

# Senior Lesson Plan 6 - Cheeses of Europe

## Objective:

To help pupils understand about the different types of cheeses from around Europe.

Duration: 30 minutes (approximately).

## Curricular Links:

SESE (Geography) → Human environments → People and other lands

## Words of the Day

**European:** Anything relating to Europe or its people.

**Pasteurised milk:** Milk which has been heated to a high temperature for a short time (e.g. 72 degrees Celsius for 15 seconds) and then cooled really quickly.

**Brine:** A solution of salt and water.

**Carbon Dioxide:** A gas which is produced when animals breathe out or when some fuels are burned and which is taken in by plants during photosynthesis.

## Classroom Discussion

Discuss the following with your pupils:

1. What does 'European' mean?
2. Name some European countries.
3. Can you name any traditional European foods?
4. Have you tasted any traditional European foods?
5. Can you name any cheeses of Europe which you know of or have tasted?

## Cheeses of Europe:

It's thought that the making of cheese dates back to more than 4000 years ago. By the time of the Roman Empire the production of cheese was already an important business in Europe. As people moved around to different countries, they brought their own cheese-making traditions with them.

- Brie is a soft cheese which comes from the Brie region in Northern France. It's made from cow's milk and is soft, creamy and yellow on the inside with a strong smell. People have been making Brie for over a thousand years.
- Manchego is a hard cheese which comes from the 'La Mancha' region of Spain. It has been produced there for thousands of years. Manchego is golden in colour and is made from sheep's milk.
- Parmesan is probably Italy's most famous cheese. It comes from the Parma region of Italy. It's a hard, dry cheese which is often grated and usually eaten with pasta dishes. It's made from cow's milk.
- Gouda is a semi-hard cheese which comes from the city of Gouda in Holland but it is now made all over the world. It's a yellow cheese with a waxy rind on the outside. It is usually made from pasteurised cow's milk but sometimes it can be made from goat's or sheep's milk.

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- Feta cheese comes from mainland Greece. It is one of the main ingredients in traditional Greek Salad. It is a soft white cheese which is made from sheep or goat's milk. It is a crumbly cheese with a salty taste. Making Feta takes a long time as it needs to be kept in brine for at least a few months.
- Emmental is a semi-hard Swiss cheese which is named after the Emmental Valley in Switzerland. It is yellow with large holes and a thin rind. The holes appear because of the bubbles of carbon dioxide which are created when the cheese is being made. Emmental is made from cow's milk.

## Activity:

### Cheeses of Europe

Show your pupils a map of Europe or draw a map on the board. Ask your pupils to point out the following countries: France, Spain, Italy, Holland, Greece and Switzerland.

Ask them to read about the 'Cheeses of Europe' on the 'Cheeses of Europe' worksheet. Discuss as a class. Then ask your pupils to answer the questions.

### Did you know?

Milk, yogurt and cheese are important sources of calcium, a mineral needed for healthy bones and teeth. (Refer to Lesson Plan 1, 'Healthy Eating').

## Class Activity:

Ask your pupils to draw a map of Europe on an A4 page or in their copies. Ask them to pinpoint all the countries mentioned in the 'Cheeses of Europe' worksheet and to create a fact box at each point. The fact box could contain details of: the capital city, the country's flag, typical cheese of the country, other typical food from the country. Pupils can also try to find out about other famous cheeses from these or other European countries and include them on their map, too.

### Extension Activities

1. Create a class data chart of favourite types of European cheese.
2. Hold a 'Cheeses of Europe' taste sampling session.
3. Write about the history of cheese in France, Italy or Spain.
4. Do a class project about Cheeses of Europe e.g. Cheese Rolling Festival in England; the word for cheese in different languages i.e. France - fromage, Italy - formaggio, Spain - queso; cheeses which are named after places in Europe e.g. Gruyeres and Emmental in Switzerland.
5. Ask your pupils in groups, to create a television advertisement for one of the European cheeses through a simple drama activity.

## Bring it Home

### How are your pupils getting involved?

See the website for suggested ways of encouraging your pupils to take home what they have learned about Cheeses of Europe. As a homework exercise, you can ask your pupils to:

1. Write about their favourite type of cheese.
2. Create a family data chart to show which cheeses of Europe are most popular at home.
3. Design a simple advertisement for one of the European cheeses.