

THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

Cooking Matters volunteers and staff often come from different communities and social backgrounds than our class participants. Sometimes because of these differences, miscommunications can occur in class. The chart below contains examples of statements or questions that were said during a Cooking Matters class.

INSTRUCTIONS

Take a few minutes to reflect on what was said and why it wasn't appropriate.

WHAT WAS SAID	WHY IT WASN'T APPROPRIATE
How many children do you have? Wow! How old are you?	
What is your favorite Christmas food?	
French fries aren't a good food choice.	
I would never feed my children fast food.	
Have you ever used the pre-made pizza dough from Whole Foods?	
I only buy organic produce.	
This would taste really good with rum in it.	
People should make their own bread. It's so much cheaper and better for you.	
You must know how to make tofu taste good (directed at an Asian person).	

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WHAT WAS SAID	WHY IT WASN'T APPROPRIATE
How many children do you have? Wow! How old are you?	This implies a judgment about what an appropriate age is to be having children.
What is your favorite Christmas food?	This could be alienating for someone who does not celebrate Christmas.
French fries aren't a good food choice.	There is no such thing as a bad food! Everything is ok in moderation, and even foods we consider unhealthy can be part of a healthy diet, as long as they are not overused.
I would never feed my children fast food.	This statement criticizes someone's choices by comparing it to someone else's beliefs and choices.
Have you ever used the pre-made pizza dough from Whole Foods?	These stores are typically located in wealthier neighborhoods making them inaccessible to many participants because of cost
I only buy organic produce.	Organic food is not available at all stores, and is more often available at higher-priced stores that are more often located in wealthier neighborhoods.
This would taste really good with rum in it.	Some cultures do not allow alcohol, so this discussion can be alienating or offensive. Participants may be struggling with issues of alcohol abuse, which can make the topic difficult. Even if there is no one to whom it is offensive, talking about alcohol is off-topic and takes away from the purpose of the class.
People should make their own bread. It's so much cheaper and better for you.	This assumes someone has the time and resources to make their own bread and passes judgment on those who don't make that choice.
You must know how to make tofu taste good (directed at an Asian person).	This is an assumption about a participant based on their race or ethnicity.