

A banner image showing various colorful ingredients like corn, beans, and vegetables arranged on a surface, with the title 'Ingredient Origins' overlaid in white text on a dark red background.

Ingredient Origins

Grade Level: Grades 4–7

Objective: To explore the ABC World Food database while learning about some of interesting and unusual ingredients people around the world enjoy, paying specific attention to the frequent differences between an ingredient's place of origin and the culture of the cuisine in which it is used.

Duration: 1 – 2 hours

Materials: Ingredients Tour instructions, individual access to ABC World Food for all participating students

Instructions: Choose recipes from two countries in different parts of the world, learn about the ingredients required to make each recipe, and then explore the distance between the recipe's culture and the ingredient's place of origin.

Assignment 1: Choose your recipes:

- Select one country from the Northern Hemisphere—North America, Europe, or Northern Asia.
- Select a second country, this time from the Southern Hemisphere—South America, Africa, or Southern Asia.
- Peruse the recipes for each of your two countries and choose one from each country to study in more detail.

Assignment 2: Plot ingredient origins:

- Read the recipe introduction and then the list of ingredients. Note the hyperlinks that connect ingredients with articles dealing with their origin, flavor profile, use, and more.
- For each recipe, follow the links and read the article about each ingredient.
- Print out two copies of the attached world map. Mark the location of each ingredient's place of origin on the map, and draw a line connecting it to the country associated with the recipe in which it's used.
- Plot each recipe's ingredients on a separate map.

Assignment 3: Reflect on what you've learned:

- Look at each map and consider the following questions: How "local" is each recipe? Do most of the ingredients originate in the same hemisphere in which they're used or is there crossover? How do you suppose an ingredient from one part of the world made it to another part of the world?
- Discuss these questions as a group or in a short writing exercise. Also address anything that may have surprised you. For example, you might be surprised to learn that potatoes, which are so closely associated with Irish and Russian cuisines, actually originated in South America.

