Tea Across Regions

Compare tea traditions and trace how they change.

7.C.5.1 "Compare cultural traits of major cultural regions and explain how culture can change over time through the process of cultural diffusion."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one tea practice in Japan and one in India, circle two groups that helped spread tea practices, and write 1 and 2 beside a way tea changed in each region.

A Drink That Travels

1. At a tea stall in India, a cook simmers black tea with milk, sugar, and spices. In Japan, a host may whisk powdered green tea with hot water for guests. These practices belong to South Asia and East Asia, two large cultural regions with many different communities. A cultural trait is a shared practice, such as preparing a drink for visitors. The drinks differ, yet both can make hospitality visible. To understand why tea appears in both regions, follow the movement of tea plants, people, and ideas across time.

2. Tea drinking began in China, in East Asia, centuries before it became common in Japan. Buddhist monks helped bring tea and ways of preparing it from China to Japan. Over time, Japanese tea hosts developed their own customs, including carefully serving matcha, a powdered green tea whisked with water. Guests may watch the host's movements and share a quiet moment. This example shows cultural diffusion, the spread of a cultural trait through contact. It also shows change: people in Japan did not simply copy every Chinese tea custom.

3. In South Asia, tea plants grew in parts of India before British rule. During the nineteenth century, British colonial rulers expanded tea growing there and promoted tea drinking. Tea became more available, and people in India developed many ways to serve it. One version, masala chai, combines black tea with spices, milk, and often sugar. A roadside vendor may pour cups for customers talking together, while a Japanese host may serve matcha in a quieter setting. These are examples, not rules for everyone in either region.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the ingredients in the two tea examples differ?

2. Compare the social settings described for tea in India and Japan. What do the examples have in common?

3. How does the passage show both cultural diffusion and change in Japan's tea practices?

4. How did British rule affect tea drinking in India, and how does masala chai show that a shared practice can change?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a tea seller from India opens a stall in Japan. In four or five sentences, describe a new tea drink that combines traits from both regions, and explain how it would show cultural diffusion and change.

ANSWER KEY

Tea Across Regions

GRADE 7 · 7.C.5.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one tea practice in Japan and one in India, circle two groups that helped spread tea practices, and write 1 and 2 beside a way tea changed in each region. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the ingredients in the two tea examples differ?	**The Indian example uses black tea with milk, sugar, and spices. The Japanese example uses powdered green tea whisked with hot water.**
2	Compare the social settings described for tea in India and Japan. What do the examples have in common?	**Customers may talk together at an Indian roadside stall, while guests may share a quiet moment with a Japanese host. Both are social ways to share tea.**
3	How does the passage show both cultural diffusion and change in Japan's tea practices?	**Buddhist monks helped bring tea and ways of preparing it from China to Japan. Japanese hosts later developed their own customs, including serving matcha.**
4	How did British rule affect tea drinking in India, and how does masala chai show that a shared practice can change?	**British colonial rulers expanded tea growing and promoted tea drinking, making tea more available. Masala chai shows one way people in India adapted tea by preparing it with spices, milk, and often sugar.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The seller makes a drink with matcha, milk, and spices. Matcha comes from the Japanese tea example, while milk and spices come from the Indian example. Customers at the new stall try the drink and share their opinions. As the seller and customers exchange ideas, tea practices spread and change to create something new.

Accept comparisons that identify the passage's specific examples without treating them as customs followed by everyone in either region. For Part 3, look for a trait from each region and a clear explanation of how contact leads to a changed practice.