



## Cookbook Collective: A Culinary Journey

A smorgasbord of cooking, connections, and culture

The aim of our PDS project was to bring together a group of students and teachers around the subject that we all heartily enjoy on a daily basis: food. Our central aim was to journey together through a variety of food-based tasks with the goal of generating enough content along the way to create Akademeia's first cookbook. We wanted this process to engage a broad range of students' creative skills, from recipe crafting to plating design, to writing, photography and graphic design. By engaging a range of our students' aesthetic sensibilities, we hoped to build connections between food, culture and people, enjoying ourselves along the way.

The tasks that we did reflected this desire for connection and tactile interdisciplinarity: students were asked to recipe build with just five ingredients or less; create poetic meals for inspirational historical figures (with choices ranging from Shakespeare to Athena to Rosa Parks to Margaret Thatcher) and re-imagine each others' food through colour, collage and words. Students worked on their task independently each week, before coming together during the PDS session to share their experiences, photos and discoveries.

The highlight of the PDS was the Happening, organized in January 2021, as a physical manifestation of the togetherness of food that had up to that point been much discussed, but never experienced communally. After spending time searching for a variety of recipes, and meticulously planning the ingredients and equipment, we met around in the Akademeia kitchen to cook up and photograph a storm. The resulting fun, laughter, photography and feasting was without a doubt the highlight of the entire project.

After this, we began to craft our material into the pages of a cookbook, incorporating text from our Akademeia on a Plate survey, our PDS group haikus, and our recipes. Alongside these were photos taken from our Happening, and quotes and observations gleaned from our time together. Over the coming weeks we hope to complete and print a cookbook that will reflect our experiences and processes to the wider school community to bring us all closer together through the creative medium of food.



**The Project Managers:** Dr. Ryan Bromley, Mrs. Bella Szala, Ms. Julia Kądziela (from Sixth Form)

**Our wonderful students:** Barbara Mielech-Marciniak, Yakira Wray, Weronika Sadownik, Natalia Tokarska, Ander Susperregui-Stempkowski, Maria-Rossa Hadjieva, Didier Chodak, Laura Bochenek, Olivia Kupczynski, Aleksandra Lasek, and Adam Przybył.

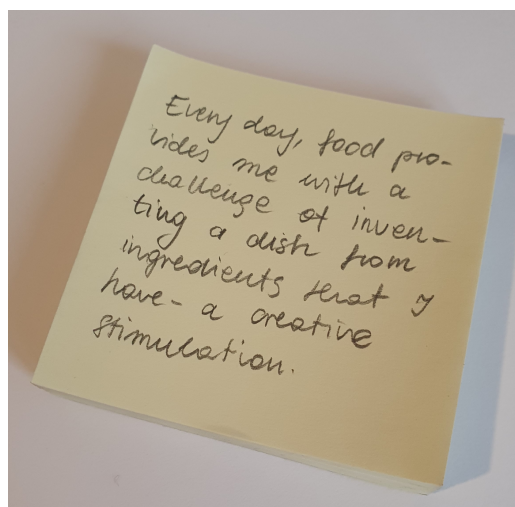


### Students' reflections

Why did you choose this PDS?

I chose this PDS, because i wanted to learn how to cook and find new receipes in order to learn how to cook new things. I chose PDS as I thought, that it is a good way of connecting with people and work together as a team on the food.

- Weronika



"I wanted to improve my cooking skills and gain some experience in teamwork through the process." - Didier

"I've always loved cooking and baking and this was an opportunity for me to do this together with other people and let me express myself in a creative, fun and delicious way." – Olivia

"I like food and I like being creative in designing." - Ander

### What have you gained by doing this PDS?

"I got to appreciate how much teachers work to keep us motivate, interested and learning. It was also a great experience of being on the organization side of the project." – Julia

" I found out new recipes, improved my cooking skills and I started to cook more often at home." – Basia

“How you can be creative with food and create new recipes just having fun and improvising.” – Aleksandra

“An experience and social interaction...motivation and figuring out what to do by myself.” - Yakira

### **How has this PDS changed the way you think about food?**

“Now I am thinking about food in more creative way.” – Adam

“Food is the way to create art and express your emotions - as well as the way it can be creatively mixed.” – Laura

### **What will you remember from the project the most?**

“A beautiful and creative collaboration in the kitchen and an explosion of flavour and laughter afterwards.” - Olivia

“I will remember the fun we had during online. I will remember how hard the teachers have worked in order for us to cook and experience with food. And I will remember our meeting, where we got to bond with each other and eat all of the great food.” – Weronika

### **Reflections from the PMs:**

“In a time of separation, food has become a metronome for the rhythm of my life. Uninterrupted by the cacophony of systems and others, I've found the necessary calm to hear the quiet voice of food and to rediscover its capacity to heal and to unite. This has been a transformative process; I am not the same body that I was at the advent of isolation. Every piece of life I now consume is intentional, considered and reflected upon; a physical conversation between my body and the natural world.” – Dr. Ryan Bromley

“Overseeing the Y10 Cookbook Creation Project has been wonderfully enriching. Working with students around food, watching them unleash their creativity across our wide-ranging scheme of tasks, has been a fantastic experience.. The learning-through-experimentation process has been vital to the success of our project, with students being enabled to try new things, make mistakes along the way, and explore a range of textures, tastes, sights and flavours. Showing them the cultural significance of food, and its importance as a way of expressing ideas, has also been key. Best of all: we got to cook together in person and enjoy the fruits of our labours together. Seeing all the smiles and shrieks of delight that came from our students with every newly presented dish brought out during the Happening was sheer joy.” – Ms. Bella Szala

“When I was joining my younger colleagues, I was expecting to just take care of the graphical side of the cookbook. In truth, joining a group as a member of management was a much greater challenge. I was put in charge of organizing 'the art group', which was very challenging, but very rewarding as well - I learned a great deal about how to communicate with people more successfully and motivate a group to action. I have to say that this made me realize how much effort our teachers put into organizing classes, and into keeping students motivated and active. The experience made me understand their work a bit more and definitely appreciate it. The project was a great fun as well! I had a great time with other students and during the preparations of the weekly task, not to mention the amazing food!” – Ms. Julia Kądziela