

Character Recipe Cards

The Great Gatsby and the Sense of Taste

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Grade Level	10th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	-2 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts		
Course	American Literature		

Essential Question

What can the taste of food reveal about a character?

Summary

In this lesson, students will explore how the sense of taste functions in The Great Gatsby by composing recipes that make connections between culinary creations and character.

Snapshot

Engage

Students will sample foods with various flavors in order to establish the characteristics of differing tastes.

Explore

Having identified the different tastes of the foods presented, students will make connections between the tastes and characters in 'The Great Gatsby.'

Explain

Students will use the connections made between taste and character to develop recipes that use knowledge of the characters' traits, relationship to other characters, and role in the plot.

Extend

As a further extension activity, students can prepare their recipes and bring them to class to present and share.

Evaluate

This recipe can be evaluated using the attached rubric in the "The Great Gatsby and the sense of Touch" handout packet.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

REL402: Identify clear comparative relationships in somewhat challenging passages

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 10)

10.1.S.2: Follow agreed-upon rules as they engage in collaborative discussions about what they are reading and writing, expressing their own ideas clearly, building on the ideas of others, and respectfully disagreeing when necessary in pairs, diverse groups, and whole-class settings.
10.2.R.1: Summarize the main ideas and paraphrase significant parts of increasingly complex texts.
10.4.W.2: Select language to create a specific effect in writing according to purpose and audience.

Attachments

- The Great Gatsby and the Sense of Taste—Character Recipe Cards - Spanish.docx
- The Great Gatsby and the Sense of Taste—Character Recipe Cards - Spanish.pdf
- The Great Gatsby and the Sense of Taste—Character Recipe Cards.docx
- The Great Gatsby and the Sense of Taste—Character Recipe Cards.pdf
- The Great Gatsby and the Sense of Taste—Character Recipe Cards.pptx

Materials

- Lesson slides (attached)
- 'The Great Gatsby' and the Sense of Taste Handout (attached)
- Oreo cookies
- Salted pretzel twists
- Coffee grounds
- Lemon wedges, sliced small
- Plastic sandwich bags

30 minutes

Engage

To begin, organize students into groups (groups of four or five, depending on class size). Once in groups, display **Slide 3** and have students work in groups to come to a consensus about the five basic taste groups. Since this is a brief introduction, give only one minute to do this.

Teacher's Note

The five basic taste groups are: 1) sweet, 2) sour, 3) bitter, 4) salty, 5) umami. Umami is the group that most students will likely not list, since it is not as common for us to hear. Umami, a Japanese word, describes a "savory" taste, like fine cheeses or meats.

Next, using **Slide 4**, students will compose a Two-Minute Paper in which they write, for two minutes, about the five tastes on which their group came to a consensus. The prompt is: "Describe, on your own, what the 5 basic tastes are that your groups decided on. Try to describe each taste through examples or reactions to the tastes". Once the two minutes is over, select one volunteer from each group to share their writing. This is an opportunity for students to hear what was similar and what was different about their knowledge and understanding about basic tastes.

Most students will probably list "sweet, sour, bitter, and salty" as common tastes, but left out "umami." Save listing the tastes until after the next activity.

Now that students have discussed and written about tastes, they will taste some foods on their own.

Teacher's Note

All the foods suggested for the next activity are safe to eat, but students may opt out of they do not wish to taste the foods or if they suspect they may have an allergy. This warning should be given before food reaches the students' groups.

Using **Slide 5**, announce to students that they will be actively experiencing a few foods that have different tastes. Tell them that they will receive a sample of each food on the board, and their task is to identify which taste group the foods belong to. The foods below should be prepared and separated into plastic bags before class. Each group should receive one bag containing the foods below, and in each bag, there should be enough for each student to have an individual sample.

1. Oreo cookies (sweet)
2. Lemon wedges (sour)
3. Salted pretzel twists (salty)
4. Coffee grounds (bitter)

Teacher's Note

These are foods that are suggested for this activity; however, there are certainly other substitutes that work just as well.

With **Slide 5** still displayed, give students two minutes to sample the foods and discuss in their groups which food corresponds with certain taste groups. While the foods have an obvious group that they belong to, some students may experience taste in a different way. For example, a student might list an Oreo cookie as being sweet and salty, while others may just taste sweetness. These differences are fine and add interest to the discussion.

After giving students time to sample the tastes of the foods, have them throw away the bags of taste samples and return to their groups to identify the tastes of the photos on **Slide 5**. As they identify each, have them describe the taste as best they can. They are sure to be curious about what the fifth taste is; on **Slide 6**, the same photos of the food samples are shown with taste identifiers, and the fifth, "umami," is shown in the corner with a link to "What is Umami, Exactly?" which provides a description of umami and food with its taste. For the purposes of this lesson, only the first four of the taste groups will be used and "umami" will be excluded.

50 minutes

Explore

Now that students have had plenty of practice describing different taste groups, display **Slide 7** and reflect on the question "What is the relationship between taste and character?" Ask students, "Can you describe people in the same way that you describe taste?"

After sharing answers, display **Slide 8**. This slide shows both the taste groups and a list of characters from “The Great Gatsby.” Ask students which "taste" goes with each of the characters. Which of the characters can be described by a blend of tastes? To get deeper into this activity, randomly assign each group a character. They may only choose from the list of the four tastes displayed to describe their character. Give students 5 minutes to do the following, using **Slide 9**:

1. Identify their character (this has already been done if you assigned the characters to each group).
2. Identify the "taste" or "tastes" that best describe your character’s personality, relationships, and/or actions.
3. Find supporting evidence through a direct quote from the text that shows this taste/character connection.
4. If there was a dish/recipe named after this connection between taste and your character, what would it be called?

Teacher's Note

To help them get started, there is an example of this activity found on **Slide 10** using the character Harry Potter for inspiration. Consider walking through this example, then moving to **Slide 11** to return to the original instructions. The text from the example slide is shown below:

1. Harry Potter
2. Sour and Bitter- these tastes describe his attitudes toward and relationship with Draco Malfoy.
3. "Malfoy? Revenge? What can he do about it?" "That’s my point, I don’t know!" said Harry, frustrated. "But he’s up to something and I think we should take it seriously!"
4. "Revenge is a Dish Best Served Cold"

After enough time has elapsed for students to work in their groups, ask for volunteers to share their taste/character connections; in particular, when students share the name of their dish or recipe, ask them to describe what it might taste like and how it might appear. Now that students have gotten into the mode of connecting characters to the sense of taste and thinking about recipes, engage them in a Think-Pair-Share strategy in which they will analyze recipes further. **Slides 12-14** hold the instructions for this strategy.

First, display the "THINK" **slide 12** and give students a minute to jot down their answers in a Quickwrite in their comp books to the question, "What are standard characteristics of all recipes? Include what is typically on a recipe card, units of measurement, and typical directions."

Next, have students follow the directions on **slide 13** and pair up with a partner sitting closest to them; students should then have a minute to read their Quickwrite and share their answers with their partner, finding similarities and differences in their responses. Finally, using **slide 14**, have a whole class discussion about what components are typically found in a recipe.

On **slide 15**, there are links to:

1. Sample recipes (this is a simple Google search- click on a variety of images to look for similarities)
2. Units of measurement in cooking (there is a printable chart at this link that may be helpful to print out for students)
3. Examples of cooking directions (scroll down to "The Preparation Method")

Click on each of these links and explore these as a class, pointing out significant elements in each link that are typically featured in recipes. If possible, give students time to browse recipes on their own for a bit using available technology. The links above are merely suggestions, so students might want to explore other examples on the web as well.

Teacher's Note

While browsing these links, ask students questions along the way like "Why would a cook use a dash of a spice instead of a cup?"

After students have had enough time to get an idea of what a recipe looks like and how to compose one, bring the idea of a recipe back to the Harry Potter example. **Slides 16 and 17** provide an example of how to incorporate a character and the text into a recipe. After viewing this example, ask students to think back to the exercise they did with their Gatsby character in connecting him/her to taste and a recipe. How might that recipe look on a recipe card?

30 minutes

Explain

Now that students have worked both with how taste relates to characters in “The Great Gatsby” and have begun thinking about the ins and outs of recipes, inform students that they will be creating a Character Recipe Card. Pass out a copy of the attached **The Great Gatsby and the Sense of Taste** handout to each student.

Using **slide 18**, inform students that they will need to choose ONE character and ONE or TWO tastes to inspire their recipe card. Students may, but do not have to, use the same character from the group writing activity completed earlier.

As **slide 18** is displayed, go through the handout. After re-reading the essential question together, show students the Brainstorming section. This looks similar to the exercise that students already completed with their groups, but they should plan the recipe based around their character in the spaces provided. The Brainstorming stage asks that students plan:

- One character from “The Great Gatsby”
- The "taste" or "tastes" that best describe the character’s personality, relationships, and/or actions
- Name of dish/recipe
- Describe dish/recipe

Teacher's Note

During this brainstorming stage, consider allowing students to use technology to look up examples of recipes. Even though examples were shown to the class, many students will be unfamiliar with how a recipe is composed. As an alternative, if technology is unavailable, consider bringing cookbooks or completed recipe cards from home to share with your students.

On the next page of the handout is the Character Recipe Card planning sheet. For the final product, inform students that they should use all of the recipe card requirements on the handout, although they may be flexible with the format and draw inspiration from real recipe cards. Remind students continually to use standard recipe measurements and play off of standard recipe directions, while always keeping their character and the text in mind.

The final product should look like a realistic recipe card, no smaller than a piece of 8 ½ X 11 paper. Final Character Recipe Cards should be finished and cut out either on paper or cardstock.

20 minutes

Extend

As an extension activity, students will add a description of the taste of their dish to the back of their Character Recipe Card. This description should be at least one paragraph and should include the reactions that those who are served the dish are likely to experience. Refer to the early examples in this lesson where students recorded examples of reactions to tasting a lemon vs. tasting an Oreo. Students should include their chosen text evidence in this extension as well.

As an additional extension activity, invite students to try cooking their recipe at home (with the help of an adult). This process can be filmed at home, then shown in class. The final food product can be shared with the class.

30 minutes

Evaluate

On the handout, there is a simple rubric that can be used to evaluate these recipe cards. Consider also using **slide 19** as a reminder for students. The slide informs students that their final project will include the Character Recipe Card and the rubric. This rubric is attached as both a PDF and a Word document so that it can either be modified as needed.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-pair-share. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/139
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Two-Minute paper. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/152
- Godbole, N. (2023, March 14). *What Is Umami, Exactly?* Reader's Digest. http://www.rd.com/food/recipes-cooking/13-foods-with-natural-umami/