



Be A Book Cook

2001 Home Baking Association National Award, Cindy Evans,
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“Interventions occurring later in life require greater expenditures of effort, and require involvement of greater proportions of the system than is the case in earlier portions of the life span.”

Richard M. Lerner, Director, Institute for Children,
Youth & Families, Michigan State University
Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, Winter, 1995

INTRODUCTION

The Be A Book Cook program uses children's literature to explore food themes, then expands the story through cooking experiences.

Thanks to funding from various community sources, each family leaves the program with a Book Cook Kit containing:

1. Featured book
2. Additional parent/child activities
3. Food and/or equipment supplies

BE A BOOK COOK BUILDS:

- Functional literacy¹ in families by combining reading, cooking, and other story-related activities
- Cooking skills that develop healthful individual and family practices²
- Family relationships and self-esteem³

WHY COOK WITH CHILDREN

“Children practice early math skills through counting, measuring, sequencing of events, and understanding of time. They practice small motor skills, improve eye-hand coordination, and learn to follow directions. Pre-reading skills are enhanced through numeral, symbol and word recognition.”

Mollie Katzen, *Pretend Soup*
Author and educator

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

- **Extension Food & Nutrition or Family & Consumer Sciences educator** coordinates programs and guides participants in choosing food activities appropriate to a child's age and abilities and how to plan for a positive, safe cooking experience that challenges the child's skills
- **Public Library** selects age-appropriate literature and tips for promoting early literacy skills
- **Parents as Teachers** supplements the program with finger plays, songs, and activities that extend the love of stories and provides additional opportunities to stretch the child's vocabulary and imagination
- **Family & Consumer Sciences classes** provided teen volunteers to assist
- **United Way's Success by 6** acts as the fiscal agent for grants received

COLLABORATORS

Kansas State University Research & Extension
Parents as Teachers (USD 501)
Topeka & Shawnee Co. Public Library
Family & Consumer
Sciences Education (USD 501)

FUNDING PARTNERS

Regional Prevention Center
Active 20/30 Club
United Way *Success by 6*
Kiwanis

TIPS FOR SAFETY AND SUCCESS

Set up by yourself ahead of time, then allow your child to feel useful as the “leader” while you play a supportive role.

Plan to manage safety: Consider your child’s age and protect him/her from sharp objects, burns, spills, etc. Some age-appropriate guidelines follow.

- **Preschoolers:** Read the recipe to them
 - Learn to wash hands, counters
 - Adult may pre-measure some ingredients, let child add, stir, tear, squeeze, and cut with plastic knife
 - Secure mixing bowl by placing bowl on damp cloth or computer mouse pad
- **K–2nd graders:** All of the above and ...
 - Begin to read recipe and instructions
 - Chop soft foods, grate cheese
 - Wash fruits and veggies
 - Measure, stir batters, and knead dough
- **3rd–6th graders:** All of the above and ...
 - Read the recipe, assemble all the ingredients
 - Learn how to use small appliances, preheat oven
 - Handle pans in and out of oven with parental supervision
- **Pre-teens:** With experience, can do it all!
- **Teens:** Plan foods into menus; shop; teach someone younger!

Keep food safety principles in mind:

- Discourage eating raw batters or dough
- **Clean.** Wash hands and surfaces (counters, cutting boards, utensils) often with hot soapy water
- **Separate.** Don’t cross-contaminate raw foods with ready-to-eat
- **Cook to proper temperatures.** Internal temperatures of 160°F
- **Chill.** Eggs, milk, and raw or leftover foods at 40°F or less

Demonstrate How-Tos:

- Teach children how to wash their hands
- Encourage them to keep their hands away from hair, nose, mouth, etc., while handling food
- Tie back long hair
- Show children how to use cooking utensils correctly
- Use a cooking surface that is at the child’s level; it is not safe for your child to stand on a chair or stool
- Teach children how to clean up

Be flexible. Keep an ingredient substitution chart handy. Be willing to explore food substitutions for an ingredient your child does not or cannot eat. Enjoy imperfections and creative shapes!

Talk to your child about the food you are preparing. Reinforce math skills (counting, measuring, sequencing of

events, using half whole-wheat flour, etc.). Notice your child’s eye-hand coordination and small motor skills.

Enjoy being a team. Sometimes you lead, sometimes you follow. Let this be a learning experience for you, too!

A PRIME EXAMPLE: IF YOU GIVE A PIG A PANCAKE

Facility:

- Large, open room with portable, low tables for activity stations and several electrical outlets
- Access to restrooms
- Easy to clean up

Participants:

- No more than 30 families with children up through 1st grade (ages 3-6)
- Other siblings do attend and enjoy the extended “story-stretcher” activities

Approximate Time: 1½ hours

Volunteers: Two teen or adult volunteers for each story-stretcher activity site is best

Cost: Free to participants

What We Did:

1. **Introductions**
2. **Finger plays or activities to get the children’s attention**
(Ex: Made 6-inch fabric “bean bag” pancakes. Using paper plate holders for flippers and catchers, had children practice catching pancakes)
3. **Read *If You Give a Pig a Pancake***
(Library youth specialist read and modeled ways to involve young children in the story)
4. **Families moved together at their own pace to the following story-stretcher activity stations**
 - **Oink Juice.** Volunteers assisted families with making fruity (pink, of course) blender drinks.
 - **Baking Pancakes.** Using plastic, resealable food bags, children measured pancake mix and other ingredients into the bags. The mixture was worked with their hands until ready to bake on the griddle. (Pancake batter doesn’t need to be smooth!) A hole was cut in the corner of the bags for squeezing batter onto the oiled or sprayed hot griddle.

Took time to discuss how to “fix” the batter if it is too thin or thick and how to tell when to flip them. Adults/teens flipped the pancakes, but children sprinkled on nuts, raisins, or chips just before they were flipped. Young children practiced flipping cardboard, 2½-inch pancakes with a turner.

Other Story-Stretcher Ideas

- Prepare Wholegrain Pancake Mix for participants to take home in resealable plastic bags for baking at home or gift-giving
- Pig puzzles
- Use pig-shaped cookie cutters to make cookies or sandwiches, or cut shapes from play dough
- Wallpaper a cardboard house
- Make envelopes

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Take-Home Book Kits

(1 for each participating family)

- Book and cassette tape, *If You Give a Pig a Pancake*, Laura Numeroff, 1998.
- Story stretcher activities
- Recipes
- Spatula (pancake turner)
- Pancake Mix

Story-Stretcher Activity Props

Options:

- 2½-inch cardboard pancake cutouts; write "P" on some, other letters on others
- Pancake turners
- Pig-shaped puzzles
- Pretzels, white chocolate, and yellow M&M candy pieces
- Pig-shaped cookie cutters; slices of cheese, bread, meat, or cookie dough to make pig cut-outs
- Oink Juice ingredients
- Large old cardboard box, scraps of wallpaper samples, glue
- Pancake mix(es) OR Wholegrain Pancake Mix plus ingredients for batter
- Measuring utensils, whisk, and large bowls (if preparing mix); plastic bags and blank labels to package the mixes
- Chopped nuts, raisins, or chips to add to the pancakes while cooking
- Gallon-sized, resealable plastic food storage bags
- Griddle(s), turners, pan spray or oil, and utensils to eat pancakes
- Brown sugar syrup or syrup, applesauce, and honey butter

Follow-up: Provide participants with a response card to return after their at-home experience.

After this program I:

- Read the book to my child.
- Completed the food activity with my child.
- Completed some of the story stretchers (please list): _____

Tell us about this experience (what did you enjoy, what did your child enjoy, what did each of you learn)?

Name: _____
Address: _____
City & State: _____ ZIP: _____
Phone number: _____ Age(s) of children: _____

Market the program. A postcard (below) was developed with an action photo from a session. The postcard was sent to legislators, commissioners, and other key decision makers highlighting Be A Book Cook goals, numbers served, collaborators, funding partners, and what participants received.



"I enjoyed that it was enjoyable for all my kids (2, 5, & 7) with appropriate areas for all ages...worth coming to!"

"We made an evening with the grandkids."

Other Books to Cook:

- Alphabite! A Funny Feast from A to Z.*** Charles Reasoner. 1985. Price, Stern, Sloan, Inc., The Putnam Group. New York, NY.
- Bread, Bread, Bread.*** Ann Morris. 1989. Mulberry Books. William Morrow & Co. New York, NY.
- Bread is for Eating.*** Davis and Phylis Gershtator. 1995. Henry Holt & Co. New York, NY.
- Hands.*** Lois Ehlert. 1997. Harcourt Brace. San Diego, CA.
- If You Give a Moose a Muffin.*** Laura Numeroff. 1997. HarperCollins Publishers. New York, NY.
- If You Give a Pig a Pancake.*** Laura Numeroff. 1998. HarperCollins Publishers. New York, NY.
- If You Give a Mouse a Cookie.*** Laura Numeroff. 2000. HarperCollins Publishers. New York, NY.
- Jamberry.*** Bruce Degan. 1983. Harper & Row. New York, NY
- Little Red Riding Hood, A Newfangled Prairie Tale.*** Lisa Campbell Ernst. 1995. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. New York, NY.
- Pretend Soup.*** Molly Katzen. 1994. Tricycle Press. Berkeley, CA.
- The Doorbell Rang.*** Pat Hutchins. 1986. Mulberry Books. New York, NY.
- The Little Red Hen Makes Pizza.*** Philemon Sturges. 1999. Scholastic. New York, NY.
- This is the Sunflower.*** Lola M. Schaefer. 2000. Greenwillow Books. Tien Wah Press. Singapore.
- Walter the Baker.*** Eric Carle. 1995. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. New York, NY.
- Yoko.*** Rosemary Wells. 1998. Scholastic Books. New York, NY.

RECIPES

Oink Juice

Makes three, 6-oz. servings

- 1 very ripe medium banana, peeled (may be frozen)
- ¾ cup pineapple juice
- ½ cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- ½ cup strawberries, washed and stems removed

1. Break banana into small pieces and put into a blender container.
2. Add juice, yogurt, and strawberries. Secure lid and blend until smooth.
3. Divide into 3 servings and serve immediately, refrigerate, or freeze.

Nutrition Facts: One, 6-oz. serving provides: 110 calories; 6 fat calories; 26 g total carbohydrates; 2 g dietary fiber; 22 g sugars; 0.5 g total fat, 0 sat. fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 3 g protein; 30 mg sodium; 353 mg potassium; 8% calcium; 45% vitamin C; 2% iron; 24 mg folate

Wholegrain Pancake Mix

Makes about 6 cups (28 oz) mix ; 8-9 pancakes.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole-wheat flour
- ¾ cup nonfat dry milk powder
- ½ cup quick-cooking rolled oats
- ½ cup cornmeal
- ½ cup white or brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

1. In a large bowl, stir together all the ingredients with a wire whisk.
2. Store in an airtight container in a cool, dry place.

Mix Nutrition Facts: One cup mix (4.6 oz.) provides: 470 calories; 15 g protein; 2 g fat, 0 sat. fat; 99 g carbohydrates; 7 g dietary fiber; 24 g sugars; 1280 mg sodium; 468 mg potassium; 6% vitamin A; 0% vitamin C; 30% calcium; 25% iron; 81 mcg folate

To prepare pancakes:

1. In a medium mixing bowl, mix together 1 large whole egg, 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, and ¾-1 cup milk.
2. Add 1 cup pancake mix and stir to blend, adding a little more milk or mix for desired batter thickness.

Pancake Nutrition Facts: One of eight pancakes provides: 115 calories, 37 calories from fat; 4 g total fat, 1 g sat. fat; 27 mg cholesterol; 14 g total carbohydrates; 1 g dietary fiber; 4 g sugars; 214 mg sodium; 117 mg potassium; 4 g protein; 8% vitamin A; 0% vitamin C; 8% calcium; 4% iron

Source: *Clabber Girl/Home Baking Association*

Honey Butter

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened slightly
- 3 tablespoons honey

1. Mix the butter and honey until blended well.
2. Chill in a pig-shaped cookie cutter, if desired, and slide out to serve with the warm pancakes.

Source: *Land O'Lakes*

Brown Sugar Syrup

- 2 cups light brown sugar
- 1 ½ cups water
- ½ teaspoon vanilla or maple flavoring

1. Bring sugar and water to a boil in a saucepan, stirring occasionally.
2. Reduce heat and simmer 3 minutes.
3. Remove from heat and stir in choice of flavoring.

RESOURCES:

Did You Wash 'Em? Kansas Department of Health and Environment. www.kdhe.state.ks.us.

Fields of Gold/Rainbow Bakery Cookbook. Preschool Lessons for Growing Kids. Literature and related preschool activities. Kansas Wheat Commission and Gold Medal Flour. 2000. www.kswheat.com.

Fight BAC! Partnership for Food Safety Education Web Site. www.fightbac.org. Food and Drug Administration's Hotline: 800-332-4010.

Home Baking Association Web site and phone number. www.homebaking.org — 785-478-3283

Tips for Using the Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children. Kids in the Kitchen. View at www.usda.gov/cnpp.

The Read Aloud Handbook. Jim Trelease. 1995. Penguin Books. New York, NY.

REFERENCES:

¹**One out of five adults can't read a story to his or her child.** (One out of five adults is *functionally illiterate*.) Adult Literacy in America. Educational Testing Service of Princeton, NJ. Reported by Marilyn Vos Savant. Parade Magazine. p16. 9/20/98.

²**America's Eating Habits: Changes & Consequences.** Frazao, Elizabeth. April 1999. Economic Research Service Report, USDA AIB #750. Order: 800-999-6799 or www.econ.ag.gov.

³**Dietary Guidelines for Americans.** Fifth edition, 2000. www.nutrition.gov

⁴**Zero to Three. Nutrition of Very Young Children.** National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families. August/Sept 2000. Vol. 21, No. 1. 734 15th Street, NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005-1013. 800/899-4301.

⁵**Family Time. Importance of family meal time.** Bowden, Blake. Ph.D. Children's Hospital Medical Center of Cincinnati. 1997. www.cincinnatichildrens.org (archived research topics).

⁶**Cross-Age Teaching + Community Service= Enhanced Self-Esteem.** Aspras, Marcie. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*. Summer 1997. pp28-31; 47.