

Is it a Recipe, or is it Evaluation?

In *Proven & Creative Strategies/Techniques for Teaching Evaluation* Session

Teaching of Evaluation TIG

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Technique: People are often anxious (scared, nervous, threatened, phobic?) regarding evaluation. Using a recipe to introduce the topic provides something that a lot of adults have in common. It can be used to demonstrate that everyone evaluates things, whether they are aware of it or not. I also use the recipe to talk about how you evaluate things at the beginning, middle, and end. I also use it to demonstrate how some evaluations are more formal than others and how the important criteria for an evaluation can differ depending on the evaluator.

Audience Targeted: This technique is for novice evaluators—use it as part of an introduction to the topic of evaluation. In my area, this includes extension agents who might be good at providing educational programming but may not be very knowledgeable of evaluating those programs. I also use it the first day of my graduate class on program evaluation (for educational/social programs). The students are already concerned about the course, so I try to put them at ease a little.

Advantages/Disadvantages: The main advantage is that it gives you and your students a way to get on the same page with something that is non-threatening. It is common ground for you. The only disadvantage is that sometimes they remember the technique more than the points you are trying to make. Don't forget to emphasize the points and bring the students back to the topic at hand.

Important Notes: Learn to cook something well. Then you'll have a good recipe to share. Have fun with it—your students will send you recipes back and you'll develop a rapport with them.

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Michael's Red Beans and Rice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 large onion, chopped
- ◆ 3 ribs celery, chopped
- ◆ 1 large bell pepper, chopped
- ◆ 1 clove minced garlic
- ◆ ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- ◆ ½ tsp salt (more to taste)
- ◆ 1 tsp black pepper
- ◆ 1 ham bone (or two 1 lb. ham hocks)
- ◆ 1 lb. andouille (or other smoked sausage), cut into ½" pieces
- ◆ 1 lb. red beans (not a bag that's been in the pantry two years, get a fresh bag)
- ◆ 1 bay leaf



Source: Wikipedia (used with permission)

Procedure:

- ◆ Soak beans in 2 quarts water overnight (read instructions for same day option)
- ◆ Sauté onion, celery, bell pepper in olive oil until tender; add sausage for last two minutes
- ◆ Add garlic, pepper, cayenne pepper, and salt to vegetable/sausage mix
- ◆ Drain and rinse beans
- ◆ Mix all ingredients in Dutch oven, cover with water
- ◆ Simmer for 2 ½ hours or until beans are tender
- ◆ Remove bay leaf and ham bone (or hocks) and remove meat from bone
- ◆ Return meat to beans
- ◆ If gravy is not thick, remove ¼ cup of cooked beans and mash. Return mashed beans to mixture and simmer another 15 minutes (you're looking for "creamy")
- ◆ Serve over rice (and preferably with some cornbread)
- ◆ Top with sliced scallions (green onions) if desired
- ◆ Add Tabasco® or Crystal® or Louisiana Hot Sauce® sauce to taste

For more information:

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_beans_and_rice