

SESSION 6

Local food products The Basque Country

TEACHER'S GUIDE



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Local food products
The Basque Country



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Energy to grow

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Breakdown

SESSION SUMMARY

- Information on local products.
- Information on Protected Designations of Origin.
- Activity: "Classify the types of food".
- Activity: "You're the chef today".
- Activity: "Become a chef".

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

- To appreciate local products as a guarantee of food quality.
- To cultivate cultural sensitivity through gastronomy.

CONTENTS

Local food products.
Protected Designations of Origin.
Seasonal produce.

KEY COMPETENCIES

1. Linguistic communication.
2. Mathematical comprehension and basic science and technology comprehension.
4. Learning how to learn.
5. Social and civic comprehension.
6. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurial spirit.
7. Cultural expressions and awareness.

Session plan

The weather, geography and cultural and historical heritage of each region mean that each place on the map specialises in growing, making and eating specific types of food. These types of food are known as local food products.

In this session, the pupils learn the benefits of local food products and Designations of Origin.

At the end of the session, activities are performed to apply this knowledge.

The advantages of local food products

Local food products are types of food which are produced, processed and distributed in a specific geographical region. They also have specific characteristics that set them apart.

The benefits of local food products:

1. They are fresher, because the distances they have to be transported are shorter.
2. They keep their flavour and nutritional properties better.
3. Because they do not have to be transported very far, they mean we can cut costs and emit less CO₂ into the atmosphere.

4. Because they are top-quality products, they always taste good.
5. They allow us to get to know and enjoy the specific flavours of our land.
6. They encourage food tourism (between regions).
7. They help maintain customs and traditions from the past.
8. They allow us to get to know and establish a relationship with the environment in which we live.
9. The production of local food products helps develop the local economy.
10. They help enrich our community.

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Tix and Loy have taught us how important it is to eat a balanced diet as part of our everyday lives, eating all kinds of food in the recommended quantities.

But, do you think that food is the same all over the world?

The answer is no, because the things we eat vary a great deal depending on where we are.

The weather, geography and cultural and historical heritage of each region mean that each place on the map specialises in growing, making and eating specific types of food. These types of food are known as local food products. Have you heard of them? Tix and Loy are going to explain them a bit more.



1/ The advantages of local food products

Local food products are types of food which are produced, processed and distributed in a specific geographical region. They also have specific characteristics that set them apart.

Do you know the countless benefits of local food products? Here they are:

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Did you know...?

Thanks to the interest shown by farmers and consumers, flavours, traditions and part of the past of our food culture are now being recovered.



Seasonal produce

This is food, mainly fruit and vegetables, which is eaten when it is at its optimum level of ripeness. The advantages of this kind of food over other kinds include:

1. More nutritional properties and better flavour because their properties remain intact.
2. Economic savings because larger quantities of the product are available.
3. They respect the environment because they defend the natural life cycles of products and help reduce the intensive farming of single products.

We can enjoy different kinds of seasonal fruit and vegetables over the year.

Like oranges for example. Although we eat them all year round, they are a winter product. In fact, the best season to eat oranges is winter.

Did you know...?

There are different protected designations of origin for different types of product.

Some typical products from The Basque Country:

- Idiazabal cheese
- Peppers from Gernika
- Txakoli wine
- Basque Country beef
- Bay of Biscay White Tuna

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3/ Seasonal produce

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We can enjoy different kinds of seasonal fruit and vegetables over the year.

Like oranges for example. Although we eat them all year round, they are a winter product. In fact, the best months to eat oranges are from January to April.



*Did you know...?
There are different protected designations of origin for different types of product.*



If I ask you to name some typical products from The Basque Country, could you name me any?

I'm going to tell you the names of some of our local products. Let's see if you've heard of them:

- Idiazabal cheese
- Peppers from Gernika
- Txakoli wine
- Basque Country beef
- Bay of Biscay White Tuna



Pupil notebook

Idiazabal cheese

This cheese is made from the milk of **Latxa and Carranza sheep which are born and raised in the Basque Country.**

The shepherds have fed them in the same way for thousands of years, taking them to high pastures in the spring, summer and autumn. When the cold winter arrives, they bring them down to the warmer valleys. These sheep are very special: they only produce milk from February to June, and only about 100 litres per animal.

They do not give much milk, but the milk they supply is of very good quality and is used raw to make Idiazabal cheese. Once made, **the cheese has to be matured for at least two months.** It is more yellow than cow's cheese because it contains more fat, the kind you need in order to grow. And it is very rich in calcium, which makes your bones big and strong.



Peppers from Gernika

As you are sure to know, before harvesting fruit and vegetables in order to eat them, you have to wait for them to grow and ripen. But these Basque peppers are an exception to the rule.

Peppers from Gernika are green peppers which are **not allowed to ripen fully.** When harvested, the berries **measure between 6 and 9cm**, and are **perfect for eating**, so they are **packed the same day** in order not to lose any of their authenticity.

Their green flesh is smooth, fine and sweet. Peppers from Gernika are best served as a starter just with salt so as not to mask their unique flavour with anything else.



Txakoli wine

This wine **made from green grapes** is deeply rooted in Basque culture. The name "txakoli" comes from the Basque word "etxakoa", which means "homemade".

The grapes are not allowed to ripen fully and are harvested when still green. This means that this wine is not as fruity as wines made from ripe grapes, but rather **sharp instead.**

Whilst other wines are fermented for at least a few months, **txakoli is fermented for just 12 days.**

Distinctions are made between the different locations of the vineyards from which the grapes come. There are a number of important areas that produce txakoli in the Basque Country: Txakoli from **Álava**, Txakoli from **Guipúzcoa**, Txakoli from **Getaria** and Txakoli from **Vizcaya**.



Basque Country beef

Meat from the Basque Country is considered amongst the finest in Europe. That is because Basque farmers take great care of their animals from the day they are born, looking after them throughout their lives. They mainly **eat local grass**, complemented with **special-quality feed.**

Although all beef may look the same to us, there are **three different types:** Txahala, which is the meat of a young animal up to two years old, Zaharra, which is the meat of an animal between 2 and 13 years old, and Idia, which is the meat of castrated males.



What have we learned today?

- Food products with Protected Designations of Origin are those which are produced, processed and distributed in our own community.
- We can recognise them in the supermarket thanks to their quality labels.
- The production and distribution of these products in our community contributes towards local economic growth.

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Bay of Biscay White Tuna

Boats reach the harbours of Hondarribia, Getaria, Bermeo, Ondarroa, Pasaia, Donostia and Lekeitio full of this kind of tuna: "Bonito del Norte" or Bay of Biscay White Tuna.

So we can continue to enjoy the tasty meat of this White Tuna and be sure that the fish does not become extinct in the Bay of Biscay, it is **not caught using nets**, because then all the fish would get caught very quickly and not have time to reproduce.

The Basque fishermen catch them one by one with rods to guarantee the sustainability of the species and not squash the fish in nets.



What have we learned today?

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- We can recognise them in the supermarket thanks to their quality labels.
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Pupil notebook

The goal here is to use language in a different way than we usually do, playing with the sounds of words and their form. Poems, rhymes, riddles, tongue twisters, songs and shape poems can all be used as resources.

The activity focuses on calligrams (shape poetry), so it can be used in a language class and / or artistic education class.

In this activity, students read, understand, think and, finally, write a poem to turn it into a visual representation.

1. Let's play with food names

First, the teachers will ask the students if they understand the meaning of the word "calligraphy". The students, raising their hands first, are free to answer with whatever the word brings to mind. It can be proposed that they look at the ending "-gram" and think of other words that end in the same way so that they can deduce part of the meaning.

Next, explain what a calligram is:

The word calligram comes from the combination of the two Greek words, 'kállos' (beauty) and gramme (written characters).

A calligram is a text (in this case a poem) visually arranged in such a way that it forms an image associated with the text's theme. In this case it is a poetic composition that draws, through writing, the theme suggested by the poem. It is visual poetry, also known as shape poetry.

It is characterized by creating a final image through words, which visually express what the poem says; that is, drawing with the words.

They can look at the examples they have in their notebook.

You can ask what they think the poem is about, even if they don't understand it, because it is written in French (Guillaume Apollinaire).

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Activities
Local food products

1. Let's play with food names

As we have seen, calligrams (or shape poems) are a type of visual poem that form a drawing with the text. That drawing represents the theme of the poem. It can be a character, an animal, a landscape or any object you can imagine!

Let's see some examples!

The first is by Guillaume Apollinaire, a French writer who popularized this type of poem at the beginning of the 20th century.
Although it is written in French, what do you think the poem is about?

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Pupil notebook

Explain that in our literature there have also been poets and authors who have used this method, such as Guillermo de Torre, who made the following in 1923:

The teacher will show the students another example and ask them what they think about this calligram.

Finally, the teacher will comment that, as they have been learning a lot about products from their region, they will make a calligram related to one. Present examples of calligrams with food:

After analyzing the examples, the teacher will explain that now they are the ones who are going to make shape poetry with products from our region.

You can state that, at the end, the work will be displayed in the corridor.

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Activities
Local food products

The following is from Guillermo de Torre, a Spanish writer, who made this in 1923. 95 years ago!



Here's another example:



Since we have been learning a lot about the products of our region, we are going to create a calligram with them!
Here are some examples of food calligrams:



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Activities
Local food products

Now it's your turn!

a) First, choose a product from our region. It can be a seasonal food. Think of something that inspires you and write a poem about that food.

b) Then it's time to make the calligram. Transform the poem into a drawing, that's shape reflects the theme of the poem; that is, the food that you have chosen.

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