Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
8th Edition

Progress Monitoring

Oral Reading Fluency

Grade 5

Student Materials: Form 15

The Story of Tea

Tea is the most popular drink in the world. After water, it is the most frequently consumed drink. It is the number one manufactured drink. There are many kinds of tea. People drink tea to be social in many cultures. People also drink it in the morning and afternoon as a stimulant. The story of tea begins in East Asia.

Tea is made from the leaves of camellia plants, which grow well in very warm climates with heavy rainfall. They are native to a small area of Southern China and Northern Myanmar. Tea has been drunk in those areas since the second century B.C. It may have been drunk even earlier in India.

There are several different types of tea. Three of the most popular are black teas, green teas, and Oolong.

Early on, people drank black tea for healing purposes. Green leaves that have been picked turn black when they meet oxygen. This is called oxidation. Then people would boil or steam the leaves. These would be formed into cakes that would later be soaked in hot water for drinking.

In the seventh century in China, people began to pan fry and dry the leaves. This stopped the oxidation process, keeping the leaves green. Green tea became a popular drink. In the fifteenth century, partially oxidized leaves resulted in a tea called Oolong.

In the middle of the eighth century tea began to spread out of China. It travelled to Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. It became an important part of religious ceremonies.

The drink made its way to Europe in the early seventeenth century, though Portuguese priests and merchants drank it as early as the sixteenth century. It was served in coffee houses in Britain. It became fashionable in The Netherlands, Germany, and France. It even made its way to the new colonies in the Americas.

Tea was still quite expensive until the nineteenth century. But by then tea had become an important daily drink in many parts of the world.