

FIVE-YEAR EVALUATION
HOME ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT

William Annin Middle School
Grades 7 & 8

MAY, 2002

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Philosophy

Today's food classes are teaching students more than how to cook. Since food is not "just something to eat", students study a range of food related topics. They examine what nutrients the body needs and what foods provide those nutrients. They learn about kitchen safety hazards, proper sanitation and storage guidelines, and how to work efficiently in the kitchen. Food, food preparation, and food consumption serve a variety of roles in people's lives. They keep important traditions alive as they bring people together for holidays, and important celebrations. As everyone sits around the table eating and talking, the sharing of favorite foods fosters human communication and family memories.

Food also opens up avenues for career development in our country's expanding food industry. Food offers the opportunity for anyone involved with food preparations at any level to be creative.

Food is related to many fields of learning. Activities offer students opportunities to develop verbal, reading writing, math, and science skills. Activities promote the development of such high order thinking skills as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in problem solving situations. Both groups of activities encourage students to apply many of the concepts learned in the food lab to real-life situations, including the role food plays in meeting psychological needs and the development of healthy eating habits that lead to wellness.

The study of Foods provides students in the middle school with practical experiences to balance the academic demands of that level. It is a multi-sensory experience that requires the development of knowledge and skills in a hands-on environment with immediate rewards. The Food curriculum offers instruction for an important life skill that is not necessarily learned at home, since we live in a society of dual careers and fast foods.

Goals and Objectives

Students will learn:

- The basic skills for the preparation of food and kitchen management.
To utilize their knowledge and skills in the area of Foods creatively
- To follow directions
- To work as part of a team in a cooperative setting
- That there are many rewarding careers in the food service industry, and that it is one of the fastest growing career areas.
- That acquiring knowledge and skills in the area of food preparation is an on-going process involving both nutritional and consumer awareness.
- About the cultural heritage of foods and food preparation
- To integrate knowledge and skills gained in the Foods courses with the curriculum of other courses such as history, geography, foreign languages, and art.

Review of Previous Five-Year Evaluation

This is the first Evaluation of the Home Economics Department.

Review of the Current Program

The Home Economics program consists of one 7th grade cycle class called Foods and one 8th grade elective, called International Foods. There is one full time teacher who teaches both classes. These classes have been in place at William Annin as they are presented now for 3 years.

The most current terminology for Home Economics is “Family and Consumer Sciences.” That terminology is too broad for the limited scope of the program offered at William Annin Middle School, but it is worth an acknowledgement.

Instructional Strategies

During the hands-on activities of the foods classes the students have many opportunities to **Identify Similarities and Differences**. As they watch each other during a foods lab they make observations and identify what other students are doing that is the same as what they are doing, or different from what they are doing. Then they make judgments about what they are doing, is it right or wrong, do they need to alter their own behavior. When they taste their foods, they make judgments about which food is better. Making judgments about which food is better and why. Judgments are based on observing and analyzing the product(s) from each kitchen group, then making judgments as a class.

Opportunities are provided for **Summarizing and Note Taking**. This is accomplished during lectures, demonstrations, video presentations, readings in the text, and guest lectures. Students are provided with study sheets and Xeroxes of recipes. Students are expected to take notes on their study sheets to serve as memory aides when preparing foods in the kitchens.

Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition is accomplished by praising the students when they follow directions and have successful experiences. A point system is utilized for encouraging students to clean up their kitchens efficiently. They receive recognition from the teacher and from each other as a result of their products, which they get to eat.

There is very little **Homework** assigned, but each semester the students are assigned a Research Paper. There is some homework involved in this assignment, and some time is allocated in class to do research (8th grade) in the media center. Students are given many opportunities to **Practice** the skills and knowledge taught when they go to their kitchens to make food.

Nonlinguistic Representations are used around the classroom in the form of posters to communicate information about healthy eating/food groups, and safety.

Cooperative Learning is the predominant method of a production unit in foods classes. Each student in each kitchen is given an assigned task. The effectiveness of their groups is based on the quality of their experience and their ability to function cooperatively.

The teacher **Establishes Objectives and Provides Feedback** for the students in all aspects of their course activities. Students also occasionally set goals for themselves when they are given choices and they provide feedback for each other.

Students are given many opportunities to **Generate and Test hypotheses**. They do this in the kitchen when they are cooking. When following directions, and considering what to do and how to do it, they must make decisions and anticipate the outcome or consequences of their actions. When they take action they test their hypotheses.

The teacher sets up lessons by providing **Cues**, asking **Questions**, and providing **Advance Organizers**. These techniques encourage the students to become actively involved in considering the topic of new lessons.

Assessment and Evaluation

The **rationale** for assessing and evaluating is to develop a knowledge and understanding of student performance, to identify each student's prior level of knowledge, skill and understanding of the content and processes, and assess student growth and development.

Grades are a means of communication between teachers, students and parents – letting them know what is expected in each student's growth and progress during the course. There are a number of very strong suggestions in regard to attitudes towards evaluating.

- Grades should not get in the way of learning
- Emphasis should be placed on the intrinsic reward of gaining knowledge and improving skills, not on receiving grades as rewards.
- Assessments should be used to communicate relative progress and help the teacher to guide the student to further growth.

There are three different domains addressed in the instructional process. Objectives directed at the taxonomies of each domain demand different evaluative techniques.

Cognitive Domain

Knowledge	identify, specify, state
Comprehension	explain, restate, translate
Application	apply, solve, use
Analysis	analyze, compare, contrast
Synthesis	design, develop, plan
Evaluation	assess, evaluate, judge

Affective Domain

Receiving	accept, demonstrate awareness, listen
Responding	comply with, engage in, volunteer
Valuing	express a preference for, show appreciation by stating, show concern by stating
Organization	adhere to, defend, synthesize
Characterization by value or value complex	demonstrate empathy, express willingness to be ethical, modify behavior

Psychomotor Domain

Perception	distinguish, identify, select
Set	assume a position, demonstrate, show
Guided response	attempt, imitate, try
Mechanism	make habitual, practice, repeat
Complex overt response	carry out, operate, perform
Adaptation	adapt, change, revise
Origination	create, design, originate

Methods of Evaluation and Assessment:

Observe the student at work to assess confidence, self reliance, attitude, application of knowledge, task commitment, manipulative skills, work habits, etc. Visually and verbally assess the student's ability to critique his/her own and others work and use appropriate terminology.

Talk to the students to verbally assess their level of skill. Review their intentions and compare with the results. Does the student have the ability to orally communicate information about the subject in a coherent and logical manner? Does the student have the ability to discuss his/her own work and the work of others, to use appropriate terminology?

Write and Read involves student demonstration of the ability to write about the subject in a logical, easily understood style with appropriate grammar and sentence structure. This might include quizzes, tests, exams, or reports.

Listening requires student demonstration of the ability to listen, comprehend and interpret information.

Group Discussion includes discussion of a topic at various stages of the learning process. This might involve analysis of a problem, brainstorming to find possible solutions to a problem. This process should require of the students a conscious awareness of the process, the contributions of the various people, the criteria and rationale behind the conclusions drawn, and the benefits or consequences of alternative options. Responses should not be accepted without reasons.

Behavior includes identifying and demonstrating behaviors that reflect a feeling for the dignity and worth of other people, including those of other ethnic, cultural, linguistic and economic groups.

Rubrics will be used to enable students to evaluate themselves and others. Rubrics will also provide an understanding of their strengths and areas they need to improve. Students are evaluated through the following:

1. Continuous teacher observations and discussions.
2. Completion of class work (individual and group)
3. Completion of assignments
4. Grading projects (teacher generated, individual and group self-assessment)
5. Quizzes
6. Tests

Cultural Diversity/Multiculturalism

In the 7th grade cycle course references are made to the cultural derivation of ingredients or processes as they pertain to topics in the curriculum. There are discussions of health factors in different cultures that are the result of diet. The U.S. Government has made recommendations to Americans about making healthier food choices, since research has shown that many common diseases are the result of life-long poor eating habits.

In 8th Grade students write a paper about their family heritage. They interview parents, grandparents and other relatives about their ethnicity related to their foods and customs. The students prepare a recipe from their heritage or from their most recent family traditions and celebrations. Family members may all be involved in this recipe preparation. The prepared food is brought into class to be shared with classmates.

During the International Foods course, the students learn about a wide range of ethnic foods that are now available in grocery stores and specialty shops. They prepare many of these ethnic recipes themselves. As they become aware of the origins of foods, they discover why ethnic food preparation and the expansion of ethnic restaurants have taken place in recent years.

Cooking foods that are American regional and ethnic with an emphasis on Italian, French, Spanish/Mexican, and Oriental, the students study the cultures, geography, and regional cuisines of four cultures. If time permits, the study of foreign cuisines is expanded to include more cultures. As the students study historical and cultural factors influencing food preparation and consumption, they recognize the French “*joie de vivre*”, and the important recognition given to the profession of being a chef. They become aware of the fact that many cultures, especially the French and Italian, value the use of fresh ingredients purchased daily for food preparation, and that these cultures are very creative in the way food is prepared and presented, whether in the home or at a restaurant. The students have some hands-on opportunities to be creative in the preparation of ethnic foods at home.

Interdisciplinary Opportunities

The Foods courses relate to the World Cultures Department because food so closely reflects cultures and their history. Not only is the food itself reflective of the culture, it also reflects the economy, and the values and mores of the culture. The geography of where the cultures are located, determines the food that is grown, raised, or acquired and how it is prepared. The language reflects the attitudes about food and life in general. Many food preparations from around the world are identified world over by their names of origin, so that students are introduced to the sounds of many tongues. Numerous seasonal events and religious celebrations revolve around eating and reflect the cultures' music and dance.

Understanding the process of food preparation is important, and when working in the kitchens, the students are taught about chemistry, the mixing of ingredients, the reaction of elements when mixed together, how ingredients are affected by varying temperature, and the timing of those stimuli to the food. In addition to the previously mentioned chemical reactions, there is interest in knowing what effect food has on human beings. There are chemicals in food; some are necessary, and some are added for convenience, like preservatives. For that reason, students are made aware of nutritional issues such as organic foods vs. non-organic foods. The subject of nutrition is taught, so that the students will become knowledgeable about how nutrients such as fats, sugar, proteins, vitamins, and minerals can affect one's health. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the *Food Guide Pyramid* are introduced to the students, so that they become knowledgeable about good food choices and have a better chance of not developing diseases due to poor diets and poor eating habits.

For accurate control of food preparation outcomes, students must learn about the importance of careful measuring skills that are math related.

The students are expected to demonstrate good writing habits and skills in producing reports for the foods classes. The students' computer skills are useful in producing these reports, researching information on the Internet, and investigating new recipes for their food preparation projects.

Enrichment/Remediation/Acceleration

Individualized instruction is provided whenever possible. Students in the International Foods course are allowed to choose their own recipes with teacher approval. The individual kitchen groups are encouraged to select more complex recipes if their preparation skills are more advanced, or if they need to be challenged in experiencing some new technique or more difficult food preparation skill. Students who possess particular skills are encouraged to demonstrate their skills and help other students. Some students come into the course having more knowledge and skill than others due to their family backgrounds and experiences.

The climate of the classroom is structured for cooperative learning and the students are encouraged to include everyone in the activities. Students who work slowly or need additional help are mixed in and offered the same opportunities and other students. Everyone is expected to participate in activities even when one person is taking the lead in the kitchen group. Others must watch and monitor and learn. The students are expected to establish a schedule for kitchen activities that assures equal opportunity. In keeping with Cooperative Learning Activities, students are assigned roles to perform within their working groups.

During the 2002-2003 school year, there will be aides for some of the classified students. A special curriculum based on the 7th grade Foods and Nutrition Cycle course was written this year and designed to assist the classified students, so that they will have a positive learning experience in the Foods and Nutrition courses.

Curricular and Co-Curricular Offerings

There are no Co-Curricular Offerings at this time.

Technology/Facilities/Program

The classroom is set up with tables filling half the room in a large square, with five kitchens along two of the walls. Each kitchen has a range and a microwave. There are four electric ranges and two gas ranges. Each kitchen is set up with its own Kitchen Aid mixer and other tools and necessary supplies.

Food technology also includes: mixers, microwaves, slow cookers, waffle makers, food processors, stoves, ovens (gas versus electric), blenders, and woks. Students make homemade pasta with the attachments to the mixers. Students also use tools like measuring cups, spatulas, scrapers, spoons, etc. They discuss the quality of equipment, the materials their tools are made out of and how they are properly used.

The ceiling fan has recently been connected to operate from the classroom. There are three refrigerators, two with freezers, which are now getting old. One unit in particular is in need a replacement, and should be replaced with a refrigerator (no freezer).

When the ovens are all in use the temperature in the room can climb between 90 to 100 degrees.

The ovens have not been cleaned in a very long time and are very dirty. The ranges are all at least 20 years old and consideration should be given to their replacement.

There is a washer and dryer in the room intended to be used for classroom materials such as towels, potholders, aprons, etc. But in addition to that use, the washer and dryer are used by the custodial staff for washing mops and rags for their cleaning needs. The custodial materials should not be washed in the same machine as the kitchen cloths. Also, the machines are not industrial weight and will not withstand continued heavy-duty use.

The New Jersey Educational Technology goals are being addressed through:

Goal 1 “Students will attain the educational technology and information literacy skills that will assist them in achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards and to succeed in the workplace of the 21st century.”

As mentioned above, students are using technology in the Home Economics classes. In 8th grade students are given the opportunity to do research on the Internet.

Goal 2 “Educators will attain the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively use educational technology to assist students to achieve the Core Curriculum content Standards.”

Staff College and Online Courses are available to all teachers to help them attain at a minimum, intermediate proficiency levels in utilizing education technology to enhance student achievement.

Goal 3: Students, teachers and administrators have access to technology in all learning environments, including classrooms, schools, and other educational settings such as community centers.”

All teachers have access to computers and software applications that provide opportunities for “...authentic, student-centered, project-based learning.”
Cookbooks are available on software and students are given limited opportunities to use them. The seventh grade cycle course, being only 6 weeks, is limited in the amount of technology experiences they have time for.

All teachers “...have access to e-mail and other interactive tools to communicate with parents, students and other educators.”

Staff Development Activities

The Home Economics teacher takes part in the mandatory and Staff College Courses available within the district. There are no courses directed specifically at the Home Economics area, but many supportive courses are. Technology and a wide variety of instructional topics are available.

The opportunities available are:

- Staff College
- College courses- including both graduate and undergraduate
- Professional Days- observing other schools, career day at colleges
- Workshops
- Evaluation and improvement of curriculum and facilities
- Read periodicals/magazines
- Internet use (research, etc.)

The only problem identified is that the Board does not reimburse teachers for courses that are on the undergraduate level. This discourages the teachers from taking basic subject area courses. When a teacher has been out of college/university for a number of years, new areas of study are developed, the basic level of which is not offered in graduate school.

Comparison of I Factor Schools

After studying curriculum offerings in other I factor schools, it was recognized that most middle schools are limited in the number of offerings they can provide. All the schools had cycle programs, some have one course in each grade level, and others have two courses. The content of the courses vary, with most offering foods. One school offered clothing; others address issues of health, childcare, interpersonal relationships, and family life.

There are potentially a variety of life skills that can be incorporated in these courses. But the cycle courses are mostly all limited to 6 weeks. So the more life skills that are included the more superficial the coverage would become. The inclusion of additional life skill offerings would warrant extended time for the cycle, especially if it were to include food preparation. Another cycle offering at the 6-grade level could be developed to include all or some of the life skills listed in the Appendix.

We reviewed the curriculums for Health and Wellness in Bernards Township. This curriculum does address some of the life skills that are mentioned in other school districts' course descriptions. This includes developing a realistic and positive self-concept, learning the benefits exercise and a balanced diet. They teach about emotional control in stressful situations.

Analysis of Survey Results

A survey was given to 8th graders taking International Foods in the spring of this year. This group was selected because they had been through the 7th grade Foods and Nutrition cycle classes, and they are in a good position to know something about the Foods course.

The survey indicated that the students believe that in the Foods courses...

1. Their intellectual curiosity is significantly challenged
2. They are well prepared to become more informed citizens
3. The course requirements are consistent with what they had expected
4. They are prepared to perform successfully in the work place and in college
5. The courses do not cover the same content
6. The amount of homework and project work were as the students had expected
7. They became more technologically aware and proficient
8. There was very much a need for more Home Economics electives to be offered at William Annin
9. Connections clearly were made in a meaningful manner between their Foods learning and other disciplines
10. Current events were actively integrated into the classroom when appropriate
11. Their writing abilities were somewhat enhanced
12. They were strongly helped to work in cooperative settings
13. They had an excellent experience

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards

Cross Curricular Content Standards are expected to be addressed by all the various curricular areas. Home Economics is no exception, and they are easily incorporated into course objectives and project assignments.

There are five Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. Each standard is addressed in Foods. All of the standards are important in studying foods

1. The first standard is concerned with developing **career planning and workplace readiness skills**. The strengths of the Home Economics Department in this area are in developing in the students the ability to:
 - 1.1 Demonstrate employability skills and work habits, such as work ethic, dependability, promptness, and getting along with others, needed to get and keep a job.
 - 1.2 Describe the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success.
 - 1.3 Identify career interests, abilities, and skills.
 - 1.5 Identify skills that are transferable from one occupation to another.
 - 1.7 Describe the importance of academic and occupational skills to achievement in the work world.
 - 1.12 Demonstrate consumer and other financial skills.

2. The second Standard states that all students will **use information, technology and other tools**. The strengths of the Home Economics Department in this area are in developing in the students the ability to:
 - 2.2 Select appropriate tools and technology for specific activities.
 - 2.6 Access and assess information on specific topics using both technological (e.g., computer, telephone, satellite) and print resources available in libraries or media centers.
 - 2.7 Use technology and other tools to solve problems, collect data, and make decisions.
 - 2.8 Use technology and other tools, including word-processing, presentation programs, and print or graphic utilities, to produce products.
 - 2.9 Use technology to present designs and results of investigations.

3. The third Standard states that all students will use **critical thinking, decision making and problem solving skills**. The strengths of the Home Economics Department in this area are in developing in the students the ability to:
 - 3.1 Recognize and define a problem, or clarify decisions to be made.
 - 3.2 Use models, relationships, and observations to clarify problems and potential solutions.

- 3.3 Formulate questions and hypotheses.
 - 3.5 Use the library media center as a critical resource for inquiry and assessment of print and non-print materials.
 - 3.8 Organize, synthesize, and evaluate information for appropriateness and completeness.
 - 3.13 Select and apply appropriate solutions to problem-solving and decision-making situations.
 - 3.14 Evaluate the effectiveness of various solutions.
4. The fourth Standard states that all students will demonstrate **self-management skills**. The strengths of the Home Economics Department in this area are in developing in students the ability to:
- 4.1 Set short and long term goals.
 - 4.2 Work cooperatively with others to accomplish a task.
 - 4.3 Evaluate their own actions and accomplishments.
 - 4.4 Describe constructive responses to criticism.
 - 4.5 Provide constructive criticism to others.
 - 4.6 Describe actions that demonstrate respect for people of different races, ages, religions, ethnicity and gender.
 - 4.7 Describe the roles people play in groups.
 - 4.8 Demonstrate refusal skills.
 - 4.9 Use time efficiently and effectively.
 - 4.10 Apply study skills to expand their own knowledge and skills.
 - 4.11 Describe how ability, effort, and achievement are interrelated.
5. The fourth Standard states that all students will apply safety principles. The strengths of the Home Economics Department in this area are in developing in students the ability to:
- 5.1 Explain how common injuries can be prevented.
 - 5.2 Develop and evaluate an injury prevention program.
 - 5.3 Demonstrate principles of safe physical movement.
 - 5.4 Demonstrate safe use of tools and equipment.
 - 5.5 Identify and demonstrate the use of recommended safety and protective devices.
 - 5.6 Identify common hazards and describe methods to correct them.
 - 5.7 Identify and follow safety procedures for laboratory and other hands-on experiences.
 - 5.8 Discuss rules and laws designed to promote safety and health, and their rationale.

Recommendations

Forecasts for the future predict that:

- Grocery stores in the future will carry genetically engineered foods that are environmentally friendly and highly nutritious.
- Crops will be disease and pest resistant.
- Cotton and wool for clothing will be genetically engineered
- 100 million Americans are living with some form of chronic illness
- Thirty to 40 percent of the adult population is overweight and the percentage of obese adolescents has almost doubled in the past 25 years.
- Grocery Manufacturers of America estimate that 70 percent of grocery store food may have been made with biotech crops.
- Making clean water plentiful and inexpensive for the world population will be a challenge.

Informed and well-educated citizens of the future need to be knowledgeable about their environment and have life skills that will enable them to live healthy lives. Their public school education can make a significant contribution to that citizenry.

Bernards Township Public Schools should:

- Continue the 7th grade Foods and Nutrition program, so that our students are exposed to education in that field. In this day and time, when lives are so busy, and fast foods are so prevalent, students need to better understand the nutritional issues that relate to healthy living today. Presently, we do not fully know what effect poor eating habits and the high consumption of processed foods will have on the health of these generations. By having some knowledge of foods and food preparation, students will gain options whereby they might have more control over the quality of foods they consume. The students' brief exposure to food preparation in the classroom will give them the confidence to prepare food in their kitchens at home.
- Continue the 8th grade International Foods elective course. This course presents an opportunity for the students to explore the origins of their own heritage and to learn about America and other countries through the culture of food, both the sociological, economic, geographic and historical factors. Food is a common denominator. All teenagers like to eat. This most basic fact is the primary motivating factor and can be an excellent approach to expanding the students' awareness of the world in which they live.
- Introduce a basic life-skills course at the 6th grade level when there is an opening for an additional cycle course. This life-skills course would provide a varied program that would include such things as interpersonal relationships and the role

of the family, safety issues, weight control, eating disorders, childcare and development, and/or clothing.

- Consider reinstating a Family and Consumer Science curriculum at the high school level. As the population of this community has grown and evolved, there may be a renewed need for exposing students to the possibility of careers in these related fields of foods/restaurant industry, dietetics, and early childhood education. Knowledge and skills gained in these courses are important as life skills as well as potential career goals.
- As mentioned in the Facilities review, some of the equipment is in need of replacement. (Specifically one refrigerator). The stoves are also very old and a plan should be drawn up to replace equipment on a yearly basis so as to minimize the financial impact.
- The custodial service should consider the purchase of an industrial washer and dryer for their own use. The potential for bacterial contamination is present as a result of this practice.
- Due to the excessive heat generated by the ovens during the hot days of fall and spring, an air-conditioner should be installed.

Appendix

Comparison of I Factor Schools

Courses	Basking Ridge	Holmdel	Berkeley Heights	Chatham
Life Skills 6 th (foods)			X	X
Life Skills 7 th (foods)		X	X	
Life Skills 8 th (foods)		X		
Foods 7 th	X			X
Foods 8 th			X	
International Foods	X			
Clothing 8				X

Some of the curricular areas addressed in the Life Skills courses in addition to Foods are:

Interpersonal Relationships
Child Care
Housing and Design
Functioning Independently-Safely and Productively
Budgeting
Clothing
Table Setting
Etiquette and Manners
Integrational Awareness

Student Survey-Home Economics at William Annin

Directions: Using the Scantron Card, fill in the answers that best describe how you feel about the statements. Use the answers below to best describe your feelings.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Agree

1. Home Economics at William Annin challenge my intellectual curiosity.
2. Home Economics classes help to prepare me to become a more informed citizen.
3. The course requirements are consistent with what is expected.
4. The Home Economics offered at William Annin will help me perform more successfully both in the work place and college.
5. Many of the Home Economics seem to cover the same content.
6. Homework and project work were more demanding than had been expected in Home Economics classes.
7. Home Economics classes help me to become more technologically aware and proficient.
8. There is a need for more Home Economics electives to be offered at William Annin.
9. Connections are made between Home Economics and other disciplines in a meaningful manner.
10. Current events are integrated into the classroom when appropriate
11. Through the Home Economics at William Annin my writing abilities are being enhanced.
12. The Home Economics at William Annin are helping to prepare me to work in cooperative settings.
13. Overall, how would you rate your Home Economics experience at William Annin thus far?

A. Excellent B. Above Average C. Average D. Below Average E. Poor

Resources

American Association of Family and Consumer Science

New Jersey Association of Family and Consumer Sciences