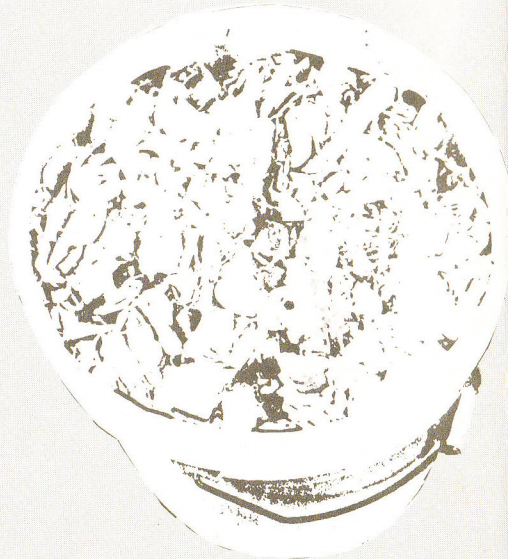
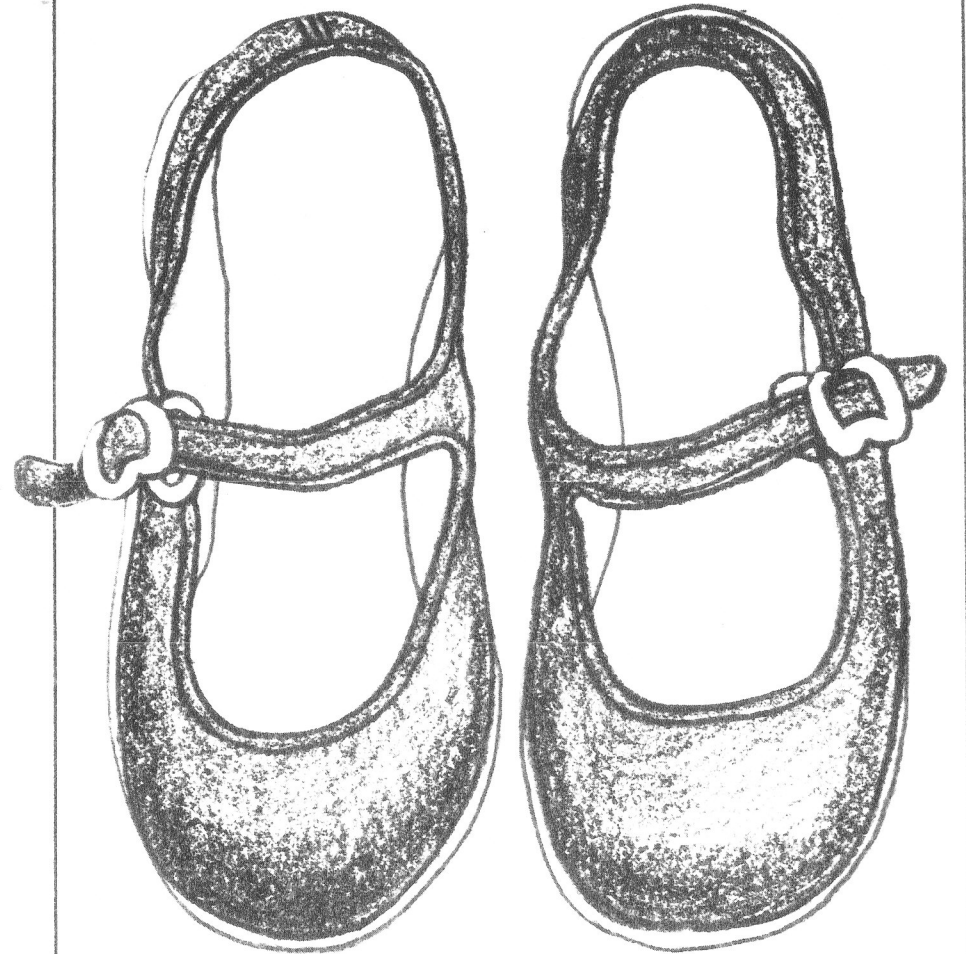


唐人街一遊

A VISIT TO CHINATOWN





A VISIT TO CHINATOWN

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

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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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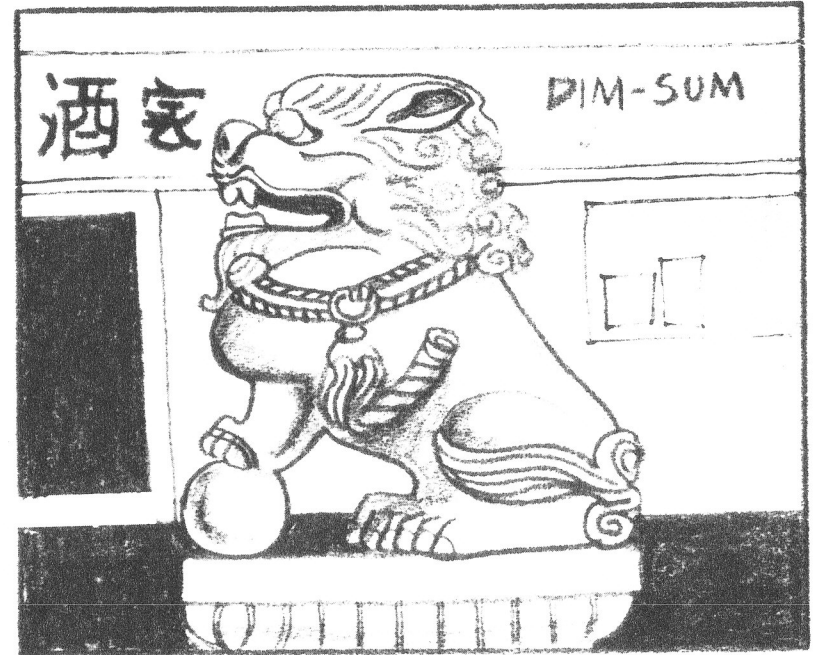


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Preface



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.

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.

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.

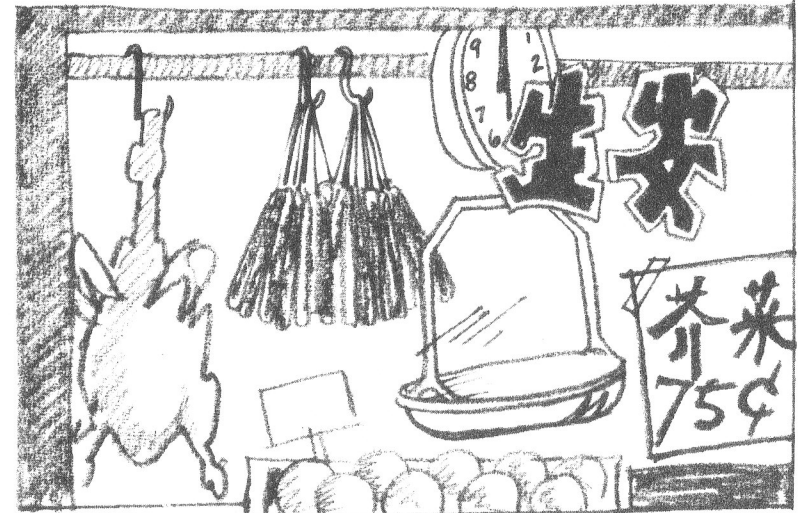
11. List as many languages as you can find and indicate where you saw the written language used.

- 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.

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.

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.

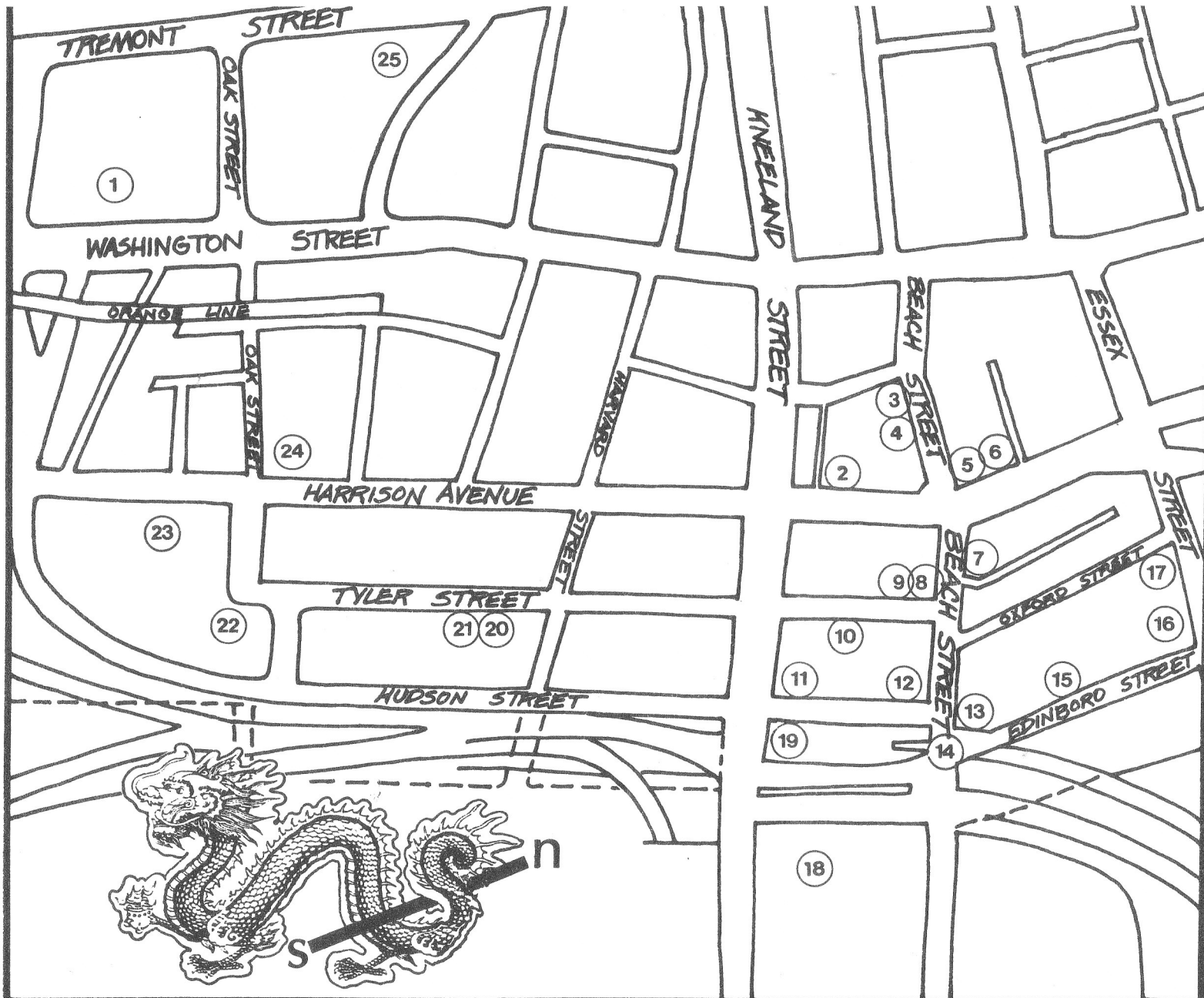
2. Ask the children to make a list of ten items their families commonly buy in the grocery store. When the students visit the Chinese grocery store, tell them to compare this list with what is available. If they cannot find what is on the list, ask them to suggest a substitute for it. For example, if 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.



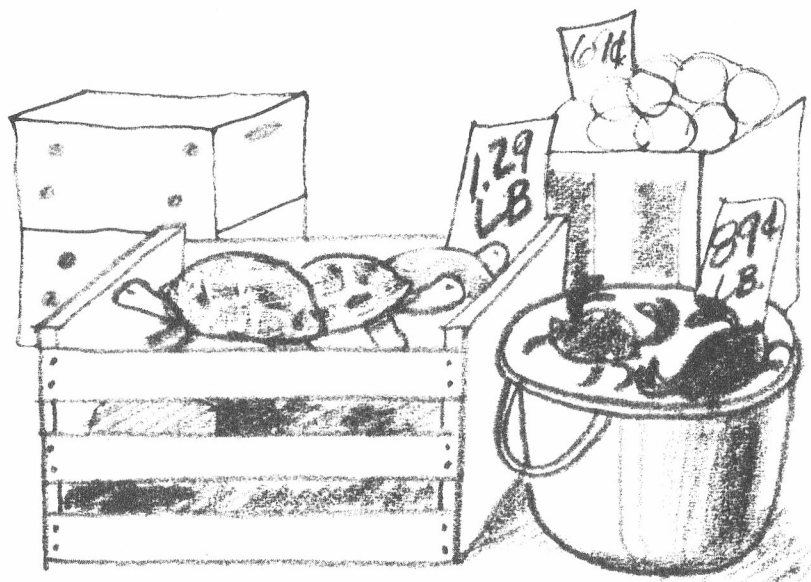
KEY TO MAP

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.

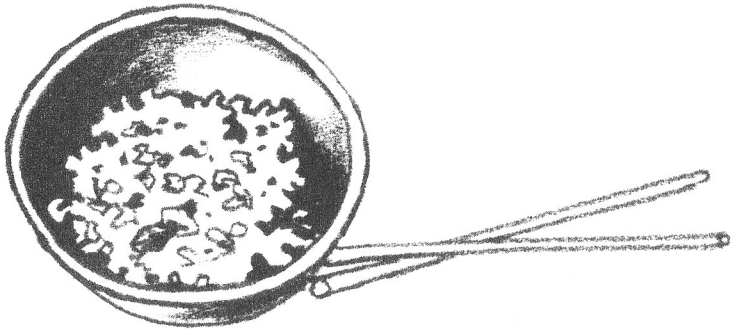
What kinds of meats do you see hanging?
Why are the ducks and chickens hanging on skewers?
What would you buy and why?

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.

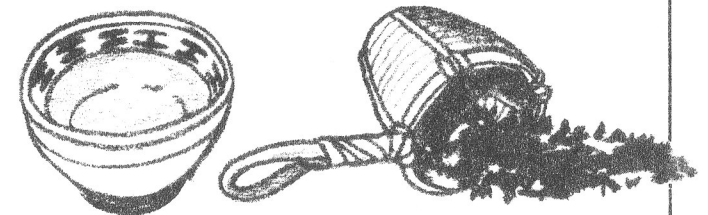
Why are some kinds of rice sold in large amounts?

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?

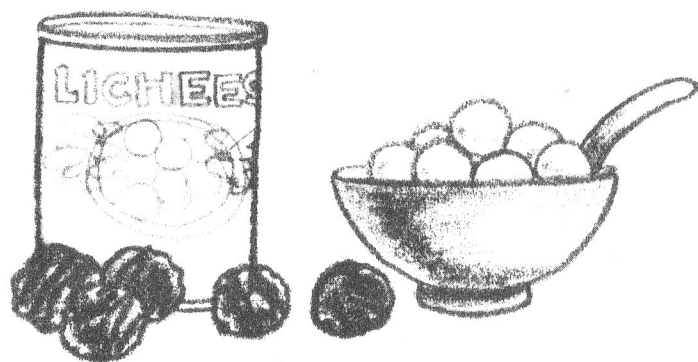
What kinds of preserved fruits are sold? Why do you think the candies and cookies are packaged in such a fancy manner?



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?

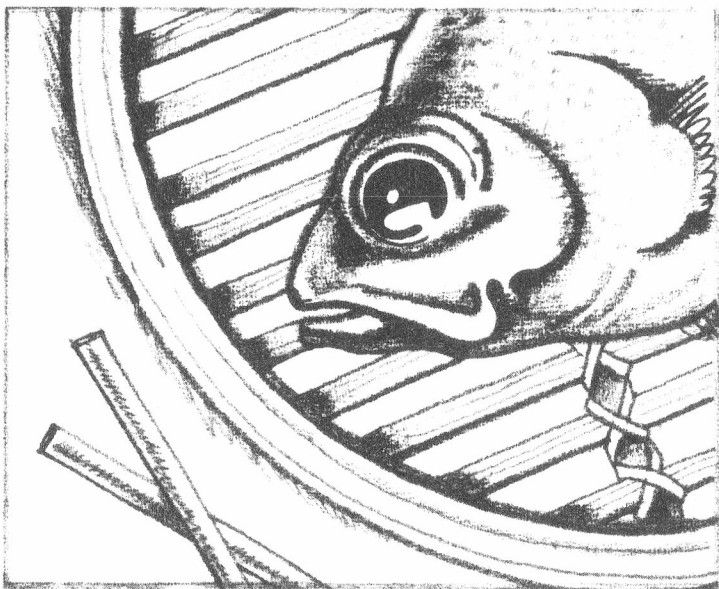
Can you find other products in the canned food section that are made with soy beans? Read the labels and find out what countries make soy sauce.

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.

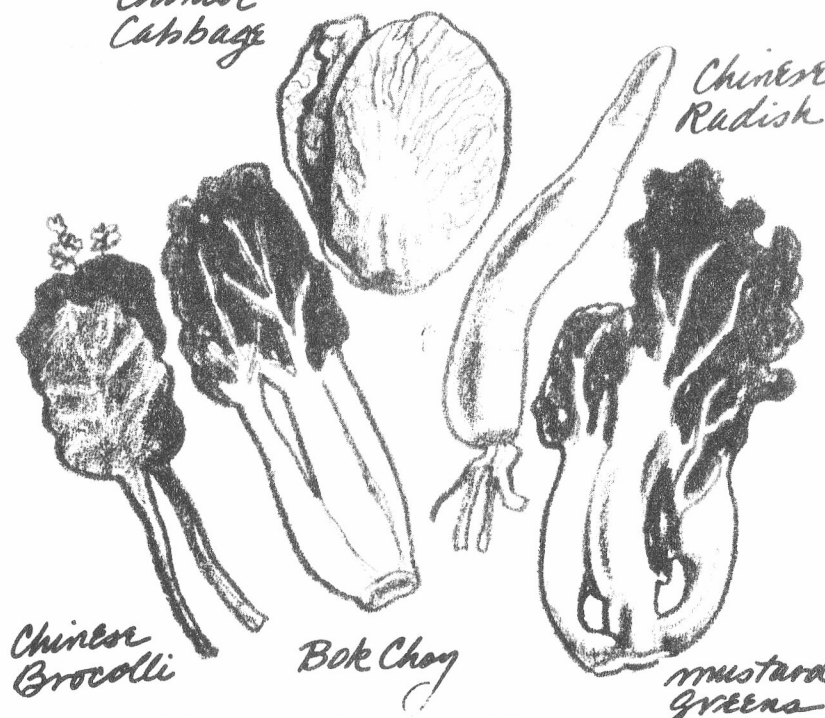
SEAFOOD: Large quantities of seafood are sold in the Chinatown grocery store. Boston is a seaport and has lots of fish. Most Boston Chinese are Cantonese who love seafood because their native province is near the coast. The fish are sold whole rather than filleted because the Chinese feel they retain 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?



Chinese Cabbage

Chinese Radish



Chinese Broccoli

Bok Choy

Mustard Greens

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	} A	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		

1/2 cup Chinese cabbage

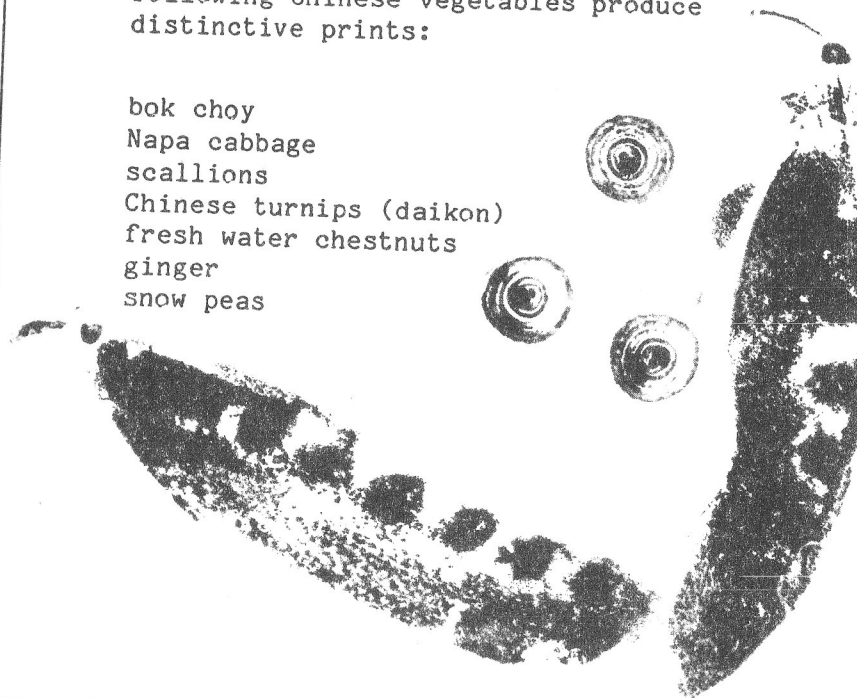
1. Slice the meat and cut into matchstick pieces. Marinate in mixture (A) at least 20 minutes.
2. Rinse the bean sprouts and drain well. Cut the cabbage on the diagonal into matchstick pieces.
3. Drop the noodles (half of the bag) into 2 quarts of boiling water and cook 3-5 minutes, or until tender. 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.

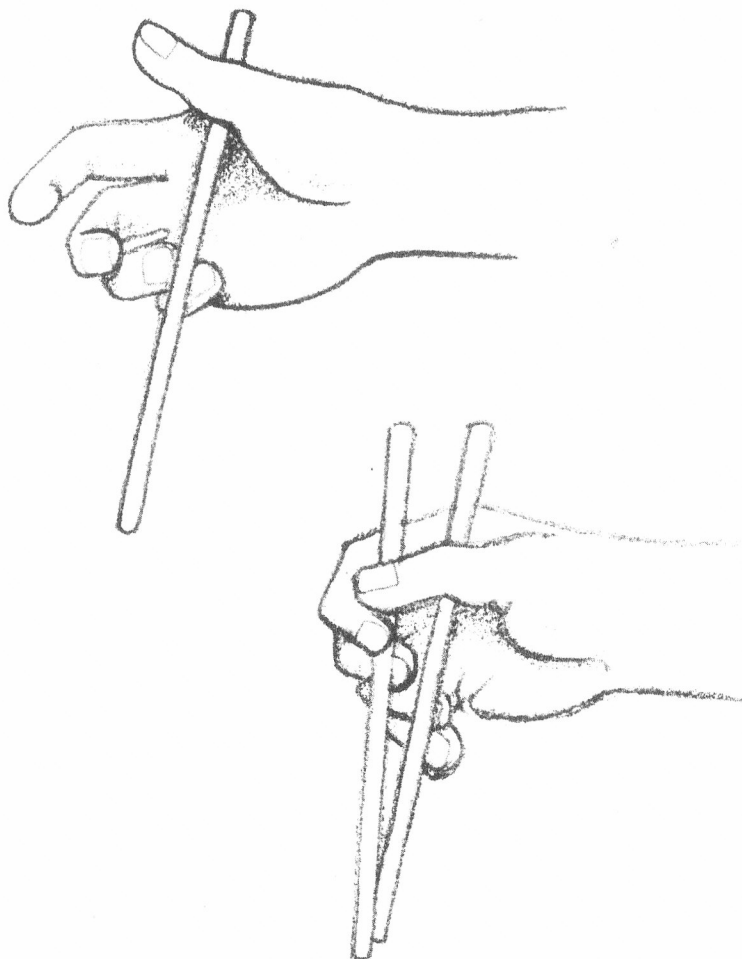
*STIR-FRYING is the most commonly used technique in cooking Chinese food. The object is to stir the food constantly in a small amount of oil over a high heat so the food cooks quickly and evenly.

- 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

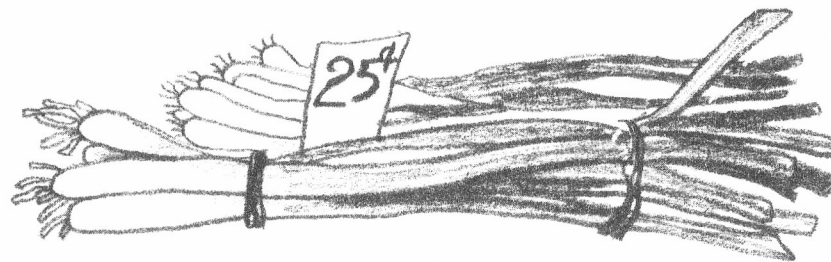
Chung Wah Hong
51-55 Beach Street

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

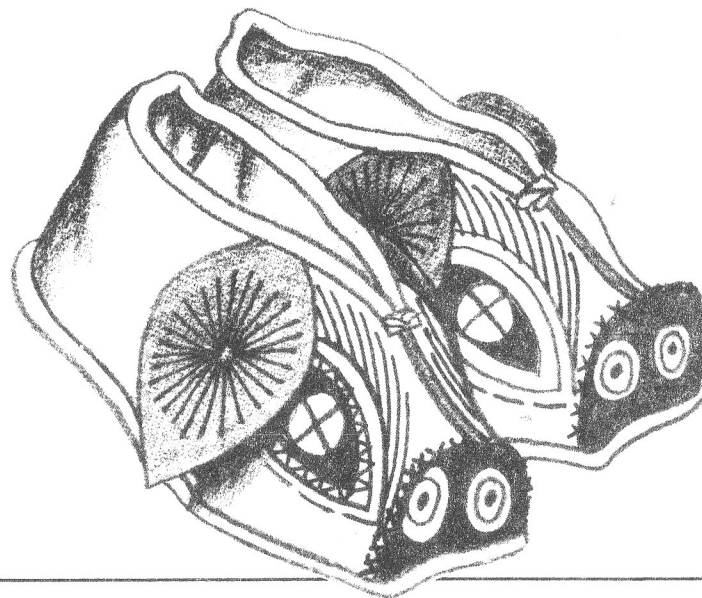
Golden Palace
1420 Tyler Street
423-4565

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).



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