



Lesson Plan

Bake, Boil, or Fry

Grades

4, 5, 6

Subjects

Language Arts, Math, Reading, Science, Spelling,
U.S. history

Time allotted

60 minutes

Setting

Classroom, home

Group size

No limit

Skills

Reading historic material, performing measurements and conversions,
and analyzing social differences in historic periods

Methods

Students will work with authentic recipes from the Civil War and
determine how they are similar to recipes of today.

Materials

Recipe from *A Country Kitchen 1850*; Cookbooks from home or
library, Ingredients as stated in recipes

Keywords

Hardtack
Receipts
Recipe
Saleratus

Objectives

At the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- *Describe the type of cooking done during the Civil War time period.*
- *Explain how modern day recipes are comparable adaptations of previous eras.*
- *Share their knowledge of cooking and the cooking experience with others.*



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Today it is difficult to imagine life without amenities. Simple things like a refrigerator and a freezer are commonplace in traditional American homes. Nearly all families have a microwave, a stovetop, and an oven. We have the freedom to purchase pre-packaged and canned foods from the marketplace. Few people today rely upon growing their own crops of fruits, grains, and vegetables, raising their own livestock, and curing meats in the smokehouse. Some traditionalists buy into the concept of “living off the land,” and try to live the way the “old-timers” did, but most modern families enjoy modern conveniences and are happy that they don’t have to do things “the old way”.

- Next have the students pair off and play “Guess what I am cooking in my kitchen?” game. They will share their recipes with each other without telling the other student what it is. The purpose of this activity is to see how similar the recipes are today with those written 100+ years ago. Each partner must guess the correct recipe to be prepared prior to leaving that kitchen: meat, chicken, vegetable, casserole, stew, and dessert.
- Once each partner understands how to play the game and the rules involved, then rotate to a new partner. Students should visit as many “kitchens” as possible in the limited time allotted. (10-15 min. per game would be adequate).

ACTIVITIES

Pre-activity

Students will write a journal entry entitled, “Where does my food come from?”

- Ask the students to read their journal entries and discuss the various crops and their local growing places within the United States. Explain the import/export process.
- Ask the students to make a list of the products and services, which would have been available to them in Tennessee during the Civil War. Also determine whether or not the types of foods they enjoy today would have been available. Why or why not?
- Talk about what type of sacrifices would have been made if you lived on a plantation (over 1000 acres), or a farm (less than 1000 acres.). Ask who would have prepared the food. How long would it take to prepare? What would you prepare for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and a snack? When would you eat? What time of day? Where would you eat? Would you eat in the same place that the food was prepared? (If the students visited the Sam Davis Home, this would be an opportunity to discuss detached kitchens).
- Have the students go to an individual workspace in the room. Explain that they are going to have the opportunity to choose an authentic recipe dating back to the Civil War time period. Tell them to take a few minutes to study the recipe they choose.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- Using cookbooks from home or the library, students will locate a comparable recipe and share these with their classmates on the following day. In three to four days the students will plan to prepare a dish to serve in the classroom. Prepare for the family feast and try to make it as authentic as possible. Invite other classes / teachers / faculty to observe or attend the festivities.
- Compare the family’s and the soldier’s views on food and cooking.
- Make hardtack.
- Research the importance of coffee, (the soldiers drank approximately 2 1/2 quarts per day,) the change from issued rations of ground coffee to coffee beans, the use of dry beans on the battlefields.

RESOURCES

Coulter, Merton E. *Confederate Receipt Book: a compilation of over one hundred receipts adapted to the times*. University of Georgia Press, 1960.

Cornelius, Mrs. *A Country Kitchen 1850*. Maynard, MA, Chandler Press, 1987.

Gowan, Hugh & Judy. *Blue and Grey Cookery: authentic recipes from the civil war years*.

APPENDIX
Recipes from A Country Kitchen 1850

Instructions

Copy these recipes onto 3x5 index cards. One per student playing "Guess What I'm Cooking in my Kitchen"

Crumb Cakes Keep a bowl or pitcher with sour milk in it, and from time to time throw in the crumbs of bread which break off when it is sliced, and also the dry pieces left of the table. When you next want some griddle-cakes, take this mixture and break up all the pieces with your hand, add an egg, salt and saleratus and a few spoonfuls of flour. No griddle-cakes can be better.	Common Flat-Jacks One quart of sour milk, thicken it with flour, two teaspoonfuls of saleratus, and a little salt.
Buckwheat Cakes Make a thin batter with warm water, half a cup of yeast, and a quart of buckwheat, with a little salt. Let it stand to rise overnight; in the morning, stir in half a teaspoonful of saleratus. Pour on the griddle. And bake both sides. Some persons procure a large sheet of soapstone, lay it upon the stove and beat it through, and butter it in the same way as the griddle, to prevent the smell of burnt fat, which is very apt to rise while baking the cakes. Buckwheat and other griddle-cakes make a very good breakfast with coffee, when meat is not used at that meal.	Rice Flat-Jacks Boil some rice thin; add a pint of sour milk, then thicken it with flour; add a little salt and saleratus.
Waffles To a quart of milk, put eight eggs, a quarter of a pound of butter, a large gill of yeast, a little salt, and flour enough to make a batter the thickness of griddle-cakes. The iron must be heated on hot coals, and then buttered or greased with lard, and one side filled with batter, then be shut up and laid in the fire. After a few minutes turn it upon the other side. It takes about twice the time that it would to bake them on a griddle, and they are really no better, but look more inviting.	Crackers One quart of flour, with two ounces of butter rubbed in; one teaspoonful of saleratus in a wine glass of warm water; half a teaspoonful of salt, and milk enough to roll it out; beat it half an hour with a pestle, cut it in thin, round cakes, prick them, and set them in a very moderate oven. Bake them till crisp.
Hoe Cake Scald one quart of Indian meal in enough water to make a thick batter; add a teaspoonful of salt, one of molasses, and two of butter. Bake on a board, or in a pan.	Corn Cake One quart of rich milk, two well-beaten eggs, one teaspoonful of salt, and one of saleratus. Stir the milk into the meal, so there will be no lumps, and then the eggs, and the saleratus last. Bake one hour.