Information with thanks to:

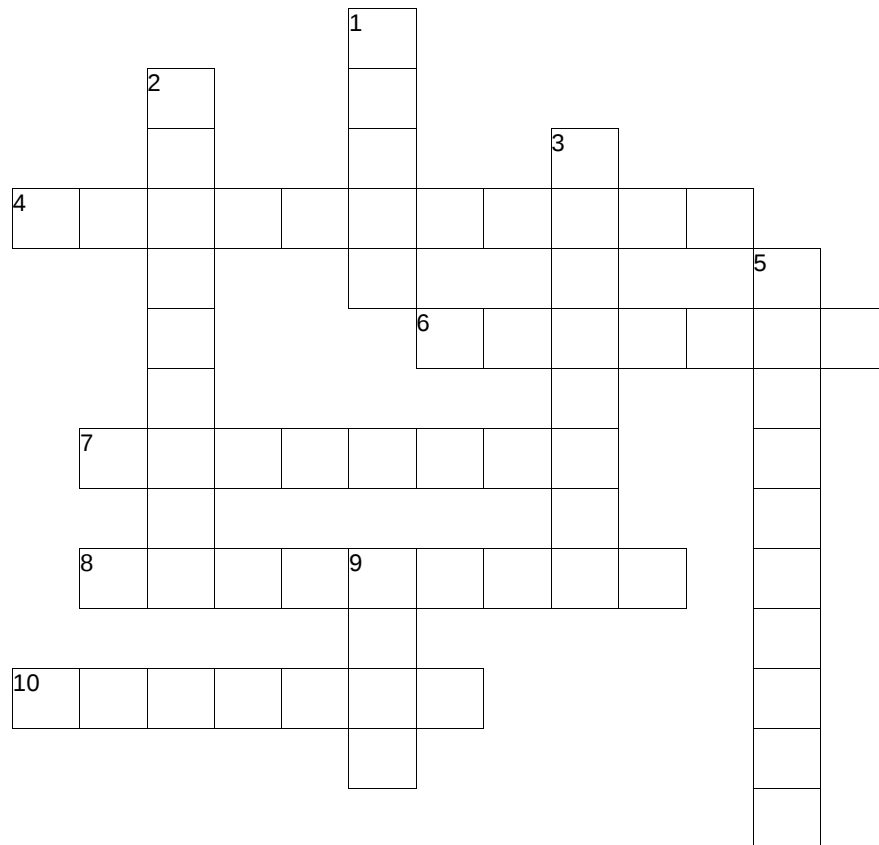
Mandy Barrow for permission to include information from the Project Britain website
<http://projectbritain.com/Xmas/index.html#top>

Wikipedia [Christmas dinner - Wikipedia](#) and
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_pudding

Photograph Acknowledgements

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4. A 12 dish Christmas Eve supper - Jacques Hnizdovsky, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
5. A typical Italian panettone - Codice1000 at Italian Wikipedia, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Christmas Dinner around the world Crossword



Across

4. Who carried in the Christmas pudding in "A Christmas Carol" ? (3, 8)

6. Where did most English turkeys come from in the 19th Century? (7)

7. What do people eat after midnight mass in Kerala? (4,4)

8. A popular Italian dessert in Australia (9)

10. What would you look out for in your Christmas pudding if you hoped for a lucky life? (7)

Down

1. In which country is KFC very popular at Christmas time?(5)

2. Where might you have a barbecue on Christmas Day? (9)

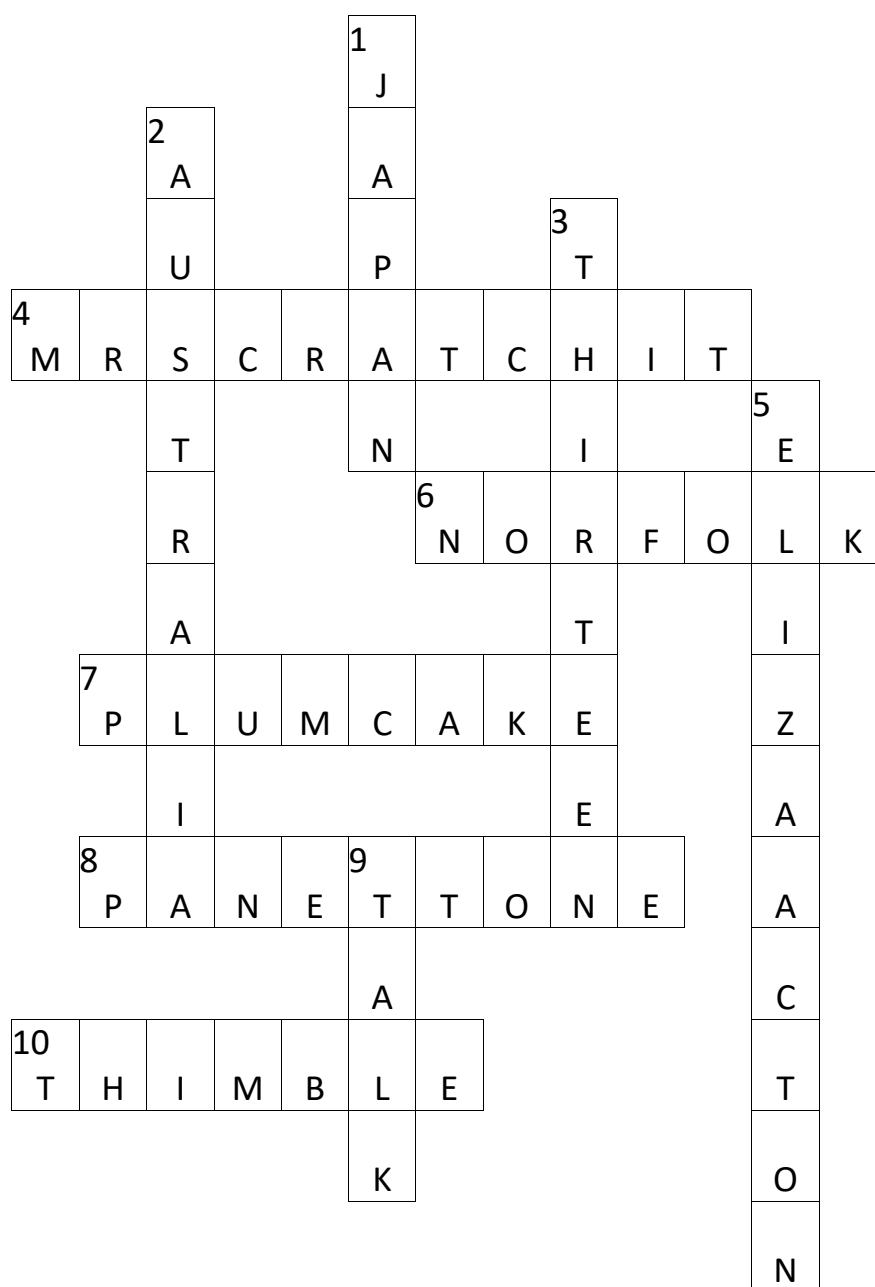
3. Number of ingredients in a traditional Christmas pudding (8)

5. Who wrote "Modernn Cookery for Private Families"? (5,5)

9. What should you **not** do when eating a mince pie? (4)

Christmas Dinners around the world

Crossword Answers



Across

4. Who carried in the Christmas pudding in "A Christmas Carol" ?
 6. Where did most English turkeys come from in the 19th Century?
 7. What do people eat after midnight mass in Kerala?
 8. A popular Italian dessert in Australia
 10. What would you look out for in your Christmas pudding if you hoped for a lucky life?

Down

1. In which country is KFC very popular at Christmas time?
 2. Where might you have a barbecue on Christmas Day?
 3. Number of ingredients in a traditional Christmas pudding
 5. Who wrote Modern Cookery for Private Families?
 9. What should you not do when eating a mince pie?

Christmas dinner around the world

Some suggestions for extra activities

Memory games

Over the years we have had fun playing variations of the memory game “ **I packed my bag and in it I put.....**”.

In the traditional version of the game, one person says "I packed my bag and in it I put...", and names any object. The next person then says "I packed my bag and in it I put...", followed by the original suggestion, and adding their own. The game continues with more objects being added, and a player is disqualified if they forget one of the previously occurring items or cannot think of a new item to add to the bag. The game continues until only one person is left.

At Christmas time you could vary it so that the objects must all have a link of some sort with Christmas dinner e.g.

“I went to the shops to buy the Christmas dinner and I came home with.....a bag of sprouts, a box of Christmas crackers etc etc”

Or “ I took my plate and on it I put *six roast potatoes, one sprout etc etc*”

Alternatively you could play a Christmas themed version of **Kim’s Game**.

Before the session collect 12 to 15 small items related if possible to Christmas meals e.g. satsuma, nut, sprout, candle, spoon etc. Put them on a tray and cover them with a cloth. When you are ready to play remove the cloth for one minute. Then cover them up again and everyone has to make a list of what they can remember. The winner is the person who remembers the most correctly.

Christmas Acrostic Poem

Can you write a food themed Christmas Acrostic poem where the first letter of each line spells out the word Christmas?

C

H

R

I

S

T

M

A

S