

Desert Dwellers' Tea Time

Description: a cross-cultural tea-tasting session along with admirable cultural insights, plus an activity page

Aim: multicultural education

Audience: preschool - college, any size class with enough helpers

Time: 10-15 minutes

Equipment: thermoses to fill with tea, small cups, paper towels, crayons

Scripture to Study: Genesis 18:1-8

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Leader's Instructions:

Pre-class Preparations:

1. Brew strong tea (decaffeinated if preferred). Combine three parts tea with one part milk. (Make one portion with "milk substitute" if any students are lactose intolerant.) Add sugar until it tastes too sweet! Stir in 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon liquid smoke flavor for each quart of finished tea. (Try Wright's Natural Hickory Seasoning or other brands. Strengths may vary. Add just enough so you detect a smoky flavor that's not overpowering.)
2. Copy workpages for your students and collect crayons.
3. Serve beef jerky, too, for a fuller snack. With no refrigeration or canning, nomadic herders make a staple of dried meat.

Class Time:

1. Divide the children into boys' and girls' groups and have them sit like proper desert-dwelling nomads. Girls sit on the floor (or ground) with legs together, straight out in front of them, toes pointed to the sky. Boys squat on their haunches, feet flat on the floor, arms extended in front with elbows resting on knees. (Those boys who can't keep their balance may sit cross-legged so as not to spill their tea!)
2. Pass out tea to all the boys first, in order from the eldest to the youngest, and then to the girls from eldest to youngest. (If grown men are present, serve them first as a sign of honor.)
3. On a map or globe point out East Africa and Kenya.
4. While everyone drinks, explain to them about their tea:

Many desert-dwelling nomads in East Africa drink tea. Imagine that! Out there herding camels and goats, but stopping for a 'spot of tea!' You see, years ago the British people grew huge tea plantations in Kenya and surrounding areas. In fact, even after Kenya became independent in 1963, they continued to grow some of the world's finest tea. While Americans usually drink iced tea, or hot tea with a little sugar or lemon, the British drink theirs with lots of cream and sugar.

So, naturally when the nomadic herders began drinking tea, they put in milk, too! Milk and meat form their main traditional diet. And sugar! Who can pass up a new treat like sugar? Do you taste a little smoky flavor in your tea? Does it remind you of sausage?

That's because the nomads store their milk in wooden gourds. They have no disinfectants, like bleach, to sterilize the milk gourds, and not much soap and water for washing things. But when milk gets old inside a gourd, you need to be able to clean it out, right? What clever idea do you think the nomadic herders came up with? What's another thing that can kill bacteria and sterilize things?

That's right...fire! Nomadic people take hot, burning coals from the fire. With split-wood tongs, they drop the coals inside the gourd, close the lid tightly, and shake and shake and shake! The inside of the gourd becomes very hot, all the bacteria die, and the next milk will go into a safe gourd. That's why their milk tastes smoky. Smoky and safe! Would you have ever thought of that? We can learn many amazing survival techniques for living in a harsh environment from different people around the world!

We can also learn hospitality from East African herders today. Though they have little, by American standards, still they give generously to guests. Look at Genesis 18:1-8. Nomadic herders in sub-Saharan Africa today welcome guests with as much excitement and hospitality as Abraham did long ago!

Additional Activities:

- Read some exciting adventure stories about children living in East Africa. *The Village Safari*, *The Hunting Safari*, and *The Canoeing Safari* by T. J. Matthews are available at www.wycliffe.org/Resources/Shop/Children.aspx/ or by calling Wycliffe's Village Store at 800-992-5433, ext. 3778.
- Take your children on a "virtual tour" of the International Museum of Cultures at www.internationalmuseumofcultures.org/home.htm/
- To get involved with a current Bible translation project contact The Seed Company. See their website at www.theseedcompany.org/
- Contact Wycliffe's prayer department to learn how you can pray long-term for a group until they receive a Bible in their own language. Call 1-800-WYCLIFFE or go to www.wycliffe.org/ and click on the **Pray** button at the top.

Notes:

If students are unfamiliar with gourds, show them the picture of a wooden gourd like this one on page four.

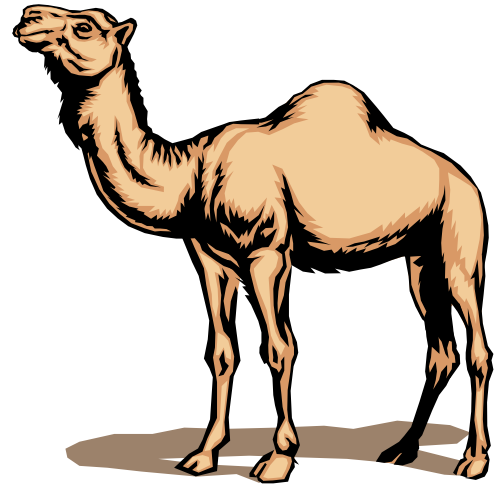


Draw a picture of these East African events you learned about

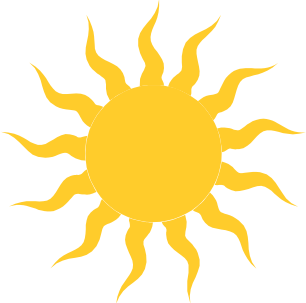
Cleaning the milk gourd:



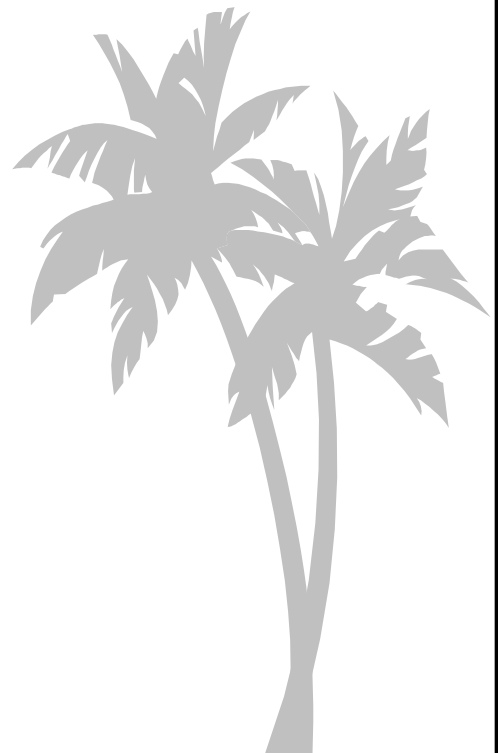
Walking away with a gourd of camel's milk:



Welcoming tired travelers to stop and rest:



Visitors sitting to drink tea with their hosts:



Notes:

