



Lesson Delivery Date: ___/___/___
Lesson Delivered By: _____
Initial when complete:
Supplies Bought: _____
Materials Prepped: _____
Feedback Complete: _____

## SCALED LEARNING™ LESSON PLAN - SACC

Review this lesson plan at least 3 days prior to leading.

<b>LESSON NAME:</b> (What is the name of the activity?) Food Critic	<b>TIME REQUIRED:</b> 30 minutes	<b>AGES:</b> All
<b>SCALED LEARNING FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS:</b> (STEM, Career Connected Learning, Arts, Literacy, Education, Diversity and Global Learning, etc.)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career Connected Learning</li> <li>Wellness and Nutrition</li> </ul>		
<b>STANDARDS ADDRESSED:</b> (Common Core State Standards; National Core Art Standards)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Speaking and Listening:</b> Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</li> </ul>		
<b>LESSON OBJECTIVE:</b> (What youth should get from this activity, what they should achieve?)		
Youth will be able to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore and take on the role of Food Critic in providing feedback on a variety of different types of foods.</li> </ul>		
<b>MATERIALS NEEDED:</b>	<b>PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Critic Handout (<b>ATTACHMENT</b>)</li> <li>Variety of unique fruits, vegetables, cheeses, etc.</li> <li>Toothpicks</li> <li>Pencil</li> <li>Coloring Tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare a selection of unique fruits, vegetables, cheeses, etc. by cutting into small bite-sized pieces.</li> </ul>	

<b>PART ONE:</b>	
<b>SAY:</b> Today we're going to explore the profession of Food Critic!	
<b>ASK &amp; CONNECT</b> (prepare opening ideas to connect lesson to youth's prior experience or prior session)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you think a Food Critic does?</li> <li>What is the strangest food you've ever eaten?</li> </ul>	
<b>PART TWO:</b> (What are the steps for youth to complete this activity?) Highlight steps when youth have a choice.	What key skills will I need to be prepared to model or teach?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute several Food Critic Handouts to the youth and review. Discuss the different elements (Visual Appeal, Smell, Taste, Texture) and clarify understanding. Review and discuss the 1 – 5 rating system. What would a 1 look like? What would a 5 look like?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

<p>2. Introduce the different foods youth will be tasting. Distribute the first food and give youth time to look at it, smell it, taste it, etc. Instruct youth to draw the food and rate and review it.</p> <p>3. Repeat with several foods.</p>	<p><b>ASK DURING</b> (open-ended questions for during activity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What types of professions do you know that involve food?</li> <li>• What do you think the best part of being a food critic is? What would be the worst part?</li> <li>• What is your favorite food today?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SITE SPECIFIC</b> (complete prior to lesson delivery)</p>		
<p><b>Leadership</b> (How can youth help lead?)</p>	<p><b>Choices</b> (What content or process choices are there?)</p>	<p>How will I promote exploration?</p> <p>How will I nurture creativity?</p>
<p><b>PART THREE:</b></p> <p><b>REFLECT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you want to be a Food Critic? Why or why not?</li> <li>• What is another food related profession you think would be fun?</li> <li>• What was the highest scoring food you enjoyed today? What has the lowest score?</li> <li>• Share Food Critic Overview (below).</li> </ul>		

Source: [www.careeraddict.com](http://www.careeraddict.com)

### How to Become a Food Critic

Contrary to popular belief, not all food critics are chefs or have culinary backgrounds. In fact, the first food critic ever to be documented was neither a writer nor a cook; he was a lawyer.

Born in the mid-1700s, Alexandre Grimod de La Reynière wrote the first comprehensive food review through a series he called *L'Almanach des gourmands* (The Gourmet Almanac). It was France's first annual restaurant guidebook that grew extremely popular among the aristocrats.

But it was only until the 1900s that the popularity of food reviews resurfaced when the tyre company Michelin began handing out their most coveted stars. Soon after, more food critics emerged, not only in Europe but all over the US, too.

Nowadays, however, food critics can be found everywhere – from blogs to newspapers to magazines and YouTube. Culinary pundits have seemingly multiplied overnight. And while some of them are exceptionally good, most of them are also very bad.

But if this sounds like a career path that's right up your alley, then be sure to read this article because it was made just for you.

Here's how to become a food critic.

## **1. Research the Profession**

In order for you (and your taste buds) to be taken seriously, it's important to know what exactly the job entails. Below is a snapshot of what a typical day on the job is like, as well as how much you can potentially earn.

### **Job Description**

In essence, a food critic's main responsibility is to give an unbiased review of a restaurant or meal based on their knowledge of the industry. They usually use a set of criteria which typically includes taste, value, service and ambience.

Of course, when it comes to critiquing food, it's never one-size-fits-all. Depending on your level of experience, some critics will have other parameters such as theme, which refers to the central idea behind the dish. But if you've spent most of your time reviewing fast food restaurants, then you wouldn't necessarily have to go beyond the usual criterions.

General duties include:

- evaluating restaurant standards and food quality
- writing original copy to effectively represent a restaurant for publication in newspapers, magazines, websites, travel guides, etc
- supplying original photography if necessary or securing publication rights of restaurant photos
- working flexibly and meeting publishing deadlines
- keeping up to date with restaurant processes and practices
- interviewing industry leaders and venue representatives
- attending launches and promotional events.

### **Essential Skills and Qualities**

In the early 90s, food critics would often wear disguises to keep their identities hidden from restaurant owners, and chefs who would do anything to spot their presence, especially since their review could make or break their business. To avoid being bribed or, worse, threatened, it was essential that they kept their identities anonymous.

But today most food critics prefer to be out in the open. And while this has its own advantages (hurray, no more wigs and fake noses!), building your presence and credibility has also become a lot more challenging.

To get ahead of the game, you'll need to.

- **have integrity:** A food critic's entire career is founded on their credibility. To have a stake in the industry, you must be able to resist bribes and temptation from restaurant owners.
- **be curious:** Food critics are driven by a desire to learn more about new cultures through food. They are always open to trying new flavours and aren't afraid to explore exotic tastes.
- **be highly observant:** Writing about food goes beyond just the meal; you must also be able to observe how you and other people react when they enter a restaurant. Do they feel at home? Does it make them happy? These minor reactions are always visible to the food critic's observant eye.
- **have a good memory:** Oftentimes, food critics are only able to write a review hours after their visit. It is, therefore, essential that they have a good memory to best recreate and rate the experience.
- **have excellent time management skills:** Even when they don't have regular hours, food journalists must still be able to meet their editors' deadlines while attending restaurant openings and other pending press invitations.
- **have superb creative writing skills:** Food critics are some of the greatest writers in the world; they have the unique ability to transport their readers to the restaurant they're reviewing while vicariously tasting the food through their words.
- **be outstanding communicators:** In order to be a prolific food writer, you should have an extensive network that you can get tips or leads from. Building relationships within the culinary industry is key to having a sustainable career as a food critic.

### **Working Hours and Conditions**

Food critics don't have a regular 9-to-5 schedule, and they generally have to deal with a busy social calendar and numerous press invitations. Their work also requires them to travel from time to time, but very few get their jobs done on the road. Most prefer to work at home, far away from the pressures of an office setting and safe from the peering eyes of people in cafés.

It's a career that doesn't involve a lot of risks unless you count the occasional food poisoning and number of hours of sitting in front of a computer. Also, most food critics have the freedom to work however and whenever they please, provided that they're able to meet the editors' deadlines.

### **Salary Prospects**

Some critics work full time for a magazine or a newspaper, while others are food bloggers who manage and maintain their own sites. There are also freelance writers who are commissioned to write online reviews.

Salaries will largely depend on your level of experience and how often you write. According to JobMonkey, however, full-time food writers can earn between \$45,000 and \$50,000 per year.

## **2. Get the Qualifications**

While there are no strict qualifications for being a food critic, having an English or journalism degree can be very useful to help you get ahead. It will expose you to the basic rules of creative writing and help you find your own voice.

It would also help to have some basic knowledge about how food is prepared, so you may want to consider taking a few short courses on cooking, depending again on what kind of food you want to review. For example, if you're looking to concentrate on desserts, then maybe you can take a baking class.

You can also intern in a restaurant to get a behind-the-scenes look at how food is made, which can add an in-depth and unique perspective to your writing.

### 3. Land Your First Job

Typically, most food writers get their start by interning in food publications such as the *Great British Food Magazine* or *BBC Good Food*. But if you want to stand out, you can consider creating your own blog or website and connecting with other food bloggers online.

If you don't have the resources to do that, you can start by creating an Instagram account that's devoted entirely to food. Start by creating a strong portfolio online and work on your writing daily. An editor is most likely to hire you if you have experience, and in such a competitive environment, it's up to you create that experience.

### 4. Develop Your Career

To be a great food critic, you should constantly expose your taste palate to new flavors, even if they're outside your comfort zone. As unconventional as this may sound, the key to developing a career in food writing is to eat in as many exotic places as you can and constantly write about them.

To quote the great late Anthony Bourdain, one of the most respected chefs and food writers in the world: 'If I'm an advocate for anything, it's to move. As far as you can, as much as you can. Across the ocean, or simply across the river. Walk in someone else's shoes or at least eat their food. It's a plus for everybody'.

#### **FAMILY AND PARENT ENGAGEMENT** (Select how activity will be shared)

- Invitation: During activity, invite families to join as they are picking up their child
- Conversation: Draw parent's attention to their youth's contribution at pick up and explain their child's positive contributions to the final product or process
- Communication (written): Photos or written Staff or Youth recap for upcoming newsletter or parent email