

THE PRESIDENTIAL PALATE

A CULINARY HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

Educator Companion
Family & Consumer Sciences
Grades 7 – 12

NATIONAL FOOD MUSEUM

nationalfoodmuseum.org

THE PRESIDENTIAL PALATE

A CULINARY HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

PURPOSE

This companion helps educators use the National Food Museum's *The Presidential Palate* digital exhibit as the primary source for student inquiry. Three independent, no-kitchen-required activities invite students to investigate a food story, design a historically inspired dinner-party menu, or compare presidential recipes. A teacher-led tasting is optional enrichment.

A CELEBRATION OF 250 YEARS OF AMERICAN FOOD HISTORY

Developed as an educational companion to the National Food Museum's *The Presidential Palate*, this collection celebrates the United States' 250th anniversary by inviting students to explore American food history through presidential stories, recipes, and traditions. Food offers a tangible way to investigate change and continuity while connecting history to the practical knowledge and skills at the heart of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Designed for middle and high school Family and Consumer Sciences classrooms, the experiences are flexible and not a prescribed unit or a one-size-fits-all sequence. Teachers may select one lesson, combine several, adapt the level of inquiry, or offer a culinary extension when facilities permit.

Students engage in active inquiry, visual mapping, menu planning, collaborative recipe comparison, and optional preparation and tasting.

INSTRUCTIONAL FLEXIBILITY

Middle school entry point: offer teacher-selected profiles or recipes, partner reading, word banks, model prompts, and paper-based options. High school extension: ask students to distinguish evidence from inference, evaluate recipe choices, investigate additional sources, and justify culinary or hospitality decisions. Each activity can be individual, paired, or small-group work.

Recommended reading: Begin with the selected presidential profile and recipe in *The Presidential Palate*. Where appropriate, invite students to read a related historical food source or introductory culinary reference selected by the teacher.

Developed by Nicki Pedeliski, M.S.
Culinary Arts & Family and Consumer Sciences Educator American Canyon High School, California.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

PART I contains educator lesson plans. **PART II** collects student-facing activity pages and optional organizers so teachers can assign, print, project, or adapt only the materials they need. **PART III** contains a universal assessment tool.

- Choose one activity or teach several; no activity requires completing another.
- Share the exhibit link and the corresponding student page. Students cite or link the Museum profile/recipe they actually used.
- Use the common 16-point rubric for the three core activities; evaluate kitchen safety and technique separately if cooking. (Part III).

Curriculum & Skills Alignment: National Family and Consumer Sciences Standards

Activity	Supporting Competency	Evidence of Alignment
01 — Unexpected Discoveries	14.1.2 — Investigate the effects of psychological, cultural, and social influences on food choices and other nutrition practices.	Students investigate presidential food stories and explore connections to traditions, people, and culture.
01 — Unexpected Discoveries	1.2.3 — Apply communication skills in school, community and workplace settings and with diverse populations.	Students communicate their discoveries during the gallery walk.
02 — Dining at the White House	8.4.4 — Develop a variety of menu layouts, themes, and design styles.	Students design a historically inspired three-course presidential dinner menu.
02 — Dining at the White House	14.1.2 — Investigate the effects of psychological, cultural, and social influences on food choices and other nutrition practices.	Students explain how historical context and traditions informed their menu selections.
03 — A Taste Through Time	14.1.2 — Investigate the effects of psychological, cultural, and social influences on food choices and other nutrition practices.	Students analyze ingredients, preparation techniques, and documented cultural or social influences to explain similarities and differences between presidential recipes.
03 — A Taste Through Time	1.2.4 — Demonstrate teamwork skills in school, community, and workplace settings and with diverse populations.	Students collaborate to categorize culinary evidence and negotiate their comparisons.
Bonus — Presidential Tasting Table	8.5.10 — Prepare breads, baked goods, and desserts using safe handling and professional preparation techniques.	Applies when students prepare qualifying Museum recipes.

21st-century learning: Critical thinking (interpret and verify food stories), creativity (visual mapping and menu development), communication (explain evidence and share findings), and collaboration (gallery walks, expert exchange, and optional tasting teams).

Source references:
NASAFACS National Standards for FCS Education (2018) and P21 Framework Definitions

At a Glance:

Activity	Students DO	Students PRODUCE
01 — Unexpected Discoveries	Investigate one presidential food story; build a visual web; share discoveries during a gallery walk.	Food story map
02 — Dining at the White House	Explore foods from presidents of a shared era; plan a dinner party and explain menu choices.	Three-course dinner menu design + host's note
03 — A Taste Through Time	Investigate one recipe each; teach a partner; compare eras from different teams	Collaborative recipe-evidence sort
BONUS · Presidential Tasting Table	Work in teams to investigate and, when appropriate, prepare and taste an exhibit recipe.	Prepared dish (if feasible) + one-slide Recipe Spotlight + tasting reflection

PART I: EDUCATOR GUIDE



01. Investigate — Unexpected Discoveries

Essential question: What can one unexpected presidential food story help us discover about people, places, and traditions?

Time: 45–60 minutes

Materials: exhibit access, index cards or sticky notes, large paper, markers or movable digital notes

Grouping: teams of 2-3

Student Product: student-constructed food-story web

Learning experience:

- Launch (5–8 min): Show a food image or title from the published exhibit without explaining its full story. Invite "I notice...," "I wonder...," and "My first guess is..." Avoid presenting an unverified historical example.

- Explore (10–12 min): Teams of 2–3 browse at least three presidential profiles and agree on one featured food story that sparks curiosity.

- Collect clues (10 min): Each teammate contributes short evidence notes, questions, and sketches on separate movable cards. Identify at least two specific details supported by the Museum.

- Construct and revise (15–20 min): Teams arrange their cards around the president and featured food. Use arrows and labels to show connections; move cards when new evidence changes their thinking. The Surprise, Food Story, Connection, and Curiosity are guiding prompts, not four boxes to fill.

- Gallery Walk (5–8 min): Display each team's evidence web. Visiting teams ask questions and share one new discovery or connection.

Instructional Strategies & Differentiation:
Model evidence-based connections and how to distinguish a Museum fact from a question or inference. Assign flexible team roles (source finder, evidence collector, connector). Use the optional printable Discovery Map only for learners who benefit from a visual starting point; it is not the required final product.

Evidence of Student Learning:
A collaborative, revisable, evidence web with at least two specific Museum details, meaningful connections, a question, and a source link; verbal explanations during the gallery walk.

Optional extension:
Students investigate one question with a credible additional source and add a clearly marked “Beyond the Exhibit” branch that distinguishes outside evidence from Museum evidence.

Student Resources:
Student Page 01; optional Discovery Map.

02. Design – Dining at the White House

Essential question: How can a dinner-party menu tell a story about presidential food traditions from one historical era?

Time: 45–60 minutes

Materials: exhibit access, menu paper or design tools such as Canva or Google Suite

Student Product: three-course illustrated menu and host's note

Learning experience:

- Launch (5 min): Ask students what a dinner-party menu communicates beyond the names of dishes—occasion, guest experience, and the story behind the food.

- Explore (10–15 min): Students choose a historical era represented in the exhibit and investigate foods connected with multiple presidents from that period.

- Plan (15 min): Students choose an appetizer/first course, main course, and dessert. Aim to connect dishes to at least two presidents; include Museum-documented food and clearly identify any historically inspired additions.

- Design (15–20 min): Students create an inviting menu with brief descriptions, visual elements, president/food connections, and direct exhibit or recipe links when available.

- Explain (5 min): Students write a short host's note describing the era and why their choices belong together.

Instructional Strategies & Differentiation
This is an imagined dinner party, not a claim about a real White House event. Encourage era coherence but do not require an exhibit recipe to fill every course. Allow an explained complementary dish if recipe variety is limited. Students must distinguish “featured by the Museum” from “my proposed addition.” Provide a blank menu structure or collaborative planning option if needed.

Evidence of Student Learning
Three purposeful courses, a clear historical era, evidence from more than one presidential profile where feasible, appetizing descriptions, historically responsible labels, accessible Museum links, and a concise rationale.

Student Resources: Student Page 02. The table-setting extension is optional and not part of the core assessment.

Bonus extension: Set the Presidential Table
Students sketch or physically set a place setting appropriate to their planned courses, identify tableware and utensil placement, and practice welcoming a guest. Optional inquiry: compare present-day etiquette with documented dining customs from their chosen period; do not assume contemporary or modern customs as universal.



03. Interpret — A Taste Through Time

Essential question: What can two presidential recipes reveal about their ingredients, preparation, and documented food stories?

Time: 45–60 minutes

Materials: Access to The Presidential Palate exhibit; index cards or sticky notes; markers; large paper or tabletop workspace.

Student Product: Collaborative recipe-evidence sort featuring ingredients, preparation techniques, and historical connections from two presidential recipes, accompanied by an evidence-based group discussion.

Learning experience:

- Launch (3 min): Ask how a recipe can serve as evidence. Distinguish what students can directly observe in ingredients and instructions from historical explanations requiring a source

- Investigate (12 min): In teams of 2–3, select or receive two exhibit recipes from different presidential eras. Read the recipes and their associated Museum profiles.

- Prepare Evidence (10 min): On separate sticky notes or index cards, record specific ingredients, equipment or techniques, and Museum-supported historical details. Mark each card with its recipe source (A or B).

- Sort, Challenge, Revise (15 min): On a table or poster, arrange cards into Recipe A / Shared by Both / Recipe B. Organize by ingredient, preparation, or presidential story. Teammates explain placements, check the sources, and move cards when needed.

- Evidence Exchange (5 min): Teams visit another sort. Each group shares one meaningful similarity, one difference, and the evidence supporting each. Visiting peers ask one clarifying question.

- Close (5 min): Each group states what the recipes show and one claim the two recipes alone cannot establish.

Instructional Strategies & Differentiation

Middle school: preselect accessible recipe pairs & supply category labels or teacher-made cards.

High school: have teams generate all evidence cards and identify unsupported assumptions.

Individual/digital pathway: use movable notes in a shared slide.

Evidence of Student Learning
A source-labeled, revised card sort; one defensible similarity and difference; a brief oral or written conclusion that distinguishes observation from inference.



Bonus: The Presidential Tasting Table

Purpose: Experience presidential food stories through preparation, sensory observation, and shared learning. This is optional enrichment; students can complete all core activities without cooking.

Teacher Preparation

- Select or approve exhibit recipes suited to your budget, equipment, schedule, allergens, food safety requirements, and students.
- Arrange teams or lab groups; provide safe alternatives for students who cannot prepare or taste a food.
- Have each team prepare one Presidential Recipe Spotlight slide to display while introducing its dish.

Student Experience

- Investigate the president, featured dish, and Museum recipe before preparation.
- Prepare the approved recipe, if the classroom is equipped and cooking is authorized.
- Present a single Spotlight slide: president and administration dates, dish, image, two exhibit-supported historical facts, one culinary detail, and exhibit recipe/profile link.
- During tasting, peers note what they tasted or observed and one fact they learned from each slide.
- Close with a reflection linking one sensory observation to a documented historical detail.

No-Cook Pathway

Teams analyze a recipe and create the Spotlight slide; peers discuss images, ingredients, methods, and historical connections without tasting. No one should be required to consume a food.

Student Resources: Bonus—The Presidential Tasting Table

PART II: STUDENT RESOURCES for The Presidential Palate

01. Unexpected Discoveries

A Presidential Food Story Investigation
Every food has a story. Your team will explore *The Presidential Palate*, follow an unexpected discovery, and build a visual web that shows how one presidential food connects to history.

1 - Explore & choose
Browse at least three presidential profiles together. Find one featured food or food story that surprises you or makes you curious. Agree on the story your team wants to investigate.

2 - Collect your clues
On separate sticky notes or index cards, collect at least two specific details from the Museum. Add your own observations, questions, and possible connections. Keep facts from the exhibit distinct from your ideas.

3 - Build a food-story web
Place your president and featured food at the center of poster paper or a digital canvas. Arrange your cards around it. Use arrows, sketches, and labels to show how the ideas connect. Move or revise your cards as your thinking changes.
Use these prompts to guide your investigation:

THE SURPRISE — What challenged your first guess?
THE FOOD STORY — What does the exhibit actually tell you?
THE CONNECTION — Which people, places, ingredients, or traditions matter?
THE CURIOSITY — What do you still wonder?

4 - Share & discover
Display your team's web for a Discovery Gallery Walk. Explore other teams' stories. Be ready to explain one surprising connection and the exhibit evidence that supports it. Leave with one "I never knew..." and one "Now I want to explore..." discovery.

Before you finish
Make sure your web includes the president and food, at least two accurate Museum details, visible connections, a question for further exploration, a link to the exhibit profile, and credits for any borrowed images.

OPTIONAL CHALLENGE: Investigate one question using a credible outside source. Label that evidence "Beyond the Exhibit."

02. Dining at the White House

Imagine you are hosting a dinner party inspired by presidential food traditions. Your guests will discover the flavors and stories of one historical era through the menu you create.

Choose a time in history
Explore The Presidential Palate and select an era that interests you. Look at food stories from several presidents who served during that period. Which foods help tell a story about that time?

Build your three-course menu
Plan a first course or appetizer, a main course, and a dessert. Aim to feature foods connected to at least two presidents from your era. If the exhibit does not offer a suitable dish for every course, add a thoughtful complementary dish and label it as your own idea.

- Give your dinner party a name and identify its historical era.
- Name each course and write a short, appetizing description.
- Show which president or Museum food story inspired each course.
- Include food illustrations or credited images and links to the profiles or recipes you used.
- Clearly distinguish exhibit-documented foods from your own historically inspired additions.

Add a note from the host
In approximately 75–100 words, explain why these dishes belong together. What would guests learn about presidential food traditions from your chosen era?

Share your dinner-party menu
Present your menu as a paper design, digital menu, or another format approved by your teacher. Make the food inviting and the history trustworthy.

BONUS: Set the Presidential Table. Sketch or arrange a place setting for your courses, identify each piece of tableware, and practice welcoming your dinner guests.



03. A Taste Through Time

Two presidential recipes. Two moments in history. What do the foods, and the stories behind them, have in common? Work with a team of 2–3. Your challenge is to investigate two recipes from different presidential eras and build an evidence sort that another team can explore.

Meet your recipes
Explore *The Presidential Palate* exhibit. Choose two recipes associated with presidents from different eras, or use recipes your teacher selects. Read each recipe AND its Museum story. Save both links!

Make your evidence cards (see following page for an example)
On separate sticky notes or index cards, record details you can point to in the recipes or Museum profiles. Make at least six cards in total, including evidence from each category:

INGREDIENTS — a named ingredient or an ingredient shared by both recipes
PREPARATION — a cooking method, instruction, or piece of equipment
PRESIDENTIAL STORY — a fact the Museum documents about the food and its presidential connection

Write “A” or “B” and a short source reference on every card. Keep observations separate from guesses.



Pedernales River Chili Recipe
President Lyndon B. Johnson



Obama Family Chili
President Barack Obama

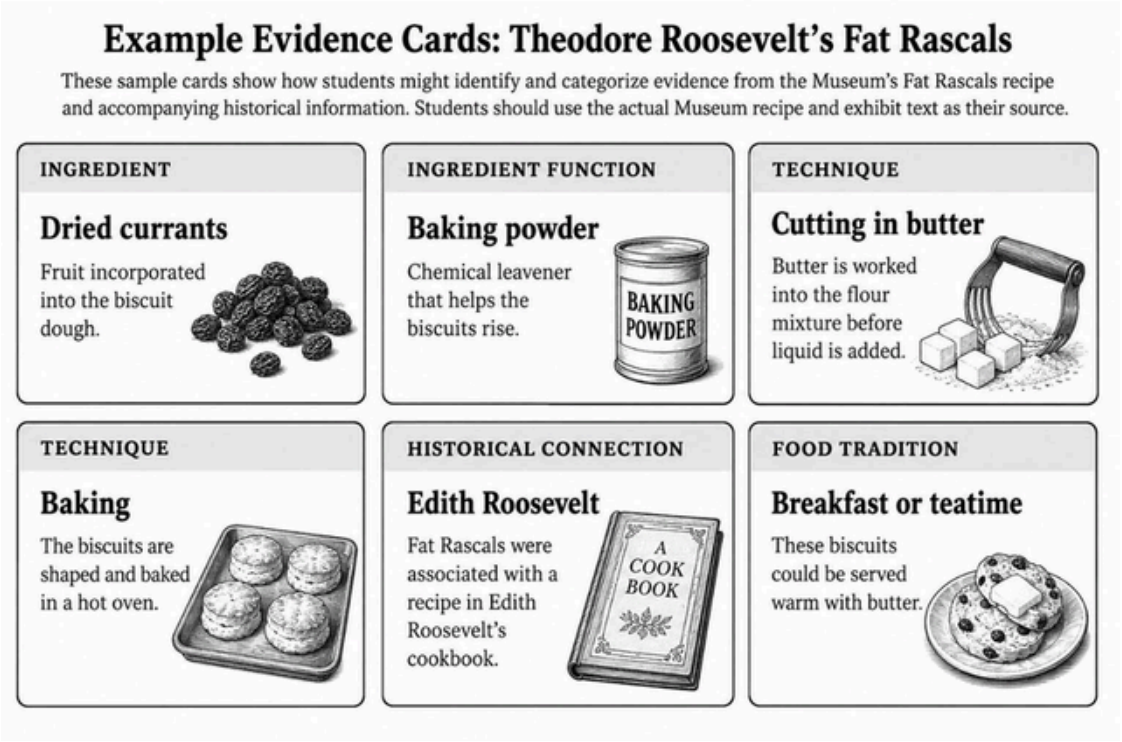
Build, discuss, revise
Place your cards on a table, poster, or digital canvas in three areas: RECIPE A / SHARED BY BOTH / RECIPE B. Discuss where each card belongs. Check the Museum exhibit when teammates disagree. Move cards as your thinking changes.

Exchange evidence
Visit another team's sort. Explain one specific similarity and one difference from your recipes. Ask the other team a question about their evidence.

Make your claim
Together, finish these statements aloud or in a few sentences:

- "Our strongest similarity or difference is because the recipes show..."
- "We cannot conclude from these two recipes alone."

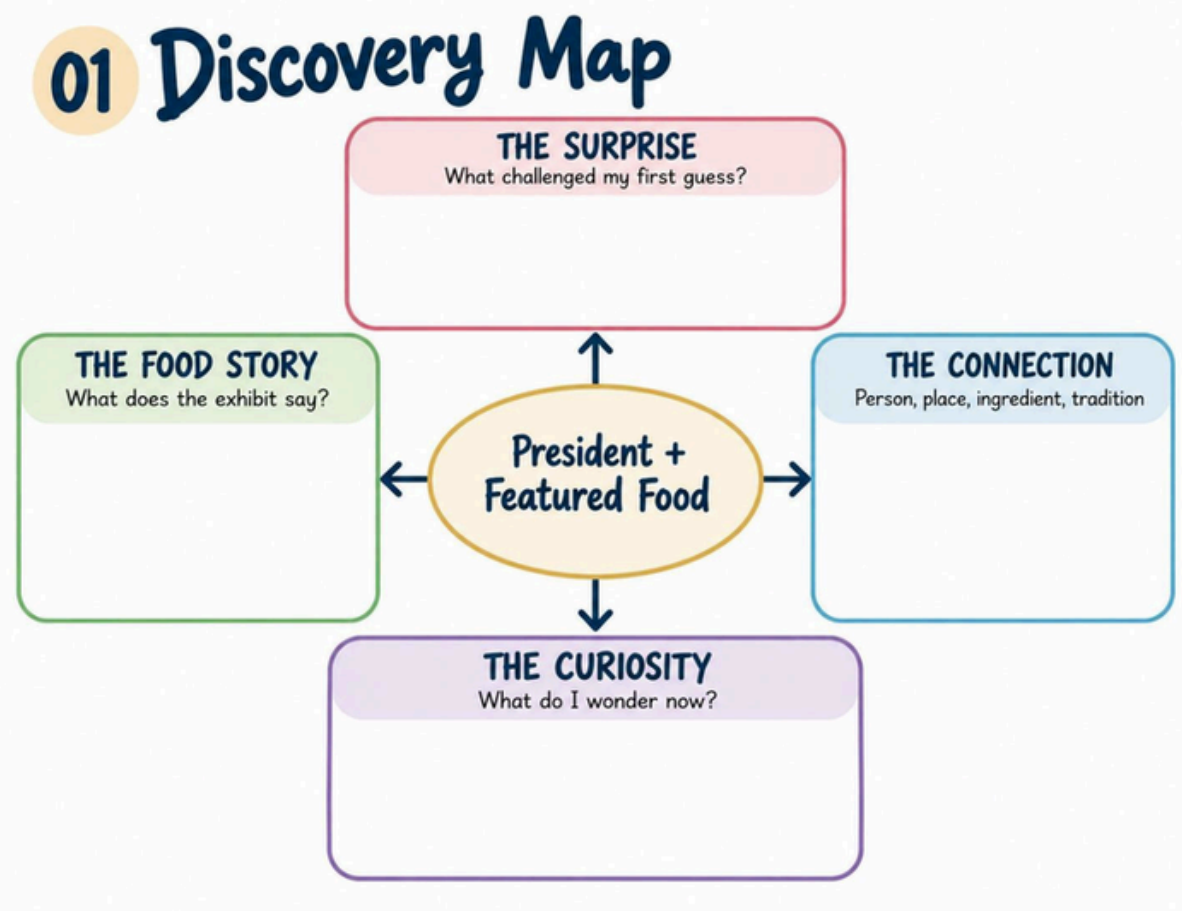
What you will share
Your completed, source-labeled evidence sort and a brief evidence-based explanation.



Optional–Discovery Map Template

01 Unexpected Discoveries

Use this visual starting point only if it helps your team plan. Jot down ideas, then build and rearrange your own food-story web on a larger surface. This is not the final product.



Museum profile / recipe link:

_____

Our team's most surprising connection: _____

A question we want to explore next: _____

Recipe Comparison Organizer—A Taste Through Time

Work with a partner or independently. Investigate two different presidential eras, recording what each Museum recipe actually says. Fill in both columns, then respond to the four interpretation prompts. Submit this page.

Look for	Recipe A · President / Era	Recipe B · President / Era
Dish and exhibit link		
Main ingredients		
Preparation / equipment		
Museum's historical story		

ONE SIMILARITY
What do the two recipes share? Use a specific ingredient, technique, or exhibit detail.

ONE DIFFERENCE
How do they differ? Support your answer with a specific detail.

MY CONCLUSION
What can these two recipes help us understand about presidential food stories?

A LIMITATION
What would I need more evidence to know? Avoid generalizing from only two recipes.

Bonus—The Presidential Tasting Table

Your team will bring one recipe from The Presidential Palate to life through cooking, if your teacher approves, or through careful recipe investigation.

Your Presidential Recipe Spotlight
Create ONE slide to introduce your featured dish. Include: president and administration dates; dish name; a credited food image or drawing; two facts supported by the Museum; one culinary observation; and a direct link to the exhibit recipe or profile.

Tasting notes

Dish / president	What I tasted or noticed	One historical fact from the Spotlight

Reflection:
Which dish helped you understand a presidential food story differently? Connect one observation to one Museum-supported fact.

PART III: ASSESSMENT TOOL



The Presidential Palate Universal Assessment Rubric

Name:
Period:
Date:

Use for any activity. Score each criterion 1–4. Total possible: 16 points.

Criterion	4 · Advanced	3 · Proficient	2 · Developing	1 · Emerging
Exhibit exploration	Purposeful, specific evidence and useful links	Relevant, accurate evidence and source links	Some evidence, links, or details are incomplete.	Limited or unsupported exhibit use
Historical understanding	Accurate, nuanced context and clear fact/idea distinction	Accurate historical connection; distinguishes fact and proposal	Some accurate context; distinctions uneven	Context inaccurate or unclear
Thinking & interpretation	Insightful, well-supported connections or decisions	Reasoned interpretation supported by evidence	Partial reasoning or weak support	Little explanation or evidence
Communication & completion	Clear, engaging, complete, and accessible	Organized and complete; required elements present	Some elements missing or unclear	Major elements missing

Score: / 16 **Feedback:**