

## Etiquette Around the World

**Directions** Is etiquette the same around the world? Read the information that follows. Then complete the Discovery activity.

Food customs and etiquette vary in many countries around the world. Sometimes what is considered proper etiquette in one country would be an insult to the people who live in another location. Here are some examples that you might find interesting:

- ❑ **Japan** In Japan, rice and soup are eaten at all three meals. Chopsticks are used for the rice. You will not need a soup spoon, however because Japanese people drink soup from the bowl as though it were a cup.
- ❑ **Kenya** In Kenya, the left hand is never used by itself to pass food. Diners use the right hand or both hands. In some tribes, the men are served first.
- ❑ **Puerto Rico** Meals in Puerto Rico are very relaxed. Both hands remain above the dining table when eating. After eating, it is customary for guests to sit and relax at the table and enjoy the conversation.
- ❑ **India** When invited to someone's home in India for a meal, it is customary to bring a gift to the host family—sweets, flowers, and fruit are considered acceptable. Diners usually sit on the floor and eat without using flatware. A piece of bread is used to scoop up sauces. In contrast to Puerto Rico, conversation occurs before the meal is served, and guests are expected to leave when the meal is finished.
- ❑ **Europe** In most of Europe, the *continental* style of eating is followed. The fork is traditionally held in the left hand and the knife in the right. Small bites of food are cut off as you eat them. It is considered improper to cut all of your food into small pieces and then eat it. This is also considered improper in the United States.
- ❑ **Bangladesh** In Bangladesh, food is usually eaten with the hands, with the exception of sweets. Sweets are eaten with spoons. Shu'ra is a special sauce served with meals. It is never allowed to touch the hands above the knuckles when eating. For special occasions, such as weddings, men and women eat separately. For regular daily meals, however, they eat together.

### Discovery

**Foreign Exchange Student** Assume you are going to be a foreign exchange student. Choose a host country. Use classroom and library resources or the Internet to research customs, especially those related to foods and meals. Write a report that explains what would be helpful for you to know.

## Talking Games for the Dinner Table

**Directions** Preparing a tasty meal and setting a beautiful table are two of the ingredients for a successful dinner. However, without the third ingredient—conversation—the evening may fall flat. If your family or guests can not seem to think of anything to talk about, one way to spark conversation is to try a talking game. Below are descriptions of a few games that can be played at the table with no equipment. Try out one or more of these games with your family or a group of friends.

- ❑ **Twenty Questions** This game is also known as “Animal, Vegetable, or Mineral.” The basic idea is simple. One person thinks of an object, and the other players guess what it is. The item may be general (a dog) or specific (the family dog). The person thinking of the object gives the other players a hint by telling them whether it is of animal, vegetable (plant), or mineral origin. Some items may fit more than one category. For example, if the item is a wood-and-glass table, you could classify it as vegetable and mineral. The other players then take turns asking yes-or-no questions about the item. The object of these questions is to narrow down the possibilities. Players may ask questions about such facts as the object’s size, its composition, and where it might be found. Their goal is to figure out what the item is without asking more than 20 questions.
- ❑ **Initials** This is also a guessing game, similar to Twenty Questions. One person thinks of a famous person—someone whose name would be familiar to everyone at the table. For example, if the answer were “George Washington,” then the person would say, “I’m thinking of someone whose initials are G.W.” The other players must ask yes-or-no questions to try and figure out who the person is. They can narrow the possibilities down by asking questions about when the person lived, his or her country of origin, and what he or she is best known for.
- ❑ **Categories** To play this game, start by thinking of a category, such as “kinds of fish.” Then players take turns trying to think of something in this category for each letter of the alphabet. For the category “kinds of fish,” the first player might say “angelfish,” the second “bass,” the third “catfish,” and so on.

### Discovery

**Your Own Game** Create a game that could be played at the dinner table with family or friends. Keep in mind that it must be simple and focus on talking. Try out the game at home and refine it if needed. Report on the game’s success.