

The Affects of Table Settings and Good Manners

Summary

The use of table settings and good manners enhances food as a social experience.

Materials

Any good food and nutrition book.

- *Food for Today*

, Kowtaluk, McGraw-Hill Glencoe Publishing, 2006.

Pamphlets on table service supplied by local stores such as ZCMI. A packet for each unit can be put together prior to teaching this section.

Background for Teachers

Table settings and basic manners can enhance both the aesthetic value of food and family interaction during mealtime.

The following quote is found in *FOOD FOR TODAY*, 1990 teachers' edition.

"In 1387 King Richard II of England held a great feast. Among the provisions were 11,000 eggs, 12 bushels of apples, and many kinds of meat, including 16 oxen and 120 sheep. In the castle's great hall, the tables were set with fine linen cloths and napkins. Dozens of servants hurried about, bringing food and seeing to the comfort of the guests" (p.267).

Can you think of times when your family traditions have included special meals and foods, similar to King Richards's great feast?

"Your own feasts will no doubt be less elaborate, but you will still want your family and guests to enjoy their meal" (p.267).

The way you set your table is important, because it influences three things:

It indicates the tone/feeling that people have about being together.

It lets people know that you think they are important enough to put in extra effort for them.

It influences the appearance of the food served.

Restaurants create an atmosphere by the way they set the table. Name various eating establishments and discuss the feelings students may have at each of them.

The food is not too much different between some restaurants but the atmosphere is. Meals eaten at home can have a wonderful atmosphere. Whether you eat at the kitchen table, a card table, counter top, a dining room table, or on TV trays the atmosphere can be influenced by doing the following:

Dimming the lights.

Providing soft background music.

Using flowers or other attractive centerpieces.

Using your imagination___tuck a flower in each napkin, place a potted plant or figurine on a place mat, use silk or real flowers, use candles.

The tableware needed for each placesetting includes dinnerware, glassware and flatware. Your budget is the first consideration when you purchase tableware. NOTE: Refer to any good food text for a discussion of tableware and table linens and for tips on buying and caring for table service. In preparation for discussion assign the students to read in their textbooks about styles of table service . There are 6 main styles of table service. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each type of service.

1. FAMILY STYLE SERVICE

Food is put in serving dishes, brought to the table, and passed around in clockwise order to avoid confusion.

2. PLATE SERVICE, also called BLUE PLATE

No serving dishes are needed because food is portioned out on individual plates in the kitchen. This goes faster if several people help to serve up the food.

3. MODIFIED ENGLISH SERVICE

All plates are stacked at one end of the table. The host/hostess carves meat and places it with the vegetable on the plate. The plate is passed around the table. When everyone has been served, the remainder of the food is passed as in the family style service for everyone to serve themselves.

4. FORMAL SERVICE

The most elaborate style of food service is called Continental or Russian style. This service includes a number of courses, each served separately on clean plates. Initially, the table is set with flatware, glassware and a service plate (a large size plate). The first course, an appetizer or soup, is placed on its own dish and then placed on the service plate which never actually has food directly on it. The service plate is cleared from the table in preparation for the next course. This type of formal service requires waiter/waitress help.

5. COMPROMISE SERVICE

This type combines both the Formal and the Modified English styles. The appetizer is served in single portions from the kitchen as in Formal style. The main course is served as in the Modified English style. The salad/dessert is served in individual portions and all else is passed around as in the Modified English style.

6. BUFFET SERVICE

The food is set on a large table, kitchen counter, or side tables. The plates are put at one end of the food along with the napkins, flatware, and beverage glasses. Flatware can be wrapped in the napkin for easier pickup. The food should be arranged so that the traffic will flow efficiently. People serve themselves and carry the food to their places at the table.

There are rules of etiquette to follow in proper placement of a table setting:

There are three components of a placesetting:

Dinnerware___plates, cups, bowls, saucers, platters and other serving pieces.

Flatware___butter and regular knives; salad, pickle and regular forks; soup, dessert and regular spoons.

Glassware___water goblet, milk and wine glasses, and sherbet glass.

There are 6 rules in proper dinnerware placement:

Allow 20-24" for each place setting with the plate in the middle.

The rule of thumb: the plate should be 1" from the table edge (use thumb)

Bread/butter plate___top left.

Salad plate___lower top left.

Soup bowl___on plate or separate.

Cup/saucer___separate or glassware.

There are differences in flatware:

Soup spoon___larger than regular

Salad fork___smaller than regular

Butter knife___shape and size smaller than regular

Pickle fork___shape and size smaller than regular

There are 4 rules in proper flatware placement:

Also a rule of thumb___place items 1" from the table edge.

Forks___to the left of the plate

Knives, spoons and pickle fork___to the right of the plate

Arrange flatware in order of use, from outside toward plate___(salad fork at the left of the dinner fork if the salad is the first course, otherwise, to the right of the dinner fork if the salad is served with dinner)

Forks___tines up

Knives___sharp edge toward plate

Spoons___bowls up

Butter knife___on bread/butter plate

There are rules for glassware placement

Water goblet at the tip of knife blade.

Other beverage glasses at right of goblet and slightly forward in a diagonal.

NOTE: cup and saucer___lower right.

If glassware contents are cold, serve with saucer to catch moisture condensation.

People are often judged by the manners they display:

Manners are decided by society. History has stated them as adapted from royalty. Many books on etiquette have been written, some including such things as the type of earring match that is best with a particular table setting. Know that manners differ from one culture to another. If you are living or traveling abroad, you may wish to do some research beforehand. The best-read authority on etiquette in the United States has been Emily Post.

Is it important to comply with the standards of proper etiquette? Yes, because we are judged by our manners___either good or bad.

Place___at the table

Why?___because we are close to people and our eating should be well mannered or we could be considered gross. Also conversation is usually intense at a meal and people should be enough at ease with how to proceed with eating that concentration can really center on the other people and personalities at the table.

Examples: TV and movie shows sometimes depict good and bad manners. (Brainstorm with students for examples)

SUMMARY

If you apply basic principles of setting the table, table service and manners you can create a pleasant atmosphere so that your relationships and appearance of food are enhanced . Good manners show respect for others.

Point out to students that other things should be taking place at the table besides eating such as:

Communication via conversation.

Relationship development.

Values development (I care enough to spend time with you).

Exchange of ideas.

NOTE: For content on Table Manners see TABLE MANNERS SORT.

Instructional Procedures

LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

OPTION #1

As a Bell-ringer or motivator, read the words to the song made popular by Bing Crosby in the movie, "The Bells of St. Mary's". If possible get a recording of the song or show that portion of the movie.

WOULD YOU RATHER BE A PIG

Would you like to swing on a star

Carry moonbeams home in a jar

And be better off than you are

Or would you rather be a pig?

A pig is an animal with dirt on his face

His shoes are a terrible disgrace,

He's got no manners when he eats his food

He's fat and lazy and extremely rude,

But if you don't care a feather or a fig

You may grow up to be a PIG!

OPTION #2

In order to show that the way in which food is served affects its appeal, have students participate in a [CAKE SERVICE ACTIVITY](#). (This is a very effective activity.)

Ask students to remain quiet during the entire activity but to beware of their feelings regardless of whether they are participants or observers of this activity.

Discuss the students' feelings with them. This is a valuable part of the activity.

OPTION #3

Using the transparency (TABLESETTING) or, if available, actual china, crystal, and silverware, show a formal place setting and discuss the proper procedures for setting a table.

Using pictures, have each student cut out and mount dinnerware, glassware, and flatware for a casual and a formal place setting. For each place setting the student will explain why it personally fits her/his choice of meal.

OPTION #4

Students will use the [TABLEWARE NOTETAKING OUTLINE](#) to record information about various dinnerware, glassware, and flatware.

OPTION #5

During the TABLE SETTING EXERCISE students will list what is wrong with six table settings.

Discuss. This option may be used as a quiz following a demonstration.

OPTION #6

Students will practice setting tables (as described in class). If materials are brought from home, do not encourage expensive, breakable items.)

Students will plan with their lab group the napkins, tablecloths or placemats, and the centerpiece they will bring from home for their lab on an assigned day. Other items are optional. Caution: Be sure that the centerpiece is well-packed so that it doesn't break.

OPTION #7

Assign groups of students to demonstrate various methods of [NAPKIN FOLDING](#). Give them time to practice before they demonstrate to the class.

OPTION #8

Small groups of students will be given descriptions of a type of meal service. Using tableware from their units they will pantomime the assigned activity using [TABLE SERVICE PANTOMIME](#) as a guide. Students need 10 minutes to plan actions. After each pantomime is performed the teacher will lead a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages and the appropriateness of the occasion.

Following the student table setting demonstrations discuss the various table services.

OPTION #9

Students will prepare [CHICKEN SANDWICH SQUARES](#) and set the table properly. This is an excellent vehicle to practice Blue Plate or Modified English and also to practice communication skills. Have each unit prepare a simple meal, [SPAGHETTI](#), with a tossed salad, garlic bread, and ice water. Have each unit serve it to practice a different experience from one or both of the following: Family Style Service and/or Buffet Style Service.

OPTION #10

For a homework assignment have the students plan and carry out two types of service at two different family meals using the [TABLE SERVICE HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT](#).

OPTION #11

Do a [TABLE MANNERS SORT](#) on good and poor manners. Students will respond to each behavior as being appropriate or inappropriate. Students may also role play correct and incorrect behavior.

TEACHER DIRECTIONS: Photocopy this activity for each unit in the foods lab. Each page could be laminated so that the activity will last longer. Cut apart a set of the behaviors for each unit. Put each set in an envelope.

OPTION #12

After a short discussion on table manners students will act out different incidents and describe what should be done in each situation. See [MIND YOUR MANNERS](#) for situations for role playing. (*This may also be used as a handout worksheet*).

OPTION #13

In groups of four or five, have the students write a short story or case study on manners. Include eight good examples and four poor examples. Designate a spokesperson to read them aloud. Have other class members listen and identify the examples. As an alternative the students could role play the case study for the class.

Use [ETIQUETTE AT A GLANCE](#) as a handout resource for students.

OPTION #14

The teacher explains the role playing pantomime that each unit will do by showing a good or bad manner. See [DINNERTIME MANNERS](#) for role play situations.

The teacher gives the students time to make up skits and then lets them perform while making comments to help them out.

After all units are done, the teacher sums up any not discussed details and moves on to the table setting portion of the lesson.

OPTION #15

Let the students examine and critique 8-10 centerpieces provided by the teacher.

OPTION #16

Students will participate in a vegetable centerpiece lab. They will fill a vase with water then prepare celery stalks, radishes cut into roses, broccoli flowerettes and green pepper strips. The vase is filled with celery stalks. Toothpicks are used to make flowers with radishes and broccoli on the celery stalks. Leaves are green pepper strips.

OR

Students will participate in a fruit centerpiece lab using pineapple boats or watermelon baskets.

OR

Students will participate in a cookie centerpiece lab using cookies purchased at the supermarket (the kind that are shaped like flowers and have frosting in the middle that holds the front cookie and back cookie together___Oreo type). Place the cookies on wooden skewers to make flowers. Cut Iris-shaped leaves from construction paper and arrange in a vase.

OR

Arrange a tray of any pretty-colored food: i.e., finger sandwiches, cookies, hors d'oeuvres, fruits, ice cream balls, etc. and use as a centerpiece. (Fruit and vegetables preserved in different-size glass jars also make pretty centerpieces when artfully arranged).

OPTION #17

Following a teacher demonstration on centerpieces, brainstorm in groups of 4-5 students inexpensive table decorations that can be made from common household items.

Example: Ideas from sacks - Fill six paper sacks with various items. Have the students create centerpieces from them.

Fall leaves, weeds, dried corn tassels, crookneck squash, small pumpkins, miniature squashes, candles, colored paper, grains on the stem such as wheat, oats, corn, barley, odd bottles, dishes, pans, etc.

OPTION #18

Students will evaluate their table setting and manners unit by taking a [TABLE SERVICE/ETIQUETTE QUIZ](#).

Authors

[PEARL HART](#)

