

Activity Guide
for
*Shanté Keys and
the New Year's
Peas*

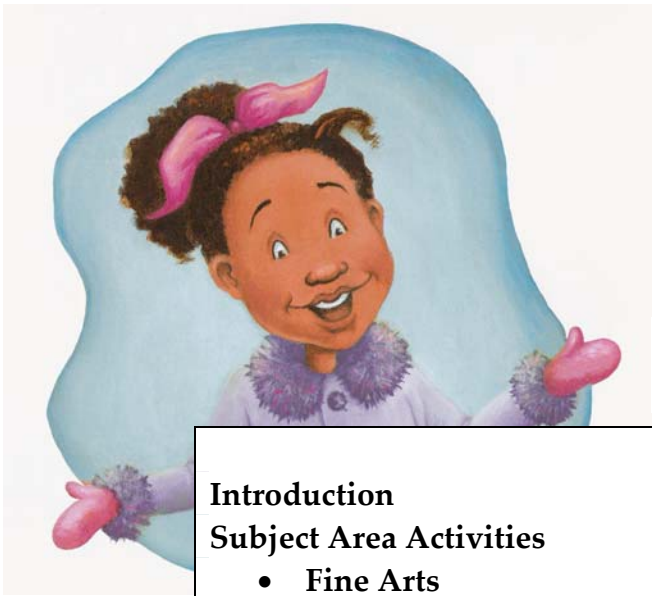
**Book by Gail Piernas-Davenport & illustrated by Marion Eldridge © 2007
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**Guide Compiled by Gail Piernas-Davenport
for Educators in Grades K-4
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**Based on the State of Illinois
Learning Standards**



Multicultural Resources for a Multicultural World



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INTRODUCTION

Happy New Year!

For the classroom teacher, *Shanté Keys* is the perfect book to use throughout the school year, especially in the fall and winter.

The traditional American New Year's is a non-religious celebration centered on January 1st. Studying *Shanté Keys*, however, can expose students to the interesting traditions and timing of other countries' celebrations in a positive manner. And as we live in a multicultural society, students in many classrooms will see their own traditions represented in the book.

While the main story of *Shanté Keys* is about food traditions, as you can see from the following activities, the book can be used in many different subject areas. Although the guide begins with a party activity and food is always a fun place to start to experience other cultures, multiculturalism involves much more than food and festivals. For the convenience of the teachers in my home state, this activity guide has been written to correspond to the State of Illinois teaching standards for the early primary grades. These should be similar to the educational goals of any state.

Feel free to use any of these ideas in conjunction with the book. If you want to share your experiences of using the book in your classroom, please drop me a note or photos!

Gail

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SUBJECT AREA ACTIVITIES

FINE ARTS

STATE GOAL 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced.

B. Apply skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in one or more of the arts.

26.B.1d Visual Arts: Demonstrate knowledge and skills to create visual works of art using manipulation, eye-hand coordination, building and imagination.

Party Hat

Children love celebrations! Designate a day and time for your class' New Year's celebration. If homemade treats are allowed at your school, ask parents to donate them. Encourage them to share treats particular to their cultures.

Prior to the party, have the children make their own New Year's party hats, or a crown like Shanté is wearing on the cover of the book. (A pattern follows for the hat.)

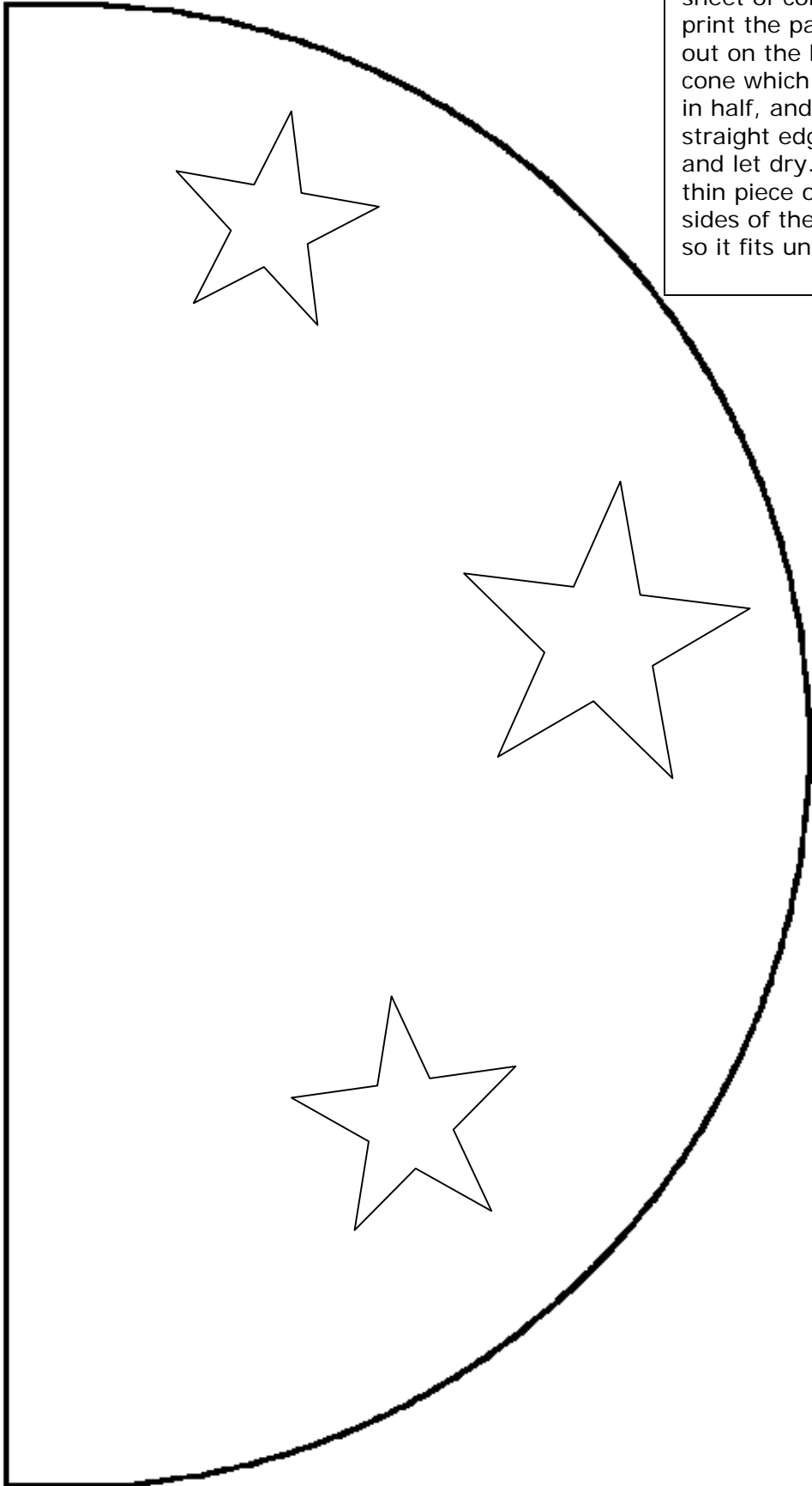
If you make the hat at the size printed on the following sheet, it will be a very small hat, so you will need to enlarge it. If you don't have a copy machine that can do the job, use an overhead projector. To enlarge the pattern, copy the sheet on a transparency sheet. Tape a sheet of large construction paper on the board or wall and project the transparency on the paper. Adjust the size of the image to the proper size to create a hat to fit the heads of your students. Trace the image on the paper to create a pattern.

Before the designated time, have the children put on their hats. Have some fun and countdown to the time. So if the party is to begin at 12 noon, for example, use the classroom clock to countdown 10-9-8-7. . . !

New Year's at My House!

Have students draw a picture or make a collage of what the parties would look like if Shanté came to their houses for a New Year's celebration! Here are some questions to get them to think about the elements in their picture:

- What are the people wearing?
- What are they eating?
- Is it a celebration with an extended family, or just the people who live in your house?
- Does your family celebrate on January 1st or another time of the year?



Enlarge this pattern to fit on a large sheet of construction paper. Copy or print the pattern on the paper, cut it out on the black lines, roll it into a cone which will fold the straight edge in half, and then glue one side of the straight edge under the other side and let dry. Staple both ends of a thin piece of elastic onto opposite sides of the bottom edge of the hat so it fits under the chin.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

STATE GOAL 1: Read with understanding and fluency.

STATE GOAL 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas.

STATE GOAL 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.

STATE GOAL 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

STATE GOAL 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess and communicate information.

Language arts include reading, writing, speaking, listening and the study of literature. Language arts skills are so intertwined and overlapping that I have not tied an activity to a particular goal.

Poetry Warm-up: Relay Rhyming

Shanté Keys is written completely in rhyme with each verse of the book ending in the “eeze” sound. Most books don’t carry their rhyming patterns to such extremes, but rhyme and rhythm are important tools in writing poetry.

Get your students minds revved up for rhyme with a relay race. Kids love to compete, and in this race there is no loser. All of the children can benefit from this creative activity. You can also use this activity in conjunction with a phonics lesson to help children to identify phonemes.

First, organize the class into rows of relay teams. If your classroom is organized into straight rows of seats, you will only need to make sure the teams are equal in size.

Take a sheet of lined paper for each team. Write one word at the top of each row’s sheet. Select words that have many one or two syllable rhymes. These can be words from the students’ spelling lists or words studied in phonics.

Suggestions are:

brain (ain sound)	sale (ale)	knew (ew)	four (ore)	goal (ole)
glow (o)	eyes (ize)	mop (op)	hide (ide)	here (eer)

Tell the students that when you say, “Start,” the student at the head of each row will turn over the paper. The first person will write a word that rhymes with the word on the sheet and then pass it to the person behind her/him.

The team that finishes first with the most true rhymes wins!

Read to Write: Analyzing Text

It's the first advice writers give aspiring writers: In order to be a writer, you have to read a lot. As your students gain and refine their writing skills, the books you read with them and the books they read themselves will help them grow as writers.

When writers seek to undertake writing poetry or picture books, one of the first things some writers will do is write out or type the text of many books or poems to study the pieces.

Give the students the text of *Shanté Keys* (a copy is at the end of this guide) and read it *without the book and pictures*. After reading it, have the students make observations about the text of the book. Some observations might be:

- There aren't many words. (The main text without back matter is just 396 words.)
- The book is in rhyme.
- The rhymes all have the same ending ("eeze").
- Most of the verses have 11 beats.
- Some phrases repeat (i.e., "Come join us for dinner so you can try peas.")
- The protagonist is a girl.
- There is a problem in the story (Grandma forgot the peas).
- The child solves the problem in the story.
- The story has a happy ending (Shanté finds the peas and everyone enjoys New Year's dinner).

Type out the texts of other rhyming picture books and have students do the same exercise. Do the books have anything in common? How are they different? Hopefully, students will see that while the stories of the books are not similar (some are serious or nonfiction, while others are fiction and may be funny), they have many of the same elements (repetition, a central problem, etc.). A few of my favorites are

- "Falling for Rapunzel" by Leah Wilcox, illustrated by Lydia Monks
- "Goodnight Moon" by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Clement Hurd
- "Green Eggs and Ham" by Dr. Seuss
- "Iron Horse" by Verla Kay, illustrated by Michael McCurdy

- “Over in the Meadow” by Olive A. Wadsworth, illustrated by Ezra Jack Keats
- “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost, illustrated by Susan Jeffers
- “Ten Little Lambs” by Alice B. McGinty, illustrated by Melissa Sweet (internal rhyme)
- “What Kind of Seeds Are These” by Heidi Bee Roemer, illustrated by Olena Kassian

This analysis can be a prelude to the students writing their own rhyming poems or books.

Writing Resolutions

We adults often think of things we want to improve about ourselves on January 1st. But what about your students? First, have them write three things they would like to improve about themselves during the year. Explain that it doesn’t have to be anything earth shattering—it can be as simple as

“I will go to bed on time.”

“I will play outside more.”

“I will eat my veggies, even if I don’t like them.”

Now that students have thought about the things they can do to improve themselves, have the students break into groups to discuss and write the resolutions they can make as a class to improve their classroom and their school. This, also, does not have to be huge. It can be as simple as the students will put their chairs in when they leave the lunchroom, or they can pick up paper around the school grounds. Direct students to write their resolutions in complete sentences. Post these on a bulletin board so the class can monitor its progress in achieving its resolutions.

Reader's Theater

If you are looking for opportunities to utilize oral reading in your classroom, use *Shanté Keys* as a Reader's Theater! Having the students read as the different characters will keep them engaged in the story while giving them fluency training. I've reworked the script to identify the speaking parts, added narrators to make smoother transitions, and added some lines to fill out the parts. All of this should make it easy for you to perform in the classroom.

SHANTÉ KEYS AND THE NEW YEAR'S PEAS

by Gail Piernas-Davenport

Adapted for Reader's Theater by the author, from her picture book published by Albert Whitman & Company, Morton Grove, Illinois, 2007

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PREVIEW: Shanté is looking forward to New Year's Day with her family, but the day—and the year—could turn out to be disastrous without her quick thinking.

GENRE: Holiday

CULTURE: Multicultural

THEME: customs, sharing, perseverance

READERS: 12 or more

READER AGES: 5-8

LENGTH: 10 minutes

ROLES: Narrators 1-4, Shanté Keys, Grandma Louise, Miss Lee, Mr. MacGhee, Señor Ortiz, Hari, Auntie Marie, Mom, Chorus (remainder of the class)

NOTE: *Shanté* is pronounced "shahn-TAY"; *Hari* is pronounced "har-EE"

NARRATOR 1: It's New Year's Day for the Family Keys.

SHANTÉ KEYS: (*happily*)
Happy New Year, Grandma Louise!
Mom said we'll eat lucky New Year's peas.

GRANDMA: (*expressing shock*)
Mercy, child! I'm weak in the knees.
I cooked lots of food, but forgot black-eyed peas!

Chitlins, baked ham, macaroni and cheese,
Greens and hot cornbread, but no black-eyed peas!

It's a year of bad luck if we don't eat cowpeas.
Quick—go to Miss Lee's and borrow some, please!

SHANTÉ KEYS: *(knocking on Miss Lee's door)*
Happy New Year, Miss Lee. It's Shanté Keys.
Gram wants to borrow some black-eyed peas.

MISS LEE: My New Year is later because I'm Chinese.
I'll make crisp golden dumplings instead of cowpeas.

SHANTÉ KEYS: I'm sorry to bother you today, Miss Lee.
Come join us for dinner so you can try peas.

NARRATOR 2: Shanté thinks of the grocer's—Mr. MacGhee's.

SHANTÉ KEYS: *(approaching Mr. MacGhee)*
Your aisles are stocked with such delicacies.
Why can't I find lucky black-eyed peas?

MR. MACGHEE: Back home in my Scotland, far overseas,
For New Year's we toast, and eat haggis and cheese.

SHANTÉ KYES: Happy New Year, anyway, Mr. MacGhee.
Come join us for dinner so you can try peas.

NARRATOR 3: Next Shanté goes to ask Señor Ortiz.
He's a wonderful chef with great recipes.

SHANTÉ KEYS: *(approaching Sr. Ortiz)*
What do you eat for New Year's luck, Chef Ortiz?
If you cook blackeyes, may I borrow some, please?

SEÑOR ORTIZ: I am from Mexico, down by Belize.
For luck, we make noise and eat grapes like these.

SHANTÉ KEYS: Happy New Year, anyway, Senor Ortiz.
Come join us for dinner so you can try peas.

NARRATOR 4: Next Shanté will try at her good friend Hari's.

SHANTÉ KEYS: (approaching Hari)
Hari, do you have lucky black-eyed peas?
For our New Year's meal, may I borrow some, please?"

HARI: We celebrate Diwali with other Hindu families.
We light lamps and eat sweets—but no black-eyed peas.

SHANTÉ KEYS: Thank you, anyway,
Come join us for dinner so you can try peas.

NARRATOR 1: Now Shanté is frantic; she's in a time squeeze.

NARRATOR 2: She thinks hard and rushes to Auntie Marie's.

(*Shanté at Auntie Marie's door*)

AUNTIE MARIE: I'd have too many if I cooked all of these.
Hon, take what you need of my New Year's peas.

SHANTÉ KEYS: Thanks and come eat at Gram's with me, please!

(*Shanté and Auntie back at Grandma's*)

NARRATOR 3: Grandma chops onions to cook with the peas.

NARRATOR 4: Auntie adds a coin for luck and a pinch of bay leaves,
And Shanté cooks the rice while Mom oversees.

MOM: Shanté, can you get the door, please?
Your friends are here for dinner, come to try peas!

CHORUS: (*happily, everyone together*)
The peas are delicious! We all can agree!
Happy New Year and thank you, Shanté Keys!

MATHEMATICS

STATE GOAL 10: Collect, organize and analyze data using statistical methods; predict results; and interpret uncertainty using concepts of probability.

10.A.1a Organize and display data using pictures, tallies, tables, charts or bar graphs. Assessment: Display and compare data in a pictograph, table, and bar graph with tallies.

Making a Bar Graph

After reading the book with or to the students, ask these questions. Write the tallies on the board for each question.

1. How many students eat black-eyed peas for luck on New Year's Day?
How many people eat other things for luck in the New Year's? List these and tally them.
2. Whose New Year begins on January 1? Whose New Year begins at a time other than January 1st? What is the name of your holiday?
3. What time do you get to stay up to on New Year's Eve?

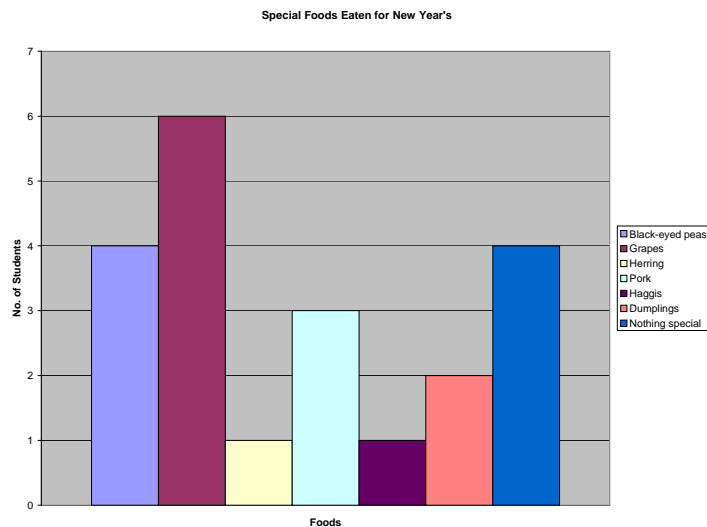
Using the tallies from one of the questions, have the students make pictographs, bar graphs or pie charts to compare the different ways to celebrate.

Example:

Foods We Eat for New Year's Luck

Food	No. of Students
Black-eyed peas	
Grapes	
Herring	
Pork	
Haggis	
Dumplings	
Nothing special	

Bar chart:



SCIENCE

STATE GOAL 12: Understand the fundamental concepts, principles and interconnections of the life, physical and earth/space sciences.

12.B.1b Describe how living things depend on one another for survival.

Assessment: Students will apply the process of scientific inquiry to explore how living things are dependent on one another for survival.

Growing Black-eyed Peas

Black-eyed peas or cowpeas like hot weather much better than cold weather. The states that produce the majority of black-eyed peas are California, Texas, and Arizona. These states produce a combined total of 20 – 30,000 metric tons of the bean each year. That's a lot of beans!

Africa produces the most black-eyed peas, with the countries of Niger and Nigeria leading production. Other countries that produce the bean are Brazil, Haiti, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina.



You can try growing black-eyed peas in your classroom! You can purchase seeds online at places like [Local Harvest](#) or [Main Street Seed and Supply Company](#). Be aware that seeds take 60 days to reach maturity.

Have the students prepare the soil and seeds for planting. Students should be involved in their daily care, such as watering, and have them make and record observations each day on the progress of the beans.

Questions for consideration:

- Where is the best place in the room to locate the plants?
- What do the plants need to stay alive and thrive?
- How does growing the beans inside compare to the conditions in which a farmer would grow them outside?
- The temperature in the room fluctuates or changes depending on the temperature outside. How does this affect the plants?
- Weeds are a concern to farmers raising all types of crops. Weeding can either be manual, such as hoeing, or chemical, with herbicides. How does the use of chemicals affect the larger environment?
- Pest control is also an issue for black-eyed pea growers, especially in Africa where an increased harvest could mean more food for millions. Scientists have been working on bioengineering a plant resistant to pests. What are the concerns people have about using genetics to affect food crops?
- How has global warming affected the growing seasons in different areas of the country and the world?

The scientific name for black-eyed peas is *Vigna unguiculata*. You can go to the [Library of Congress Science Reference Services](http://www.loc.gov/rr/scitech/mysteries/blackeyedpeas.html) (<http://www.loc.gov/rr/scitech/mysteries/blackeyedpeas.html>) to see pictures of the plant in bloom and the bean pod fully grown.

The book Beans by Melanie Mitchell (First Step Nonfiction, Lerner Publications, 2003) is a good primary level book that pictures the different stages of bean development.

SOCIAL SCIENCE/HISTORY

STATE GOAL 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.

D. Understand Illinois, United States and world social history.

16.D.1 (W) Identify how customs and traditions from around the world influence the local community.

Assessment: Draw pictures illustrating a tradition and custom that originated in another country that is practiced in the community and write at least one sentence comparing the two traditions/customs.

Study the Traditions of Chinese New Year

In cities all around the United States, Chinese Americans celebrate Chinese or Lunar New Year in January or February. Families observe traditions that were started in China centuries ago. In the 1800s, many Chinese men came to America with the hopes of striking it rich in the California Gold Rush and stayed to work on building the railroad.

Have the students study how the festivities differ today in America than yesteryear in China. Some resources are:

- "Bringing in the New Year" by Grace Lin
- "Chinatown" by William Low
- "Dumpling Soup" by Jama Kim Rattigan, illus. by Lillian Hsu-Flanders
- "Chinese New Year": www.infoplease.com/spot/chinesenewyear1.html
-

Examples of differences:

In China

- People lit fires on bamboo sticks to ward off the evil spirits
- 15 days of festivities
- Dragon dance performed on 15th day at Lantern Festival
- China was largely a rural society
-

In America Today

- Fireworks used to celebrate
- Celebration often shortened
- Dragon dance performed at weekend parade
- Many Chinese Americans live in or near big cities

Have the students take a sheet of construction paper and fold the sheet in half. On the top, have students draw a traditional Chinese New Year from a prior century. Tell the students to draw a scene from a Chinese American celebration today. Have the students write a sentence to compare the two scenes.



SOCIAL SCIENCE/GEOGRAPHY

STATE GOAL 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.

A. Locate, describe and explain places, regions and features on the Earth.

17.A.1a Identify physical characteristics places, both global (e.g., roads, regions, of water).



Peas around the World: Map Activity

As you read in the Science section, a number of other countries grow black-eyed peas. Some of the black-eyed bean producing countries and states are:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Angola | 14. Ethiopia | 28. Somalia |
| 2. Australia | 15. Ghana | 29. South Africa |
| 3. Benin | 16. Haiti | 30. Sri Lanka |
| 4. Bosnia | 17. Herzegovina | 31. Sudan |
| 5. Botswana | 18. India | 32. Togo |
| 6. Brazil | 19. Kenya | 33. United States –
Arizona |
| 7. Burkina Faso | 20. Mali | 34. United States –
California |
| 8. Cameroon | 21. Mauritania | 35. United States –
Texas |
| 9. Central African
Republic | 22. Mozambique | 36. Zambia |
| 10. Chad | 23. Myanmar | 37. Zimbabwe |
| 11. China | 24. Namibia | |
| 12. Congo | 25. Niger | |
| 13. Côte D'Ivoire | 26. Nigeria | |
| | 27. Senegal | |

Have the students locate the countries and states on the classroom map, identify the continent on which each country is located, and make a few observations. Is the country mountainous or flat? Is there a good water supply?

For older students, have them do some basic research on the countries, using an almanac designed for students, such as FactMonster.com.

Topics to research include:

- Climate—average temperature
- Population
- Other food crops

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH

STATE GOAL 23. Understand human body systems and factors that influence growth and development.

B. Explain the effects of health-related actions on the body systems.

23.B.1 Identify healthy actions that influence the functions of the body (e.g., cleanliness, proper diet, exercise).

Assessment: Students who meet the standard can explain the effects of health related actions on the body systems.

Studying the Food Pyramid

Eating a balanced diet is key to good nutrition and good health, but it is not the only variable in the equation. When our bodies have the right servings of nutrients and exercise, our minds develop and our bodies grow.



It's easy to integrate information on black-eyed peas in your nutrition lessons.

Black-eyed peas are typically categorized

as a member of the bean family, and have great nutritional value. They are low in fat, high in fiber, and are a good source of iron, protein, and folate, and have no cholesterol. In the food pyramid, a serving of black-eyed peas can be counted either as a serving of vegetables or a serving from the meats and beans section.

You can obtain a master of the blank food pyramid for students at

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/m>

[pk_coloring.pdf](http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/m), in the [MyPyramid for Kids](http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/m) site. (Also, a detailed completed pyramid poster appears there.) Go over the different categories and what they are composed of and have students enter the proper titles in the boxes at the bottom. Have them color their pyramid.

Nutrition Facts

Source: Food and Nutrition Service,
United States Department of Agriculture

Serving size 1 cup (172g)

Cooked black-eyed peas without salt

Amount Per Serving

Calories 199

Fat Cal 8

% Daily Value*

Total Fat .9g **1%**

Saturated Fat .2g **1%**

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 6mg **0%**

Total Carbohydrate 35g **11%**

Dietary Fiber 11g **44%**

Sugars 5g

Protein 13g

Vitamin A 0%

Vitamin C 1%

Calcium 4%

Iron 23%

Pyramid Blast-off Game

As we know, however, food is just the beginning of the equation. Exercise plays a key role, but children usually have no clue about the proper amount.



In order to get your students to use the information they gained in studying the pyramid and to get them thinking about the proper balance of food and exercise, play this neat interactive game on the MyPyramid.gov website, the [MyPyramid Blast-Off Game](http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/kids_game.html) (http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/kids_game.html). Students ages 6 – 11 make choices to fuel up their spaceship with the right mix of foods and exercise in order to reach Planet Power.

You will need Flash Player 7 (or higher) to play the game. It can be downloaded free on the site if your classroom computer does not already have it.

If they are not successful the first time (as I wasn't!), they can return to the game, change their choices and retry the trip to Planet Power. Students will see if they consume too many calories, have enough exercise, and make adequate choices in the different parts of the pyramid. At the end, if the student's mission is successful, he/she receives a certificate!

FYI: March is Good Nutrition Month.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

State Goal 2: Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.

**B: Recognize individual and similarities and differences.
2B.1b. Describe positive qualities in others.**



Character Education Discussion

In the book, Shanté Keys demonstrates many of the characteristics we would want young students to emulate. Lead a discussion with your class on how Shanté shows the following qualities. Ask them what they would have done if they were in Shanté's place.

- **Responsibility**
 - (Shanté accepts the assignment from her grandmother to find the peas for dinner and makes it her mission to return with the peas.)
- **Acceptance**
 - (Shanté respects the traditions of her friends and neighbors, even though they are very different from those of her family.)
- **Politeness**
 - (Even when Shanté doesn't find the peas she was sent to find at the neighbor's, she thanks her before she leaves.)
- **Perseverance**
 - (When she doesn't find the peas at Miss Lee's, the neighbor her grandmother told her to try, she keeps searching until she finds them.)
- **Friendship/Generosity**
 - (Shanté invites the neighbors back to her grandmother's to enjoy her family's tradition of eating black-eyed peas.)
- **Cooperation**
 - (Shanté helps her grandmother, mother, and aunt by preparing the rice to go with the black-eyed peas for the family dinner.)

JUST FOR FUN

Lucky Food!

Match the food eaten to celebrate the New Year with the appropriate country.



Oliebollen
Doughnuts

Greece



St. Basil's Cake

Spain



Fried
Dumplings or
jiaozi

United States



Haggis

Holland



Black-eyed Peas

Scotland



Grapes

China

Name _____

Name _____

Chinese New Year Word Scramble

Please unscramble the words below.

1. migupnld

2. mono

3. yckul

4. goandr

5. rrieowskf

6. encnalgi

7. eoveplen

8. rsnltean

9. lsfatiev

10. edaarp

11. rluan

12. ciazod

Just for Fun Answer Keys

Food Match

Food	Country
Oliebollen Doughnuts	Holland
St. Basil's Cake	Greece
Fried Dumplings	China
Haggis	Scotland
Black-eyed Peas	United States
Grapes	Spain

Chinese New Year Word Scramble

dumpling
moon
lucky
dragon
fireworks
cleaning
envelope
lanterns
festival
parade
zodiac

Make your own word scrambles and puzzles for other holidays at
<http://www.theteacherscorner.net/printable-worksheets/make-your-own>

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Web Resources

(These are just a few of the many resources available online.)

Black-Eyed Peas	
• Bean Information	Northarvest Bean Growers Association
• Crop Information	Purdue University Extension
	Network for the Genetic Improvement of Cowpea for Africa
	Yuma Area Ag Council
	Thomas Jefferson Institute
• Nutrition	Beans for Health
	Vegetable of the Month/Beans - Centers for Disease Control
	University of Michigan Integrative Medicine
• Recipes	Melissa's Black-eyed Peas
	Vegetable with More
	California Dry Bean Board
Evaluating Multicultural Books	Anti-Defamation League
New Year's	
• Activities	New Year's Coloring Sheets
• Countdown	Countdown the Time to New Year's Around the World
• Greetings	How to Say "Happy New Year" in Different Languages
• Party Ideas	Family Fun Magazine
• In China	Chinese New Year
• In India	Diwali
• In Mexico	New Year's Eve in Mexico
• In Scotland	Edinburgh's Hogmanay

Please note: If you received a printed copy of this guide, please visit my website for the active links to these sites.

Final Text of
Shanté Keys and the New Year's Peas
by Gail Piernas-Davenport © 2007

"Happy New Year, Grandma!" says Shanté Keys.

"Mom said we'll eat lucky New Year's peas."

"Mercy!" cries Grandma. "I'm weak in the knees.
I cooked lots of food, but forgot black-eyed peas!"

"Chitlins, baked ham, macaroni and cheese,
Greens and hot cornbread, but no black-eyed peas!"

"It's a year of bad luck if we don't eat cowpeas.
Quick—go to Miss Lee's and borrow some, please!"

"Happy New Year, Miss Lee," says Shanté Keys.
Gram wants to borrow some black-eyed peas."

"My New Year is later because I'm Chinese.
I'll make crisp golden dumplings instead of cowpeas."

"I'm sorry to bother you," says Shanté Keys.
"Come join us for dinner so you can try peas."

"I'll try at the grocer's—Mr. MacGhee's."

"Your aisles are stocked with such delicacies.
Why can't I find lucky black-eyed peas?"

"Back home in my Scotland, far overseas,
For New Year's we toast, and eat haggis and cheese."

"Happy New Year, anyway," says Shanté Keys.
"Come join us for dinner so you can try peas."

"Why don't you try asking Señor Ortiz?"

"What do you eat for New Year's luck, Chef Ortiz?
If you cook blackeyes, may I borrow some, please?"

"I am from Mexico, down by Belize.
For luck, we make noise and eat grapes like these."

"Happy New Year, anyway," says Shanté Keys.
"Come join us for dinner so you can try peas."

"Why don't you try at your good friend Hari's?"

Next Shanté asks at her good friend Hari's.

"May I borrow peas for New Year's, please?"

"We celebrate Diwali with other Hindu families.
We light lamps and eat sweets—but no black-eyed peas."

"Thank you, anyway," says Shanté Keys.

"Come join us for dinner so you can try peas."

Now Shanté is frantic; she's in a time squeeze.
She thinks hard and rushes to Auntie Marie's.

"I'd have too many if I cooked all of these.
Hon, take what you need of my New Year's peas."

"Thanks and come eat at Gram's with me, please!"

Grandma chops onions to cook with the peas.
Auntie adds a coin for luck and a pinch of bay leaves,
While Shanté cooks rice as Mom oversees.

Auntie says, "Shanté, can you get the door, please?"

"Your friends are here for dinner, come to try peas!"

"The peas are delicious!" the whole group agrees.

"Happy New Year and thank you, Shanté Keys!"