

Cooking Up History

Kindergarten–Grade 5

Every culture has its version of bread. Children enjoy making this Native American fry bread.

What You Need

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose or wheat flour
- 1 1/2 tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon dried skimmed milk powder
- 3/4 cup warm water
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- Oil for frying
- Mixing bowls and spoons, spatula
- Large skillet
- Cloth towels
- Baking sheet
- Paper towels

What to Do

- * Talk with your child about Native American peoples—that they lived in what is now the United States for many years before nonnative peoples came here, and that many tribes still live throughout the United States.
- * Read a book with your child about Native American life, both long ago and today, either fiction or nonfiction. With an older child, search the Internet for Native tribes, such as Blackfeet, Chippewa and Navajo. Explore Web sites to learn about tribes' geographic locations, tribal activities and programs.
- * Have your child help you gather all of the ingredients listed above. For a younger child, talk about what you're doing as you complete each step in the recipe. Your older child can complete the steps as you read them aloud. **Reminder:** You'll need to supervise your child closely, regardless of his age, as you work around a hot stove!

Follow this recipe:

—In a large bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder and salt. In a small bowl, stir together the dried milk, water and vegetable oil. Pour this liquid over the dry ingredients and stir until the dough is smooth (1 or 2 minutes). Add 1 tablespoon of flour if the dough is too soft.

—Knead the dough in the bowl with your hands about 30 seconds. Cover it with a cloth and let it sit 10 minutes.

—Line the baking sheet with paper towels to receive the finished loaves.

—Divide the dough into eight sections. Take one section and keep the rest covered in the bowl. Roll the dough into a ball and flatten with your hand. Then roll it into a very thin circle 8 to 10 inches across. The thinner the dough, the puffier the bread will be. Cover this circle with a cloth. Continue with the other seven sections of dough in the same way.

—In the large frying pan or skillet, pour vegetable oil to about 1 inch deep. As you begin to roll the last piece of dough, turn on the heat under the skillet. When the oil is hot, slip in a circle of dough. Fry for about 1 minute or until the bottom is golden brown. Turn the dough over with tongs or a spatula. Fry the other side for 1 minute.

—Put the fry bread on the baking sheet and continue with the other rounds of dough.

—Eat your fry bread while it's hot and crisp. Put honey on it if you like.

* Help your child to use the Internet or reference books to find out more about the role of bread in human history.

Let's Talk About It

Ask your child:

How is this bread different from the breads you usually eat?

What place does bread have in our daily lives and in the lives of people in other cultures?