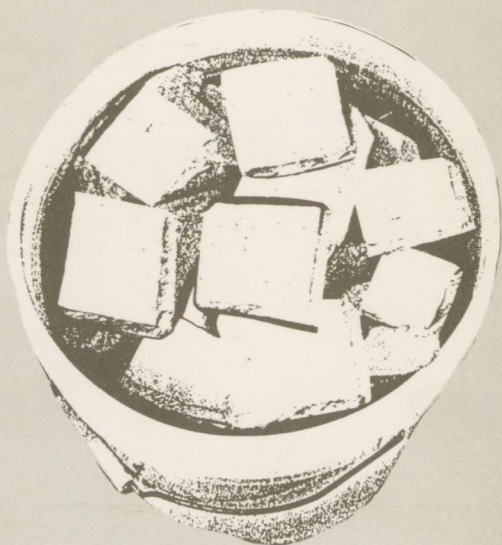
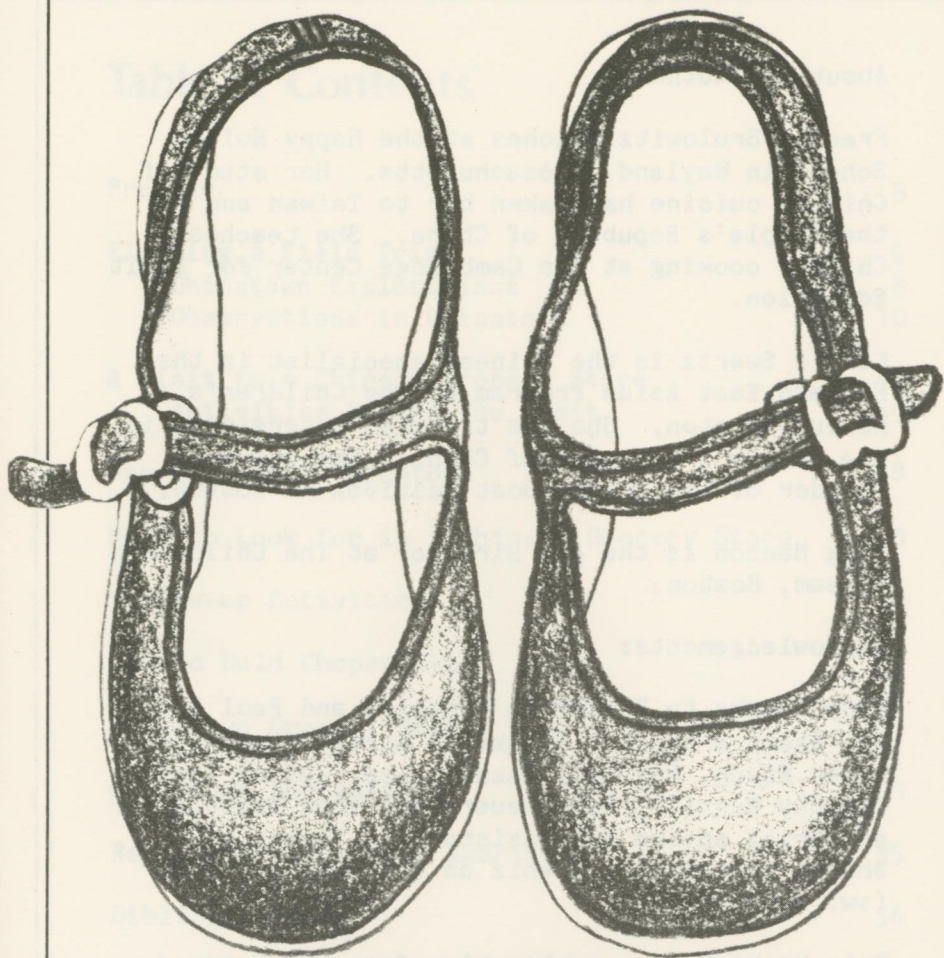


# A VISIT TO CHINATOWN





# A VISIT TO CHINATOWN

Frances Srulowitz and Leslie Swartz  
Illustrations by Sing Hanson  
The Children's Museum, Boston, 1985

### About the Authors:

Frances Srulowitz teaches at the Happy Hollow School in Wayland, Massachusetts. Her study of Chinese cuisine has taken her to Taiwan and to the People's Republic of China. She teaches Chinese cooking at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education.

Leslie Swartz is the Chinese specialist in the Harvard East Asian Program at The Children's Museum, Boston. She has traveled extensively in the People's Republic of China. She was a founder of The Dragon Boat Festival in Boston.

Sing Hanson is the Art Director at The Children's Museum, Boston.

### Acknowledgements:

Many thanks to Priscilla Gonzales and Paul Sun for their artwork. Thanks to Marcia Iwasaki, Peter Kiang, Fay Lee, Suzanne Lee, Julian Low, Dorothy Merrill, Pat Steuert and Anne Tribble for editorial advice and assistance. Thanks to Sharon Saperstein, a whiz on the word processor (aw, shucks--ss).

This booklet is a publication from the Harvard East Asian Program at The Children's Museum, Boston. Funding for this and other educational outreach programs comes from The Children's Museum, Boston, and the Harvard University Language and Area Center for East Asian Studies.

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300 Congress Street

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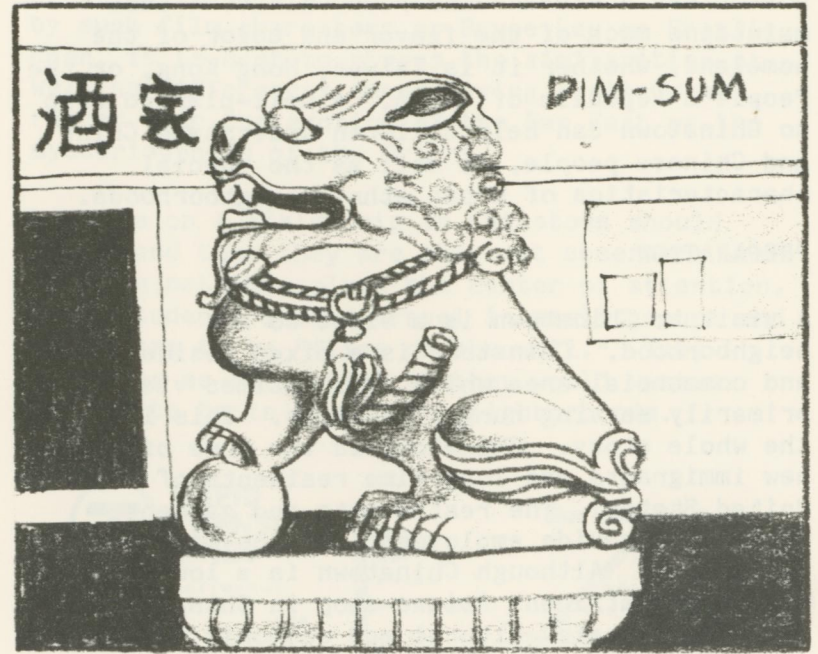


(617)426-6500 voice (617)426-6501 TTY-TDD

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## Preface



This pamphlet will guide you on a visit to Boston's Chinatown and a Chinese grocery store. Although primarily aimed at adults taking children, we think it will be useful to anyone interested in Chinese culture and food. The occasion for writing this pamphlet is the opening of The Children's Museum exhibit, "A Market in China." Chinatown and The Children's Museum are neighbors. We invite you to visit the exhibit, Chinatown and a Chinese grocery store, and to compare these experiences with visits to other neighborhoods. We think you will learn much about yourselves, about China and about the Chinese in America.

## Planning a Field Trip

Boston has a vibrant and rich Chinatown that maintains much of the flavor and color of the homeland, whether it is Taiwan, Hong Kong, or the People's Republic of China. A well-planned trip to Chinatown can help children understand China and Chinese people, as well as the special characteristics of urban ethnic neighborhoods.

### PREPARATION

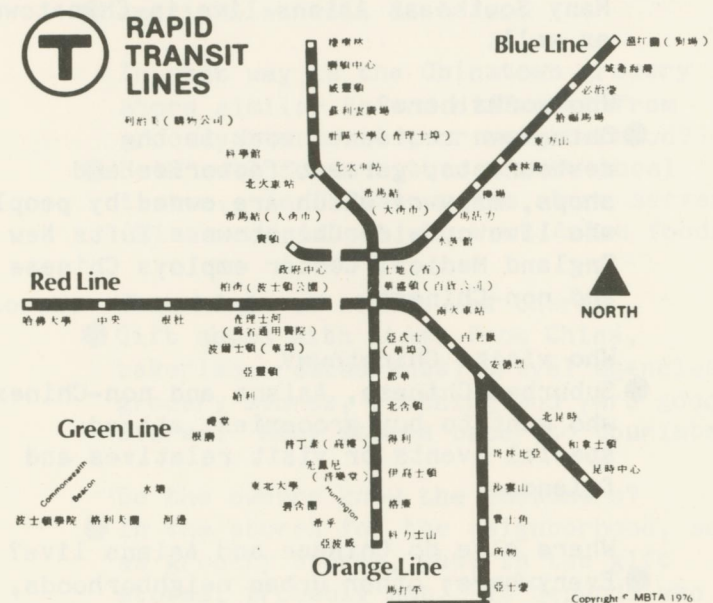
A visit to Chinatown is a visit to a neighborhood. Chinatown is a mixed residential and commercial area which is sometimes viewed as primarily serving hungry tourists. This is not the whole story. Chinatown is the home of both new immigrants and long-time residents of the United States. The restaurants and garment factories provide employment for the majority of the adults. Although Chinatown is a low-income area, more affluent Asians shop in Chinatown and view it as their cultural and economic nexus.

To enter Chinatown is to enter an Americanized Chinese and Asian world. Most of the people in Chinatown are Chinese or Southeast Asians. Of the hundreds of Chinese dialects, most people speak either Toishanese, Cantonese or Mandarin. With the recent influx of Southeast Asians, the Vietnamese, Hmong, Lao, Khmer and Thai languages are used as well.

Chinatown is a neighborhood that is similar to and different from other urban neighborhoods. Just as the North End of Boston captures the sense of Italy, Chinatown captures the sense of China. We may feel like we are in a "foreign"

country when we visit ethnic neighborhoods. This feeling is sometimes exaggerated in Chinatown because of media images of Asians and Asia. Since children's preconceptions may be influenced by such film characters as Bruce Lee or Charlie Chan, it is best to stress the similarities as well as differences among living environments, rather than the exotica of the Far East or the mysteriousness of the Orient.

Students on a field trip in Chinatown should understand that they are the best observers when they are not themselves the center of attention. Thus, students should travel in small groups and should try to be "flies on the wall." They should be as respectful as they would want a visitor to be in their own neighborhoods.



## Chinatown Explorations

(For children 8-12 years old)

The questions provided below will serve to guide students in their exploration of Chinatown and should be used with the section about the Chinese grocery store.

The best way to explore a new place is to keep your eyes and ears open. Observe all things: people, sounds, signs, foods and stores. As you are exploring, try to be like a fly on the wall. If you are not obviously watching, you will see more.

People: Who lives in Chinatown?

- Mostly Chinese people, mostly new immigrants, mostly low-income people. Many Southeast Asians live in Chinatown as well.

Who works here?

- Chinatown residents work in the restaurants, garment factories and shops, many of which are owned by people who live outside Chinatown. Tufts New England Medical Center employs Chinese and non-Chinese.

Who visits Chinatown?

- Suburban Chinese, Asians and non-Chinese who want to buy groceries, attend special events or visit relatives and friends.

Where else do Chinese and Asians live?

- Everywhere; other urban neighborhoods, particularly Allston-Brighton, as well as suburban communities, such as Lexington.

How are people dressed?

- Both in "typical American" and in Chinese-style clothing.

Sounds: Is it noisy?

- You bet; it is a crowded, commercial and residential district wedged between major thoroughfares.

Signs: Observe the street signs, store signs, posters, menus. In how many different languages are they written?

- Chinese is the main language, but some shops have signs in Khmer and Vietnamese as well.

Foods: What kinds of foods are sold in the grocery stores?

- American as well as Asian.

In what way is the Chinatown grocery store similar to and different from grocery stores in your neighborhood?

- Both sell food, both cater to local tastes. In Chinatown the store serves Asians and people who want Asian foods.

Stores: What kinds of stores are there?

- Gift shops with items from China, bakeries, restaurants, travel agencies, grocery stores, clothing and yard goods stores. Many stores cater to tourists.

Do the owners know the customers?

- In the stores for the neighborhood, such as grocery stores, yes; in the gift stores, probably not. It depends who the store serves primarily.

## Observations in Chinatown

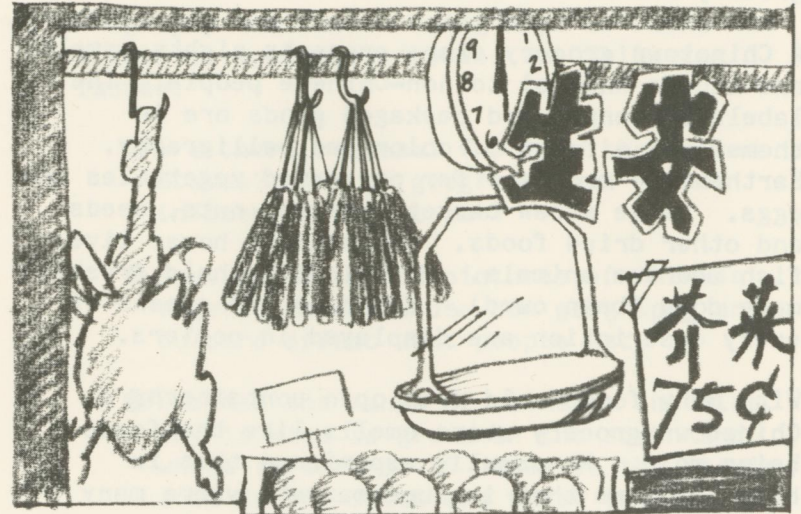
(For young people 12 years old and up)

The best way to observe a community is by being inconspicuous. Walk around Chinatown in small groups--no more than three to a group. Try to find answers to the questions below.

1. Find the new Quincy School. What activities are housed in this building?
  - The new Quincy School is at 885 Washington Street, on the edge of Chinatown. The building contains the South Cove Health Center, the Quincy Community School and the Quincy School. There are English language lessons for people of all ages, afterschool activities and recreation facilities including a gym and playgrounds on the roof. This is a real community center.
2. Find the old Quincy School. What is the building used for now?
  - The old Quincy School on Tyler Street has been rehabilitated and now houses the Chinese Language School. Many children go there after regular school so they will remember or learn how to read, write and speak Chinese.
3. Find the boundaries of Chinatown. Can Chinatown expand?
  - The Massachusetts Turnpike, the Theatre District, the Combat Zone and Tufts New England Medical Center are all encroaching on Chinatown. Chinatown is shrinking, not expanding. Some of the areas around Chinatown are rather unsavory.

4. Go into a grocery store. Use the description of the grocery store below to guide you.
5. Find some traditional medicines. Describe a few kinds.
  - Many grocery stores have sections devoted to traditional medicines. Some are sold in colorful packages. Others are sold from big jars or drawers. Research is showing that many traditional remedies are as good as or better than modern drugs.
6. How can you tell that Chinatown is a mixed residential and commercial neighborhood?
  - Everyone knows about commercial Chinatown. To find residential Chinatown, look for housing complexes and look at the stories above the stores and restaurants.
7. List all the ways you know you are in Chinatown.
  - The people are Asian and mostly Chinese. The street and shop signs are in Chinese. People are speaking many dialects of Chinese. Decorations such as the Chinatown Gateway and the pagoda roof on the public telephone booths, are supposed to be Chinese style. These decorations are geared to the tourists rather than to the residents.
8. How do you feel walking around in Chinatown?
  - The students may feel like outsiders. Students might try to think how Asians feel in non-Asian environments.

## A Visit to a Chinese Grocery Store



All around the world people go shopping for their daily necessities. We go to supermarkets, department stores, specialty shops, corner stores, flea markets, farmers' markets and roadside stands to buy what we need (and sometimes even what we don't need). In China, people can buy their fruits and vegetables from a farmer who carries his produce in from the countryside each morning and they can buy their clothes and household appliances in huge department stores selling to many thousands of people a day. Grocery stores in Chinatown carry foods and equipment needed for cooking Chinese food. Stocked with the vegetables, meats, spices, herbs, rice, noodles, and drinks most popular among Chinese people, Chinatown grocery stores are a blend of Chinese and American tastes and needs.

9. What are people doing?

- People are shopping, eating, walking, talking with friends, working and so forth. Groups of men may be hanging around on street corners. In all likelihood, they are waiting to be picked up to go to a suburban Chinese restaurant where they work.

10. What flags do you see?

- The flag of the Republic of China is sometimes flying from the Merchant's Building and from the Kuomintang Headquarters on Hudson Street. Traditional Chinatown institutions tend to lean more toward Taiwan than toward the People's Republic of China. Students should know what the flags look like before they go.

11. List as many languages as you can find and indicate where you saw the written language used.

- Show the students what written Khmer and Vietnamese look like. They will see signs in these languages in the grocery stores. Many Southeast Asians have immigrated to the US in recent years.

12. How is Chinatown similar to and different from other city neighborhoods?

- Ethnic neighborhoods offer people the comfort of a common language, a source of special foods, a place for cultural events, often a place to work even if they do not know English. Chinatown and the North End are both ethnic neighborhoods, yet they are almost as different as Italy and China.

Chinatown is a small, densely-packed neighborhood. Like most shops in Chinatown, the grocery stores are small and crowded.

A Chinatown grocery store presents sights, smells and sounds unusual to non-Chinese people. The labels on canned and packaged goods are in themselves a feast of color and calligraphy. Earthenware crocks offer preserved vegetables and eggs. Large straw baskets present nuts, seeds and other dried foods. Glass tanks house live fish and sea animals. Plastic tubs hold freshly made dofu (bean curd). Cabbages and greens of every description are displayed in coolers.

With many foods sold from open containers, a Chinatown grocery store smells like the foods being sold. We usually experience this in bakeries more than in supermarkets where many foods are wrapped in plastic.

The sounds of the grocery store are a mix of Chinese dialects, other Southeast Asian languages and English. Chinese is tonal (the voice rises and falls with each syllable) which gives it a sing-song quality. There is often considerable discussion in the grocery store over the quality and price of the goods. Everyone wants to buy the freshest, highest quality food at the lowest price. Also, since Chinatown is a relatively small neighborhood, people often know one another and catch up with each other while marketing.

The more children and adults know about the Chinatown grocery store, the more they will appreciate what they are experiencing. The activities below suggest ways to prepare a class.

## Activities Before You Visit

1. Geography and food: Using maps of China and a Chinese cookbook, discuss the following issues.
  - Are there regional foods in the United States? How do geography and taste influence what we eat?
  - Show the children pictures of Chinese vegetables. Discuss how geography and culture affect what people eat.
  - Discuss the range of climates in China. Why is rice grown in the south and wheat in the north? Rice is the staple food in the south and wheat in the north. Discuss the forms in which you can eat rice and wheat.
  - Tea is grown mostly in the central coastal region. Discuss the introduction of tea to Europe and the popularity of tea in China.
  - China has very little arable land and a very large population. Beef is not eaten much in China. Why may this be?
  - China has many climates. Rice requires a warm, moist climate whereas wheat can endure cooler, drier weather. Rice and wheat can be used to make noodles, dumpling skins and porridges. The

- Chinese drink tea like we drink coffee - often. Beef is not eaten much because there is little grazing land and cattle are too expensive to raise. There is no religious prohibition against eating beef.

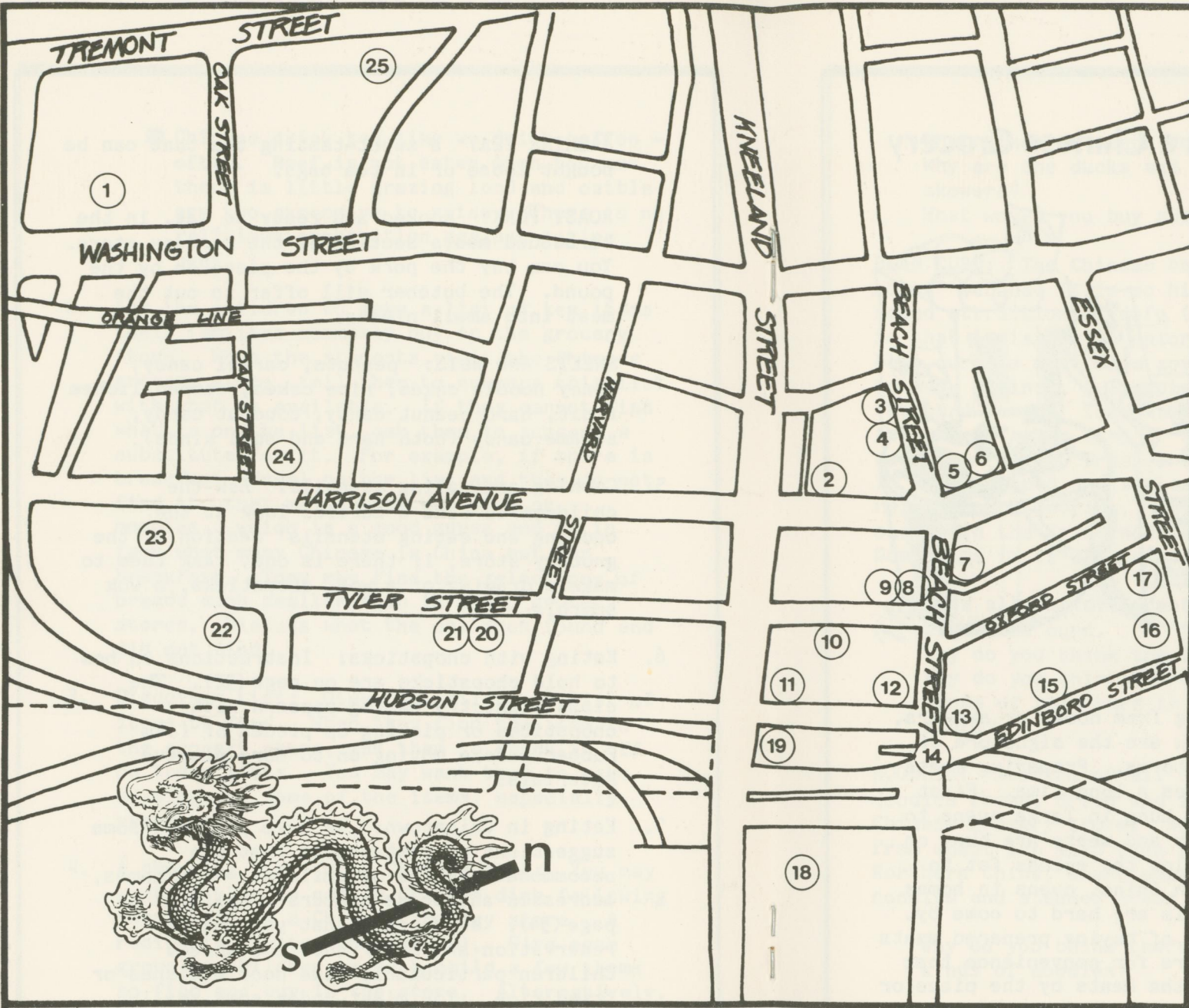
2. Ask the children to make a list of ten items their families commonly buy in the grocery store. When the students visit the Chinese grocery store, tell them to compare this list with what is available. If they cannot find what is on the list, ask them to suggest a substitute for it. For example, if there is breakfast cereal on the list and they do not find it, they may substitute rice or noodles...which is a good guess and is in fact what many Chinese in China eat for breakfast. They may find the selections of breads much smaller than in their grocery stores. Discuss what the children found and did not find.
3. Discovery List: Give the children a list of items to find. When they find the item in the grocery store, ask them to check it off on their lists. You may want them to make drawings of some of the items, especially vegetables.
4. A shopping list for a Chinese dish: You may want to plan to cook a Chinese dish following your visit to a Chinese grocery store. A recipe is printed on page(30). Give each group of children or each child a few items to find and buy in the store. Alternatively, you might buy the following:

JASMINE TEA: a sweet-tasting tea that can be bought loose or in tea bags.

ROAST PORK: cooked and ready to eat, in the barbecued meats section of the grocery store. You can buy the pork by the piece or by the pound. The butcher will offer to cut the meat into small pieces.

SWEETS AND NUTS: peanuts, carmel candy, honey noodle cakes, rice cakes, canned lichee fruit, hard peanut candy, coconut candy, sesame candy (both hard and soft kinds).

5. Cooking and eating utensils: Ask the children to take a careful look at the cooking and eating utensils' section of the grocery store, if there is one. Ask them to make a drawing of a wok, chopsticks, a wok spatula.
6. Eating with chopsticks: Instructions on how to hold chopsticks are on page(32). The class might try eating popcorn with chopsticks or picking up pieces of foam rubber before moving on to more elusive materials.
7. Eating in Chinatown: We have provided some suggestions of restaurants that can accommodate groups of children. The names, addresses and phone numbers are listed on page(34). We suggest that you make a reservation and order the food ahead. Children particularly like noodle dishes or fried rice. You might order some smaller dishes for the children to sample.



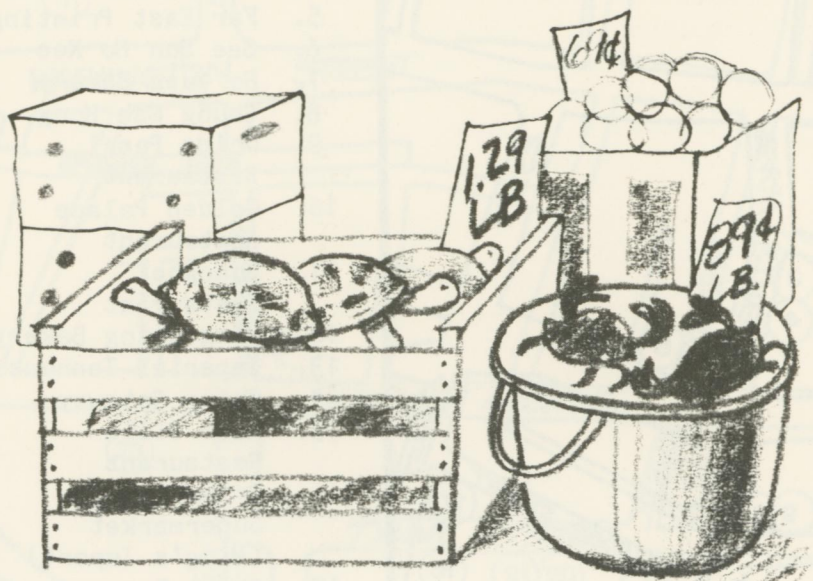
KEY TO MAP

1. Quincy School
2. Wing Fung Lin
3. Viet-Hoa Market
4. Asia Supermarket
5. Far East Printing
6. See Sun Ho Kee
7. Ho Yuen Bakery
8. Chung Wah Hong
9. China Pearl Restaurant
10. Golden Palace Restaurant
11. Shanghai Restaurant
12. Hing Hsing Bakery
13. Imperial Teahouse
14. China Gateway
15. Moon Villa Restaurant
16. Oriental Supermarket (Ming's Import)
17. Cheng-Kwong Seafood Market
18. Lin Num Sprout Company
19. Chinese Merchant's Association
20. South Cove YMCA
21. Old Quincy School
22. Acorn Day Care
23. Tai Tung Village
24. Chinatown YES
25. Chinese Culture Institute

BOSTON'S CHINATOWN

唐人街

## What to look for in a Chinese Grocery



**BARBECUED MEATS:** Hanging from hooks or skewers, barbecued ducks, and pork are the signature of many Chinatown grocery stores. Preparing meats and poultry this way takes a long time. First they are marinated, then hung in large ovens to cook. The cooked poultry and meats are hung on hooks in the store to allow the excess fat to continue to drip off. In China, ovens in homes are rare and cooking fuels are hard to come by. In America the tradition of buying prepared meats and poultry continues more for convenience than necessity. You can buy the meats by the piece or the pound, the poultry by the whole or the half. You can also specify what cut of the meat you prefer--fatty or lean. The butcher may offer to cut the meat up into small pieces.

What kinds of meats do you see hanging?  
Why are the ducks and chickens hanging on skewers?  
What would you buy and why?

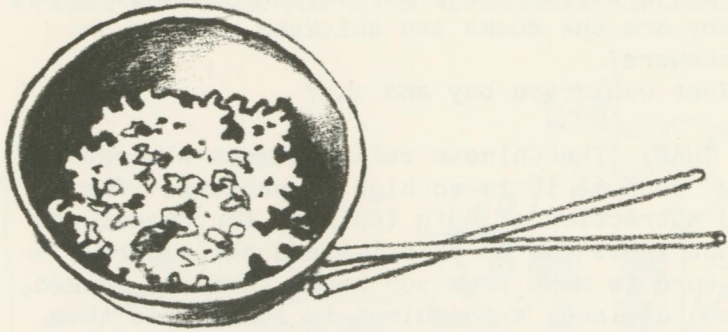
**BEAN CURD:** The Chinese call it "meat without bones" because it is so high in protein. The added attraction of dofu (Chinese for bean curd) is that it is low in calories and cholesterol. Bean curd is made from soy beans that are soaked, boiled, drained, a coagulant is added, and then the curd forms. The Chinese and many other Asians eat it as a major source of protein. It can be purchased fresh from a big plastic tub or in a prewrapped small plastic box found in the refrigerated section. It can be bought as dried sheets in the dried noodles section of the store. Sometimes it is spiced or fermented.

Draw all the different forms in which you find bean curd.

Why do you think the Chinese dry bean curd?  
Why do you think there are so many different kinds of bean curd in the Chinese grocery store?

**NOODLES:** Noodles of all shapes and sizes, noodles fresh, dried and frozen are found in a Chinese grocery store. Noodles are made not only from wheat but also from rice and mung beans. In Northern China, where wheat is the staple food, noodles and steamed bread are eaten daily.

Why do you think there are so many different kinds of noodles?



**RICE:** Rice is the major staple food in China and especially in the south it is eaten at all meals. South China's warm, tropical climate is perfect for growing two and even three rice crops a year. There are three types of rice used in China and available in the grocery store. The long grain white rice is boiled. For breakfast, it is cooked with a lot of water and eaten like a hot cereal. It is sold in bags ranging in size from 5 to 100 pounds. Since it lasts a long time and is eaten regularly, people prefer to buy it in large quantities. Short grain white rice is also sold in Chinese markets, although it tends to be more popular among Japanese. The third form of rice is short grain sticky or glutinous rice. It is sweet and is used in stuffings and as a dessert with fruits. You will note that there is little if any brown rice available. The Chinese traditionally prefer white rice, and the brown rice, considered inferior, used to be eaten by less important members of the family.

Why are some kinds of rice sold in large amounts?

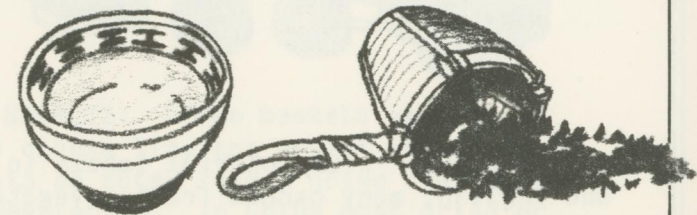
Why are the rice and noodle sections of the grocery store so much larger than the bakery and bread section?

**SWEETS AND SEEDS:** A wide assortment of cookies, cakes, candies, preserved fruits, and dried seeds are available in the Chinese grocery store. Melon seeds and pumpkin seeds are popular snack foods. Sometimes they are spicy and sometimes salty. Fruits are preserved with sugar or salt. You will find salted plums, sugared pineapple, orange, and ginger. Although a variety of candies and cookies are sold in the grocery store, Chinese often think of children and not adults as eating sweets.

How many different kinds of dried seeds do you find?

What kinds of preserved fruits are sold?

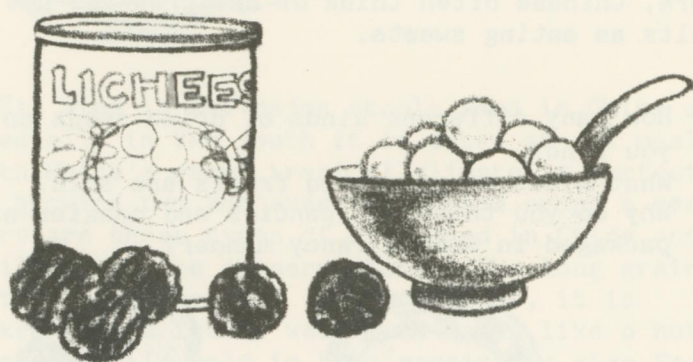
Why do you think the candies and cookies are packaged in such a fancy manner?



**TEA:** Tea is the favorite drink in China, and several shelves in the store are devoted to the many varieties of tea. The three kinds of Chinese tea are green, oolong, and black (we call it black; in Chinese it is called red). Green tea is unfermented, and lightly baked in the drying process. It has a delicate flavor and color. Jasmine and chrysanthemum are green teas. Oolong teas are semifermented and have a slightly smokey taste. Black teas are fermented and have a pungent taste. The tea most commonly served in Chinese restaurants in America and the tea bags we most often purchase are black teas. The Chinese drink tea with neither sugar nor lemon

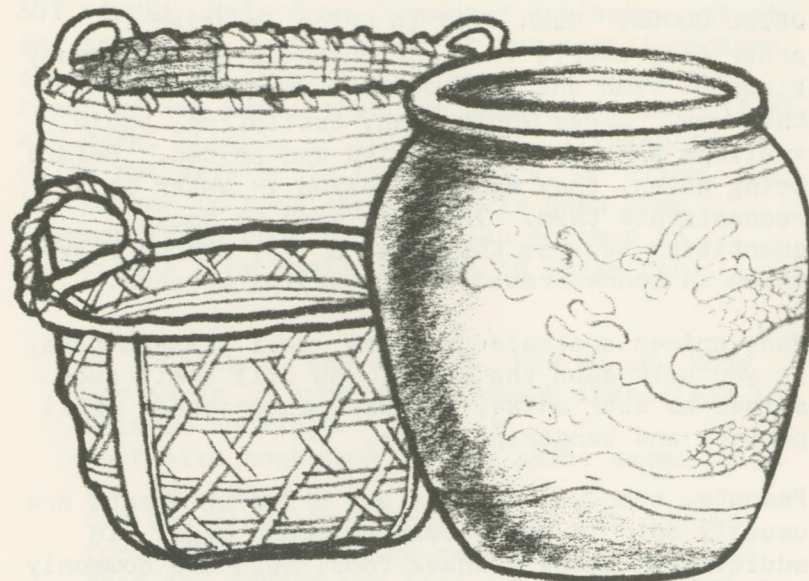
nor milk added. The price of tea varies considerably, and the finest teas or those packaged in the fancy tins make good gifts.

How many different kinds of tea can you find? What do the pictures on the tea packages show? Why are there so many kinds of tea available?



**CANNED GOODS:** With colorful labels in Chinese and English, many canned fruits, vegetables and condiments are sold in a Chinese grocery store. Canning is a good way to preserve food because it allows people to enjoy foods during the entire year rather than just when they are in season. Bamboo shoots, water chestnuts, pickled cabbage, baby corn ears and straw mushrooms are just a few of the many Chinese vegetables that are canned. Loquats and kumquats are two of the tropical fruits which can be purchased.

Why are there so many canned fruits and vegetables?  
Name five fruits and or vegetables you have never seen before.



**CROCKS AND BASKETS:** Large baskets and earthenware crocks line the aisles containing such products as nuts, seeds, dried seafood and preserved vegetables. In China most dried or preserved foods are sold this way. You are apt to notice the black duck eggs, called "thousand-year-old eggs." The duck eggs are coated with a claylike mixture of lime, ashes, and salt and then buried for about one hundred days. The lime cooks the eggs. These preserved eggs are usually eaten cold for breakfast or as an hors d'oeuvres.

Which kinds of items are in the baskets?  
Why do you think people might prefer to buy food loose rather than prepackaged?  
Why do you think the Chinese preserve vegetables?

**DRIED GOODS:** Much food in China is dried in order to preserve it. For hundreds of years many kinds of fish and seafood have been preserved in this way. Large whole fish, cuttlefish, squid, scallops and shrimp are dried and salted. Before being eaten, they must be soaked in water to reconstitute them. They are used in small quantities because they have a very strong flavor which is concentrated by the drying process.

Many spices are sold dried in small plastic bags. As you walk down the aisle, you will smell such spices as star anise, Sichuan peppercorns, chili peppers and tangerine peels.

Peanuts, cashews, almonds and dried chestnuts are usually sold in half pound or pound bags. In addition to being a snack food, nuts are commonly used in Chinese cooking as a source of protein.

Why do you think dried fish is being sold in the grocery store?

List 5 different kinds of dried food being sold.

Which spice smelled the best to you?

Why do you think so many different kinds of nuts are being sold?



**SOY SAUCE:** Made from fermented soy beans, wheat and salt, soy sauce is one of the most important seasonings in Chinese cooking. There are two types of soy sauce that are commonly used: light and dark. Light, or thin, soy is lighter in color but saltier in taste. Dark, or black, soy is thicker in consistency and is used most frequently in cooking. Soy sauce comes in everything from small bottles to large cans.

By looking at the shelves, how do you know soy sauce is such an important ingredient in Chinese cooking?

What size container of soy sauce seems to be the most popular?

Can you find other products in the canned food section that are made with soy beans?

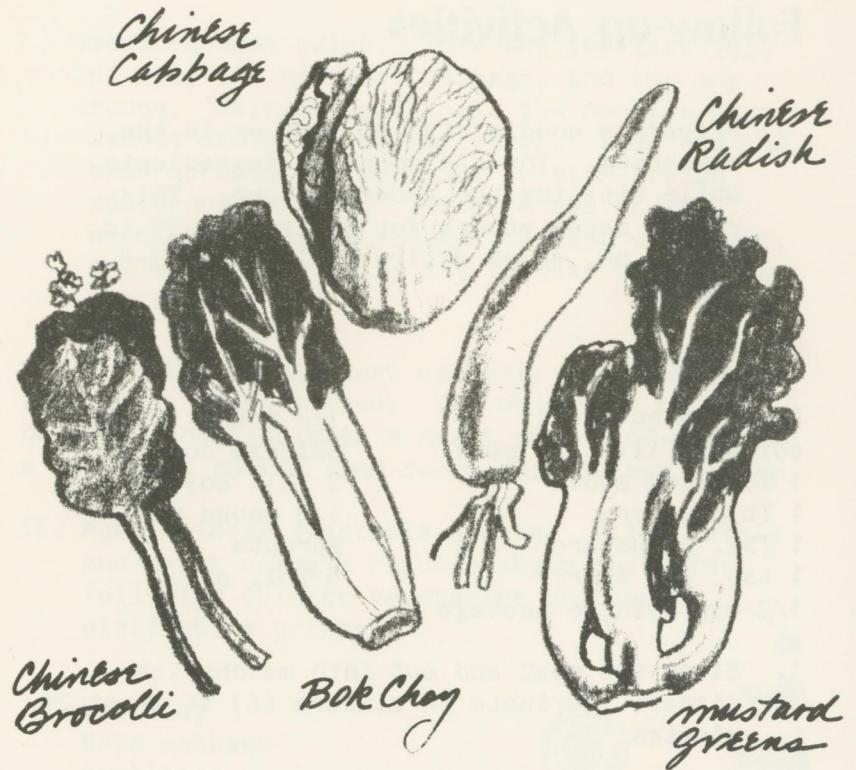
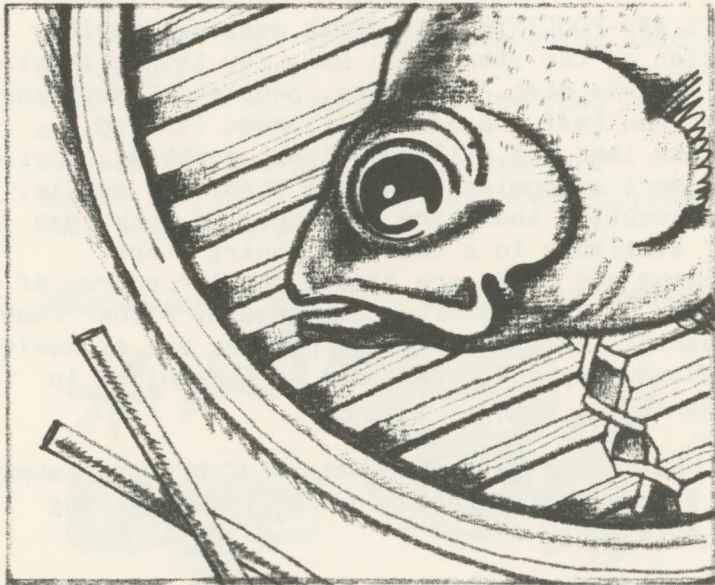
Read the labels and find out what countries make soy sauce.

**MEATS AND POULTRY:** The fresh meat and poultry section of the store tell us a few things about the Chinese diet. In China, people eat much more pork than beef. Because pigs need limited grazing land and will eat almost anything, it is much more economical to raise them than cattle. Consequently, there are more cuts of pork than beef available in a Chinese grocery store. Chickens and ducks are also a popular source of protein. They are often sold whole, rather than in parts. Because meat and poultry are expensive in China they use every part of the animal in cooking.

What seems to be the main kind of meat eaten? Name the different kinds of poultry being sold.

**SEAFOOD:** Large quantities of seafood are sold in the Chinatown grocery store. Boston is a seaport and has lots of fish. Most Boston Chinese are Cantonese who love seafood because their native province is near the coast. The fish are sold whole rather than filleted because the Chinese feel they retain the flavor better. The man at the counter weighs, scales, and guts the fish you personally pick out. Shrimp, squid, scallops, and different kinds of clams can also be purchased. Some stores have tanks for live fish, lobsters, crabs and turtles. The fresher the fish the better it will taste. Dried seafood is often eaten when fresh seafood is not available.

Why do you think the fish is sold whole rather than cut up?  
 What kinds of fish and seafood are there?  
 Why is the grocery store selling live fish?



**VEGETABLES:** Vegetables play an important role in the Chinese diet. In China, a meal may very well consist entirely of vegetables with rice or noodles. In the grocery store there will be many familiar as well as unfamiliar vegetables displayed. Eggplant, peppers, snow peas and celery will be found along with an assortment of Chinese cabbages and squashes.

Name five different vegetables for sale.  
 Draw pictures of the vegetables you have never seen before.

Why do you think there are so many different kinds of vegetables for sale?

## Follow-up Activities

- I. Prepare a noodle dish at home or in the classroom. You can purchase ingredients while visiting the grocery store. This recipe makes enough for a class of 25 to sample or, as an entire meal, feeds 3-4 people.

### LO MEIN

1/2-1 pound beef, chicken fillet or pork	1/2 pound fresh Chinese noodles
1 Tbl. soy sauce	2 Tbl. soy sauce
1 Tbl. water	1/3 pound bean sprouts
1 Tbl. cornstarch	6 Tbl. oil
1 tsp. dry sherry	

} A  
1/2 cup Chinese cabbage

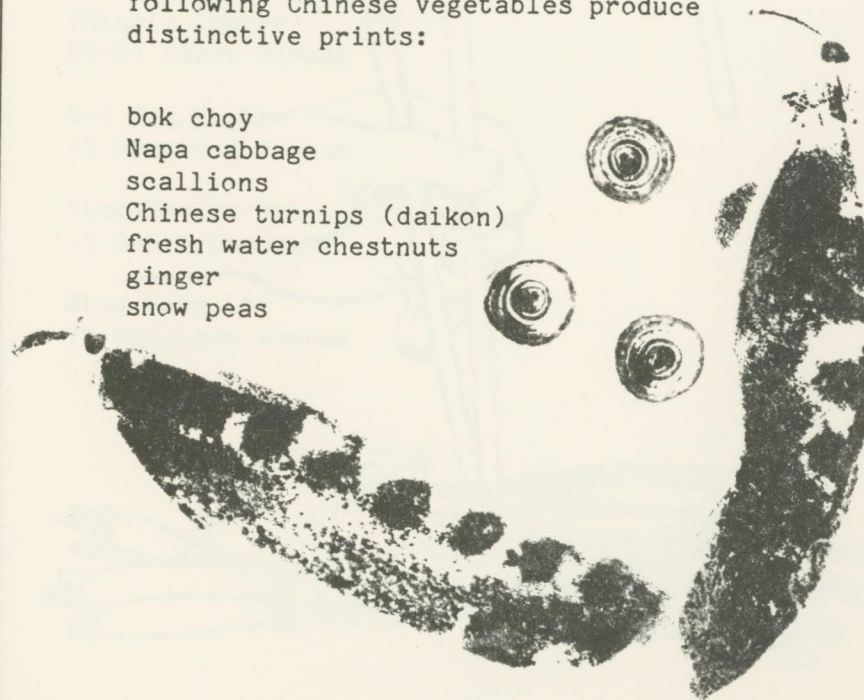
1. Slice the meat and cut into matchstick pieces. Marinate in mixture (A) at least 20 minutes.
2. Rinse the bean sprouts and drain well. Cut the cabbage on the diagonal into matchstick pieces.
3. Drop the noodles (half of the bag) into 2 quarts of boiling water and cook 3-5 minutes, or until tender. Drain and rinse under cold water. Add 1 Tbl. of oil to the noodles to keep them from sticking together.
4. Heat a large frying pan with 2 Tbl. of the oil. When hot add the cabbage and stir-fry\* until almost done. Remove from pan. Add 2 more Tbl. of oil. Swirl a few times around the pan and add the meat; stir-fry until the

meat changes color. Then add the last Tbl. of oil, the noodles, cabbage, and the soy sauce. Stir-fry until all the noodles have become stained a darker color. Then add the bean sprouts and continue to stir-fry an additional minute. Taste to see if the noodles are salty enough. Adjust with salt, not soy sauce, so as not to make the noodles too dark.

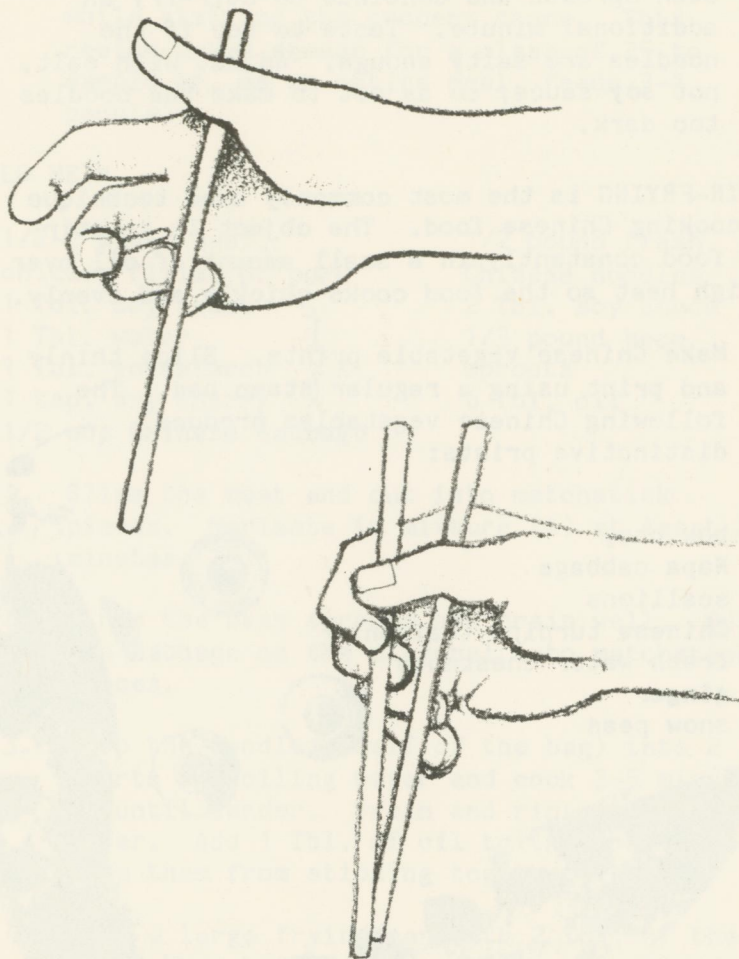
\*STIR-FRYING is the most commonly used technique in cooking Chinese food. The object is to stir the food constantly in a small amount of oil over a high heat so the food cooks quickly and evenly.

- II. Make Chinese vegetable prints. Slice thinly and print using a regular stamp pad. The following Chinese vegetables produce distinctive prints:

bok choy  
Napa cabbage  
scallions  
Chinese turnips (daikon)  
fresh water chestnuts  
ginger  
snow peas



## How to Hold Chopsticks



## Chinatown Grocery Stores

Here are a few of the larger grocery stores in Chinatown. Since they tend to be small, it is best to divide the class into many groups, each visiting a different grocery store.

Asia Supermarket  
17-23 Beach Street

Cheng-Kwong Seafood Market  
73-79 Essex Street

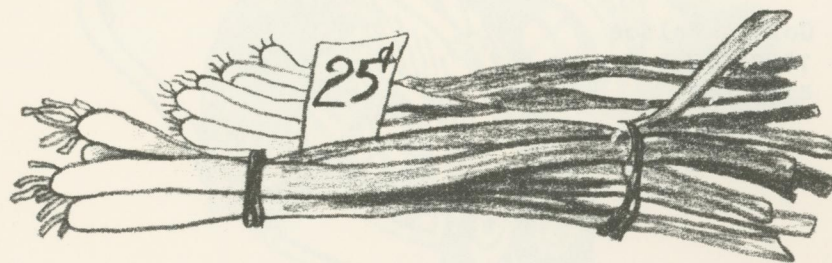
Chung Wah Hong  
51-55 Beach Street

Oriental Supermarket  
(Ming's Import)  
85-91 Essex Street

See Sun Ho Kee  
25 Harrison Avenue

Viet-Hoa Market  
15 Beach Street

Wing Fung Lin  
79 Harrison Avenue



## Chinatown Restaurants

While there are many excellent restaurants in Chinatown, we are listing those which can accommodate school groups at lunchtime. It is important to make a reservation and to order the food in advance. Fried noodles or rice will please most children. You can order other entries or dim sum (various dumplings and small orders of luncheon foods) for everyone to taste. The meal will cost about \$5 per person, not including soda.

Imperial Tea House  
70-72 Beach Street  
426-8439

Moon Villa  
23 Edinboro  
423-2061  
338-8712

China Pearl  
9 Tyler  
426-4338

Shanghai Restaurant  
21 Hudson  
482-4797

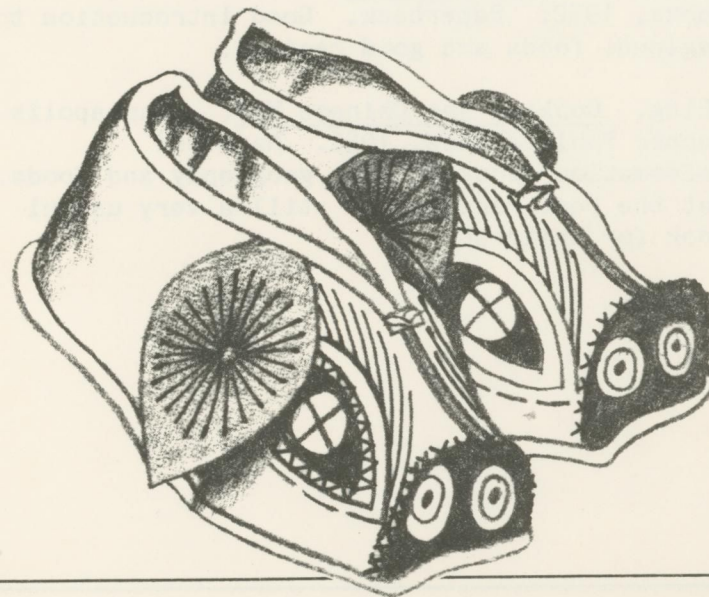
Golden Palace  
1420 Tyler Street  
423-4565

## Resources on Chinese Americans

Asian American Resource Workshop, 27 Beach Street, Boston, 02111; 426-5313. Extensive collection of print and audiovisual materials. Newsletter. Public programs. Members can borrow and rent materials.

The Children's Museum, Boston. East Asian Study in Resource Center: books for children and adults. Members can borrow books. Bibliography on Asian Americans available. Kit Rental Department: "Jia - Chinese American Families," activity kit for middle schools.

Japanese American Curriculum Project, 414 East Third Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94401. Excellent source for books on Asian Americans for children and adults. Write for catalog (\$1).



## Bibliography

Claiborne, Craig and Lee, Virginia. The Chinese Cookbook. New York, J.B. Lippincott Co., 1972. Part of The New York Times Cookbook series.

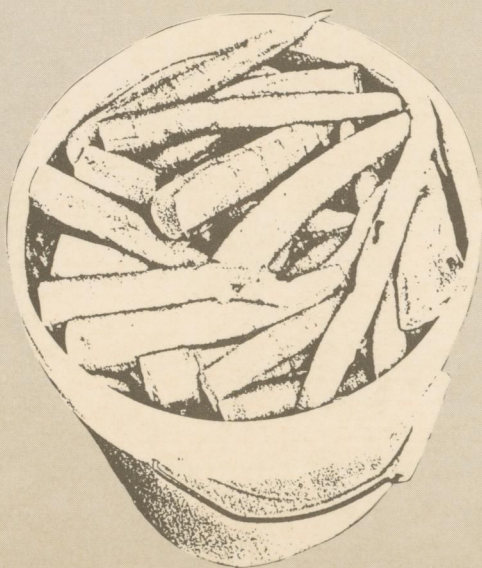
Fu Pei Mei. Pei Mei's Chinese Cookbook. Volume I. Taipei, Taiwan, T and S Industrial Co., 1969. Available in Chinatown and some suburban Chinese grocery stores. We prefer Volume I. Bilingual with good pictures and excellent recipes.

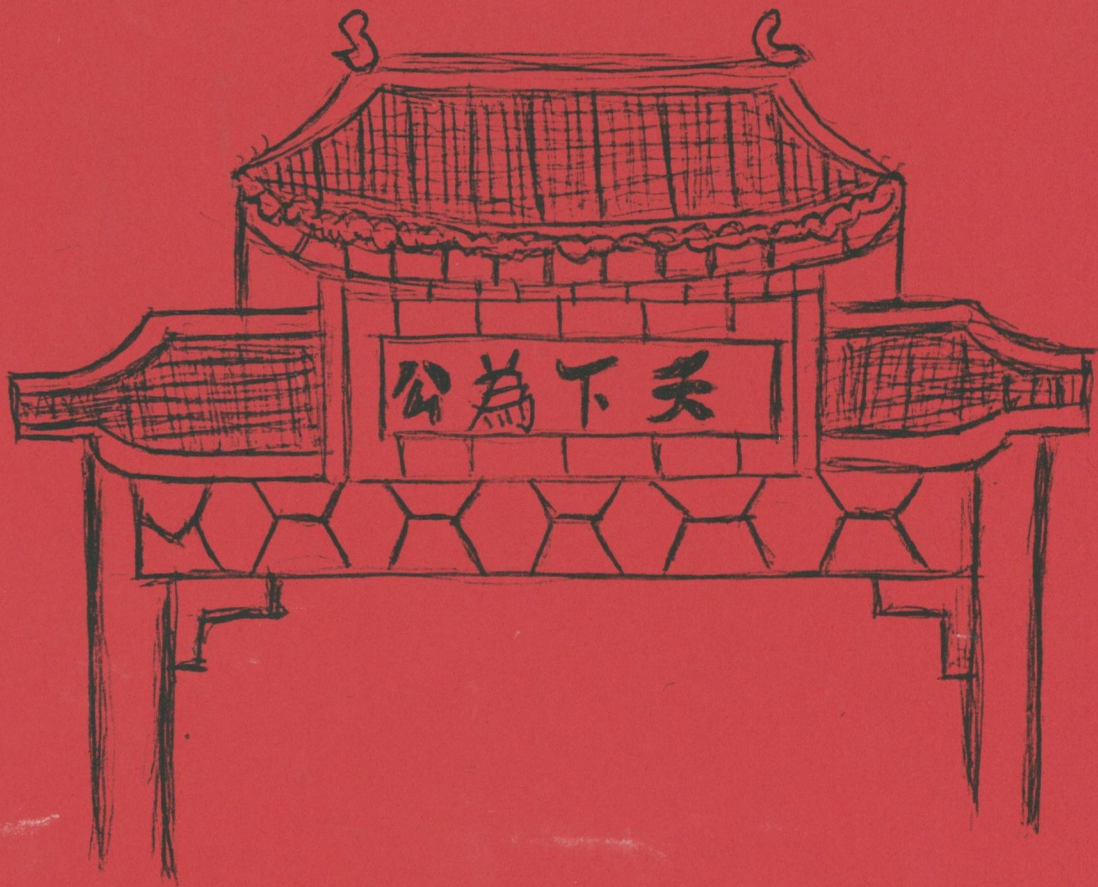
Huang Su Huei. Chinese Cuisine: Wei-Chuan Cooking. Taipei, Taiwan, Wei-Chuan Publishing Co., 1975. Also available in Chinatown and some suburban Chinese grocery stores. Bilingual with good pictures and excellent recipes.

Lo, Kenneth. Chinese Food. London, Penguin Books, 1972. Paperback. Good introduction to regional foods and good recipes.

Yu Ling. Cooking the Chinese Way. Minneapolis, Lerner Publications, 1982. Maps and information about Chinese geography and foods. Not the best recipes but still a very useful book for children.

# 唐人街一遊





# CHINATOWN

by the kids in  
the Boston Children  
service Association's  
After School Program

Summer 1984



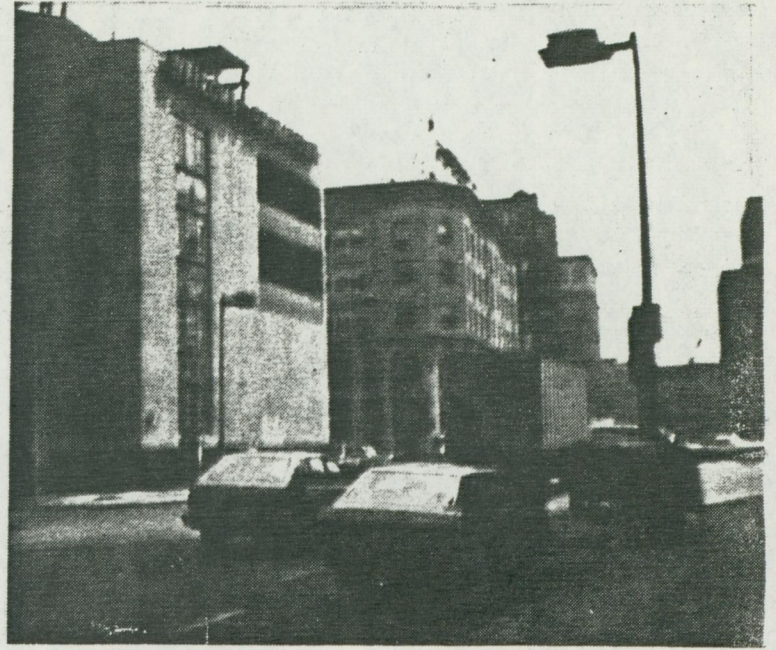
We are After-School Program kids. We are eight and a half to eleven and a half years old. During the year we go to school in the morning and during the afternoon we go to After School Program. This is a summer program now and we are trying to make a book.

**BY: SO-YAN CHAN  
LAN CHIU  
TANG-VI CHUONG  
ADA LAM  
KIN KI LAW  
MAN YEE LAW  
HAO, DUNG TRAN  
HAO, NGHIA TRAN  
TEACHER: PAULINE KIM**

We want to thank Mary Tsiongas because she helped us learn about health and medicine and to interview Dr. Chung and the nurse practitioner. We also want to thank the people that we interviewed: Peter Kiang, the nurse practitioner, Dr. Chung, Joseph Tam, Doris Wong and Betty Lam. And we want to thank the ASP staff.

by Ian Chiu

I like to live in Chinatown, because I can have lots of friends and I can buy things very fast. But something I hate is when I am sleeping in the morning the factory makes a lot of noise to wake me up at 6 o'clock, so I can not sleep at all. But I still like Chinatown better than living somewhere else because people are nice in Chinatown. I like Chinatown's restaurants. They have good food to eat. Some Chinese stores are not selling food to eat, they are just selling things to play with or papers, erasers, pencils, and all that stuff. But most people like to see Chinese movies. Day after day we are working, going to school and sleeping all night long.



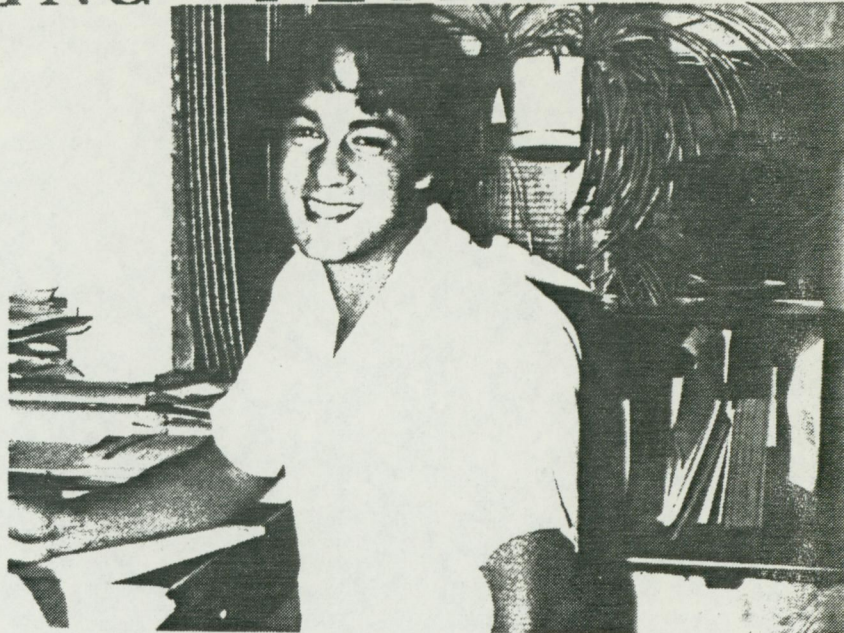
by Ada Lam

Chinatown is a place where lots of Chinese people live and where people buy Chinese food. There are stores and bakeries in Chinatown and the breads smell good. We have Chinatown because there are lots of Chinese people in Boston. We also have Chinatown because Chinatown is so important to Chinese people. And we have Chinatown because Chinese people like Chinatown. And do you know something? I really like Chinatown.



# INTERVIEWING PETER

Peter Kiang was a staff member of the After School Program two years ago. We interviewed him to find out what he is doing now at the Workshop. (ASP = After School Program, PK = Peter Kiang)



ASP: What is the name of the place you work?

PK: The name is the Asian American Resource Workshop.

ASP: What does the name mean?

PK: That's a long story. Sometimes we call it the Workshop. Sometimes we call it A. A. R. W.

ASP: For Asian American Resource Workshop?

PK: That's right. Asian American means that your background or your family is Asian. Your family came from Asia. Asia is really big, right? Asia means China, Vietnam, Japan, Korea. But you're in America now, so you're Asian-American. So those two words go together. Asian-American. Resource means you have photographs, music, cameras, crayons and paper. You have lots of things to make things with--those are resources. And Workshop means you work together. Everyone is working together and you share things and you work together to make more resources. So that's what the name means.

ASP: How did the workshop get started?

PK: The Workshop got started in 1979. What year is this?

ASP: 1984.

PK: So how long ago did the Workshop start?

ASP: Five years.

PK: So we started five years ago.

ASP: What do you do at the Workshop?

PK: We teach, we have a lot of movies. Sometimes we make movies ourselves. We have singing, we have dancing. Sometimes we study history. Do you know what history is? History is looking at how old things happened. Or how what you are today--what it was before. It is looking at the past. So we study the history of Chinatown which means we study what Chinatown was like 5 years ago, 10 years ago, 50 years ago, 100 years ago. So there's alot. There's art and there is also history.

ASP: Why do you like to work at the Workshop?

PK: One reason is because there are a lot of Chinese and Asians who work here. And it's nice for me to work with them. So that's one reason--there's a lot of people here that I like to work with. Another reason is that the programs that we do here are a lot of fun.

ASP: Do you live in Chinatown?

PK: No, I cannot live in Chinatown because housing is very crowded and there is no space for me to live in Chinatown. So I have to live in Cambridge.

ASP: Why is Chinatown in Boston?

PK: Why is Chinatown in Boston? Well, Chinatown is not only in Boston. Have any of you been to New York? They have Chinatown in New York, right? It's bigger than Boston's. Who's been to San Francisco or Toronto? They have Chinatown's too. So there are Chinatown's in different places.

The reason why there's Chinatown in Boston is because 100 years ago the Chinese who came from China and then went to California came to Boston. They came to Boston because in California a lot of white people were beating up Chinese so they wanted to leave California so they wouldn't get beaten up. And they came over to Boston.

ASP: Tell us the story of Boston's Chinatown.

PK: Well, in 1875 the first Chinese came to Boston. That was more than 100 years ago. When they first came here they were making shoes; they had laundries, then they started to have restaurants and then they started working like your mothers in factories making clothes.

Back in 1890 there were 200 people in Chinatown, so that's pretty small. Then around 1920 you had about 1000 people. And by 1945 you had maybe 2000 people. Today, 1984, there are maybe 10,000 people.

Why is it so big? Because there are a lot of immigrants who come every year. Do you know what an immigrant is?

ASP: People who leave one country to come to another.

PK: So who's an immigrant here? . . . You're all immigrants. So there's a lot of immigrants in Chinatown. The number of people in Chinatown keeps getting bigger and bigger because there's more and more immigrants.

So if you're an immigrant, what language do you speak? Maybe English. Chinese, maybe Spanish.

You can speak a lot of languages if you're an immigrant because you can speak the language of your country before and you speak English here. So in Chinatown what language do you speak?

ASP: Chinese.

PK: So why do people like Chinatown? You can buy Chinese food. You can speak Chinese. You can see Chinese movies. You can buy Chinese food. See, that's all in Chinatown. But if you go outside of Chinatown there are no Chinese movies, no Chinese groceries. So a lot of people really need Chinatown and they want to stay in Chinatown.

ASP: Do you help the people or stores in Chinatown?

PK: Sometimes, because we make posters or pictures for them. Sometimes when we have singing or dancing we ask them to come and then they really like it. And they see movies here and they like it.

ASP: Did you like being an ASP teacher?

PK: Of course. Do you know why? Because I got to know all of you. I was a teacher but all of you taught me also. Sometimes you're teaching the teachers too, you know. So I really liked being an ASP teacher.

ASP: Will you teach ASP again?

PK: Well, maybe, but I'm not sure because now I'm working here all the time. But after ASP you can start coming to the Workshop, too.



By Hao Ding Tian

by Hao Dung Tran

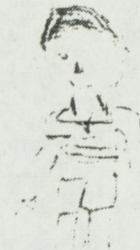
I will talk about how I came to America. The people came here because they were very pure. Some came here because they have aunt and uncle here. America is a big place. In this country my family eats the same food as in Vietnam. When I first came here I was afraid. Here there are four seasons. Here, Americans have bathrooms and light. Because here there is no war fight. Then I could live here forever. I like America because I like school here and the big mountains and the animals too.



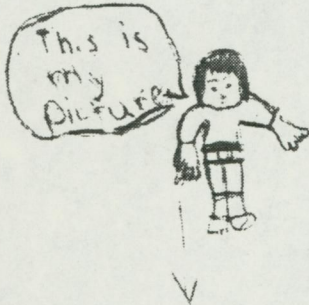
Chinatown is a place where lots of immigrants live. Since all of the children on the staff of Chinatown are immigrants, some of them wrote about what it was like to move from another country to America.

by Kin Ki Law

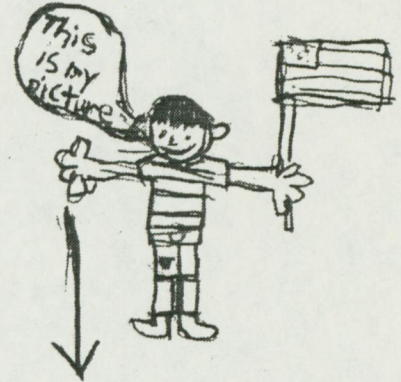
I left the apartment in Hong Kong one and one half years ago. I was ten years old. I remember the park in Hong Kong. I went to the park to catch the bugs. I threw some bread for the birds and I liked to catch the fish. I liked coming to America because I would have new friends. I like American sports like basketball, fishing and swimming. On Sundays I go to Chinatown. I go with my family. I buy some Chinese food to eat.



When I went to America from Vietnam it was like driving a car to a place where you have never gone to. It was very scary to go to a place you have never gone to. It would make you sea sick. I felt very sad to leave where I was born. I wouldn't like to eat others food, but when I ate it, it would taste better. Sometimes it would be not so good to eat others food. Sometimes you would be ill. When you got to another country you would like to eat the country's food and the old food you ate in Vietnam.



I left Vietnam because there was a war and we went on a ship. There was a big rock and we crashed. It was like we were riding on a broken ship and someone died and someone drowned. Most people were safe and most ships were broken. Sometimes it was hard to eat on the boat. Some people were ill on the boat and some people were sick. And when we got to shore we found an old house and people lived in there and some people helped pull the ship on the beach. Some people said there were ghosts in the old house. Some people died because there was no food and when the boat was fixed we got on to the boat and went to America.



# LEARNING ABOUT SPORTS

We were learning about sports. So we interviewed Joseph Tam to know more about sports. He works at the Quincy School in the gym. He told us what he likes to play. He showed us the equipment in the gym. (JT = Joseph Tam, ASP = After School Program)

ASP: What people use the gym?

JT: Kids from aged 5 to adults. We have different times for them and different sports for them also. It's mainly males, but we do get some females

ASP: What kind of equipment do you have?

JT: We have volleyball nets and basketballs. We have a trampoline, parallel bars, high bars. We have gymnastic mats, soccer balls, baseball bats, softballs, baseballs, tennis rackets. Almost everything, but it doesn't mean that we use them all. The main things that we use are basketball, volleyball, badminton, ping-pong, maybe some softball.

But the gymnastics we don't use because we don't have any qualified person to use the gymnastics equipment.

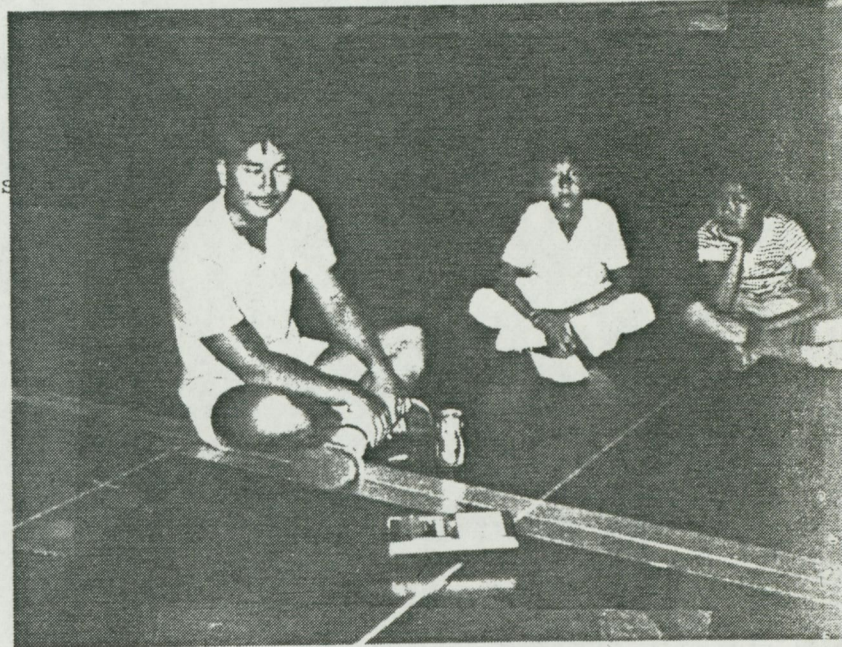
ASP: Is exercise good for us?

JT: Well that depends on what kind of exercise. Exercise is good for the heart. Keeps the heart pumping. When you exercise you're breathing out more also, so you get new oxygen in there. It helps the circulation. It's good physically for your health and it also helps improve your coordination abilities.

ASP: Is it more fun to play by yourself or with a team?

JT: It's more fun playing with a group. Team sports and group sports are different. Team sports are when you have sides and play against each other.

But in a group sport, where everyone just participates, someone doesn't have to lose for the other person to win. You can have more fun that way.



If you play alone you might not meet as many friends. And you might get bored too.

ASP: Do you play team sports?

JT: Sometimes.

ASP: Does Chinatown have any sports teams?

JT: Chinatown has a lot of team sports. The YMCA has the Knights which is a basketball club and also a volleyball club. Wing Wo has a basketball and a volleyball club also. And that's mainly for men.

The females have Reggie's Angels for volleyball.

ASP: What kind of sports do you like?

JT: I like football.

# THE SOUTH COVE HEALTH CENTER

We studied health and medicine one week. We wanted to know how Western medicine and Chinese medicine are different. We interviewed a nurse practitioner at the South Cove Health Center. She talked about Western medicine. (ASP = After School Program, NP = nurse practitioner)

ASP: Who comes to South Cove Health Center?

NP: Usually our patients are Chinese, but we do have some Vietnamese refugees and Laotians and Cambodians and also some white and black people who live in the area.

ASP: How closely do you work with the doctor?

NP: How closely? Well, we work very closely. Here everyone is part of the team. So that if we're not sure about something or I have a question about what kind of medicine would be best to give to a patient, then I can talk to the doctor. And also when the doctor needs help she can come to me too. So we work very closely.

ASP: How many hours do you work here?

NP: Right now I'm working 40 hours, I'm full time. And as I said, I sometimes see children and I also see some adult patients. I'm also in a unique position in that I also go out into the community and I see elderly patients in their homes. People who are too sick and too frail to come to the health center can get health care in their homes because I visit them.

ASP: Do you speak Chinese?

NP: I speak a little bit of Chinese, mainly Toisanese. But Nadine has been giving me Chinese lessons ever since I started working here.

ASP: Some people believe in using Chinese medicine. How do you feel about that?

NP: Well, I grew up taking Chinese medicine and I'm still alive. Folk medicine is what we call medicine that is not purely Western, scientific medicine. And folk medicine is how Western medicine got started.

So there is lots of folk medicine that does work. However, because Western medicine doesn't understand folk medicine, when people come here to be treated we ask them not to use the Chinese medicines because we're afraid that if they use the Chinese medicines and the Western medicine at the same time they could hurt themselves.

But if they want to continue using Chinese medicine on their own, they can do so, but only at a time when they're not taking Western medicine.

We don't want people taking too many medicines at one time, you see, so if a person wants to take Chinese medicine, we try to make sure that they're not taking any other medicine.

And if the Chinese medicine is working for them then that's fine. Maybe we can help them in other ways.

ASP: Do you like treating children?

NP: Yes, I do very much. And as a matter of fact, when they asked me if I wanted to see adult patients and see elderly in their homes, I thought, what am I going to do? because I have to give up seeing all these nice children patients.

But as it turns out I like what I'm doing, so I now see about half and half children and adults.

# ACUPUNCTURE

Next we interviewed Dr. Kenneth Chung. He is a Chinese doctor. We wanted to find out about Chinese medicine. He gave us a taste of it. First it tasted sweet and then it tasted awful. He let us see Chinese herbs. We saw him doing acupuncture on a woman. (ASP = After School Program, Dr.C = Dr. Kenneth Chung)

Dr.C: When I was 12 years old, I decided I wanted to be an acupuncturist. I visited with my uncle who was a great acupuncturist. I tried to learn from him, but everyone told me I was too young.

Then one day my family and neighbors had to flee the Japanese army so we started on a great trek, walking 13 miles a day. On the way a person became unconscious and no one knew what to do. I suggested acupuncture, but everyone smiled and said 'o.k. are you an acupuncturist and where are your needles?'

At that time I always carried a bit of tiger balm and happened to have a safety pin with me. I used the tiger balm as an antiseptic, rubbed some beneath the persons nose and mouth. (I had seen my uncle do this many times) I punctured it with the pin. Five minutes later the person was revived and I was considered a hero. I had to perform the same technique on someone else who fainted a few days later. Again I was treated like a hero. I knew I would be an acupuncturist after that.

ASP: How long have you been practicing medicine?

Dr.C: I have been learning and practicing medicine for 36 years. Chinese medicine school is very difficult. You have to get "100" on everything you learn before you go on to the next thing you will study. You cannot get one wrong and still pass because when you practice medicine you can't afford mistakes, therefore you must learn everything before.

ASP: Where were you educated?

Dr.C: I was educated in China, first by following my uncle who was a famous acupuncturist in China. He helped many people and I respected him. Now I am an acupuncturist and I help people and am very happy.

ASP: How did you like China?

Dr.C: I like China but you know China has many people; one quarter of the world's population is Chinese. That doesn't include you and me. That is a lot of people and there is a long history. Chinese history is 5,000 years old. How old is the U.S.--does anyone know? 208 years. How do you compare 5,000 years to 208 years? You cannot.

Do you know about marijuana? Three thousand years ago Chinese know that marijuana hurts second generation. You would be alright but your kids, your kids will be hurt by it. Unfortunately when I come to the U.S. twelve years ago, I told people this but they don't believe me. They say I have to make experiments.

ASP: Who comes to your office?

Dr.C: Many different people come here. Some are state representatives, some are physicians. Some physicians come for lower back pain. Some are old and some are young; the oldest is 94 and the youngest is 2 weeks.

All kind: postman, policeman, firefighter, dancer --all kinds of people. Some rich, some poor. And for poor people we charge less. But in the U.S. we have to pay rent and taxes. So we have to charge something.

# PLACES OF CHINATOWN

ASF: How do you feel about Western medicine?

Dr.C: Western medicine is good for emergency. Fast, and they use chemicals to stop pain. If you come to me with appendicitis, I will tell you go to the hospital. Acupuncture cannot help you then. Western medicine is different. Acupuncture, Chinese medicine, is concerned with balance. If you are balanced you are healthy. If you get off balance you don't feel well and may need a doctor.

Western doctors sometimes just treat symptoms, they look at patient and see what is wrong and write a prescription. Chinese doctor will look at the person, ask them how they have been; they are concerned about the person, not just symptoms.

ASP: Why is acupuncture good for chronic pain?

Dr.C: Read the brochure, the traditional yin and yang theories, the nerves system, the hormone systems.

Beta-endorphines can explain why--a four year old theory. This can also explain why acupuncture works for behavior habits like smoking, drinking.



# WORKING ON THE NEWSPAPER

We went to interview Doris Wong and Betty Lam. They work on SAMPAN. SAMPAN is a English and Chinese newspaper. It is part of C.A.C.A. which stands for Chinese American Civic Association. (DW = Doris Wong, BL = Betty Lam, ASP = After School program)

ASP: What do you write about in the newspaper?

DW: Well, we write about things that are happening in Chinatown--things that we think are important to the people who work in Chinatown. And its usually things that are happening right now or will happen soon. We can do anything from covering the mayor's visit--he came about a month ago--to anything like tenant strikes.

Do you know what a tenant strike is? It's when people who live in a building think that the landlord isn't keeping up the place and he might be asking for too much money. So they'll keep their money and ask the landlord to make improvements before they'll give him their money.

So we cover anything like that to the mayor's visit.

ASP: Is this paper about our city?

DW: It's more about the Chinese-American community in this city. It's very special in that way because no other paper has both Chinese and English and covers just things about Chinese-Americans.

We cover mostly Chinatown, South Cove, near where your after school program is. And sometimes we also cover things that are wider, even things that are happening in other states. But mostly it's Chinatown.

ASP: Do you write in Chinese or English?

BL: We write in both languages. We have two sections--English and Chinese. And so we write, if possible, every article in both languages.

ASP: Do you like writing?

DW: Yes. Reporting is what it's called, really. Because you go out and you cover something. People can't go everywhere themselves because they have to work or raise their families--bring up their children. Our job is to go out and get the information and put it down on paper so its easier for people to just pick up a piece of paper and read it. They can't always go everywhere that they would like to, and find out about everything firsthand.

So that's our job--to go out and get that information for them--to learn about things.



ASP: Do you have other people helping you?

BL: Yeah, we have a lot of people volunteering to help. They work for us without taking any pay. They are interested in the newspaper and in working for the community--doing something good for the community.

ASP: What is C.A.C.A.?

DW: It's mostly a group of people who work here--there are different programs. Like they teach English to adults--maybe your father or your brother and sister who are older than you, who just came to this country recently. They teach them how to read and write English and to speak English. And then there's things like people who are trying to find somewhere to live--people here also help with that.

And then there's the newspaper, which is basically trying to get information out. C.A.C.A. is a group of people that are trying to help people in the community in different ways.

ASP: Does this paper come out every day?

BL: No. It originally was a monthly publication for over 12 years. And 3 or 4 months ago we went into a biweekly publication and that means the paper comes out every two weeks.

ASP: Why is the newspaper free?

DW: Well, it's because we want the information that people get through the newspaper to reach as many people as possible. And if we made it something that people had to pay for, then a lot of people don't have that much money. And we think it's more important for them to get the information than for us to get the money.

ASP: How come you work on SAMPAN?

DW: Well, it's personal for each person who decides to work on SAMPAN. But for me, it's partly because I think it's a very important newspaper. As I said before there's nothing else like it in Chinatown or even in Boston or New England.

Personally, I like learning all the time which is what you can do when you go out and report on things. And I think it's an important newspaper too, because it records things that people can look back on later who may be new to Chinatown and may not know everything that happened before.

Maybe Betty has a different reason.

BL: For me, it's because I graduated from school and I'm glad that there's a newspaper like SAMPAN to give me a chance to practice what I've learned in school.

And plus, SAMPAN gave me a very good opportunity to learn more about the Chinese-American community, especially the Boston Chinese community.

ASP: How many years have you worked here?

DW: I've worked here about 3 and a half years.

ASP:

BL: And I've worked here for almost one and a half years.

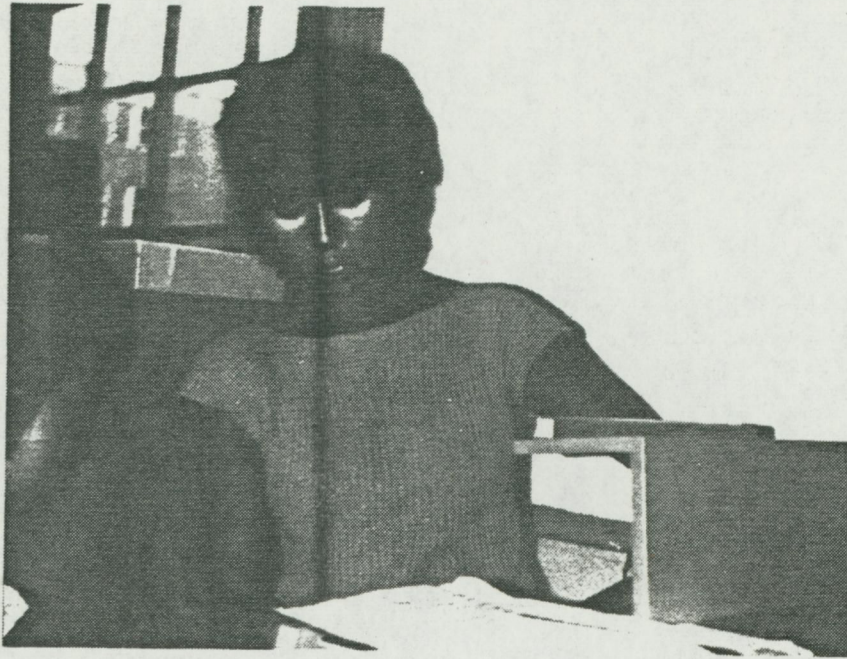
ASP: What kind of paper do you use?

DW: It's called newsprint and it's a very light kind of paper--and it's cheap. You'll see a lot of newspapers use it because it's cheap. It's different from magazine paper--it's not as smooth.

That's more of a technical question, really.

ASP: Can we see the machines and how they work?

DW: Sure. The machine we have here just does English. We have to send the Chinese out to New York.



Doris Wong showed us three machines. The first one was for typing. Some paper came out of it. The second one was for developing the paper. And the third one was a waxer. It is used to make the paper stick.