

Think–Pair–Share



Name: _____

Instructions: Using your prior knowledge and past experiences, answer the following questions relating to birthday cakes and birthday celebrations. Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

THINK: Answer the following questions independently.

How do you celebrate birthdays in your household?

What are some common birthday traditions that you have heard of family or friends celebrating?

Sketch a picture of a birthday cake below.

Referring to your sketch, how much do you think the presentation or appearance of a birthday cake matters to the cake?

What visual characteristics make a birthday cake appealing? How important is a visually appealing birthday cake?

Where do you think your birthday cakes and birthday traditions originated?

(continued)

Think–Pair–Share *(continued)*



PAIR: Share your birthday traditions with a partner.

Write down two things you learned from your partner.

SHARE: Discuss as a large group.

Write down two things you learned from your classmates.

History of Birthday Cakes

Name: _____

Date: _____

Points: /10

Instructions: Read about the history of birthday cakes. Answer the questions relating to the text.

Birthdays are celebrated all around the world in a variety of ways with each culture having unique traditions that help individuals celebrate another year older. Baked goods are commonly used as a celebratory custom. Customs, traditions, and baked goods have evolved over time, but historians are unsure of the exact location where the origin of celebratory cakes first started.

Historians believe that Ancient Egyptians were the first to celebrate birthdays, because Egyptians believed that pharaohs became gods when they were crowned. Coronations were considered the “birth” of a god and celebrated. Food, drink, and festivities occurred when each new pharaoh was born, similar to “birthday parties” today.

Cakes were also common celebratory foods in Ancient Greece and Ancient Roman. Ancient Romans typically served cakes at birthdays and weddings. The circle cakes were made from flour, nuts, leavened years, and honey. Ancient Greece celebrated birthdays with cakes, specifically the sixth day of every lunar year with moon-shaped cakes that included lit candles. The cakes were offered up for Ancient Greece’s goddess of the moon, Artemis. The lit candles represented the moon’s shine. Artemis’ candles were considered the first “birthday candles.” Cake candles continued to be used in other ancient, Pagan cultures. Pagan cultures believed that fire from the lit candles scared away evil spirits and the smoke from candles carried prayers to the gods. People made noise and lit candles to ward off evil spirits on a person’s birthday.

In the early 1400’s, German bakeries first started selling sweet cakes, specifically marketed for birthday parties of young children. The birthday parties were referred to as *Kinderfest* and the cakes



were called *Geburtstagorten*. These cakes were designed for the wealthy, but by the Industrial Revolution, the birthday cakes were considered widespread in Germany.

By the 1700’s, German children were greeted on their birthday with a cake that included candles, multiple layers of cake, icing, and decorations. The candles totaled the child’s years in age plus one, to represent hope for another healthy year. In Switzerland in 1881, the first account of blowing out candles is recorded. Switzerland used candles on birthday cakes and each candle represented a year of life, then blew the candles out one by one.

The tradition of using decorating cakes and candles has continued for many Americans, with European descent, as customary for birthday celebrations. The cakes have evolved to include multiple layers, fillings, and flavors. Also, cake variations, such as, cupcakes are commonly used in the US. Other cultures celebrate with different types of cakes, but some variation of the birthday cake has become a staple in almost all cultures across the world. Celebratory cakes continue to evolve from their sweet history, dating all the way back to Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. *(continued)*

Sources:

Blog, D. (2013, January 13). Kinderfest. Retrieved March 30, 2021, from <https://delicioushistoryblog.wordpress.com/tag/kinderfest/>

Nowak, C. (2020, August 14). Why do we eat birthday cake? Retrieved March 30, 2021, from <https://www.rd.com/article/origin-of-birthday-cake/>

University, C. (2017, April 28). The real reason we eat cake on birthdays. Retrieved March 30, 2021, from <https://spoonuniversity.com/lifestyle/origin-of-birthday-cake>

History of Birthday Cakes *(continued)*



Questions:

1. Where were the first birthdays celebrated and why?

2. How did Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome vary in the celebratory cakes prepared?

3. Why did Pagan cultures light candles and sing?

4. What role did German bakeries play in the development of birthday cakes?

5. Where did people start blowing out the candles?

6. What traditions discussed in the text relate to your own birthday cake and celebration experiences?

Birthday Traditions Around The Globe

Name: _____

Date: _____

Points: /20

Instructions: Label on the map where each tradition originated.



- 1: United States of America
- 2: Egypt
- 3: Greece
- 4: Germany
- 5: China
- 6: France
- 7: Japan
- 8: India
- 9: Norway
- 10: Mexico

Birthday Traditions Around The Globe *(continued)*



Instructions: As you listen to the slides, record the birthday traditions and type of celebratory baked good used at birthdays around the globe in the boxes below.

United States	Egypt
Greece	Germany
China	France
Japan	India
Norway	Mexico

Birthday Traditions and Cake Lab Guide

Name: _____

Date: _____

Points: /15

Instructions: Research a specific culture or country of your choice and the birthday traditions most typically celebrated. Then, select a recipe that incorporates the recipe.

Country or Culture Selection: I am selecting _____, because...

Geography: Describe the location and mark on the map below where the tradition started.



History: How did the tradition first begin? Describe in detail.

Food Presentation: What makes the celebratory dessert unique? How is the food presented in a visually appealing way?

Any additional notes on the tradition or cake:

Cake Recipe Selection Lab Preparation



Name: _____

Date: _____

Points: /10

Instructions: Search the online and print sources for a recipe for your cake. Identify the yield, source, and ingredients. Describe the recipe procedures below and identify who is going to complete each step.

Yield: _____

Recipe Source: _____

Ingredients:

Procedures	Lab Member Indicated

Baked Good Evaluation



Name: _____

Date: _____

Points: /10

Instructions: After preparing the baked good, evaluate based on the sensory characteristics. Sample and compare your baked good to your peers' cultural baked goods.

Culture	Appearance	Aroma	Texture	Flavor

1. Overall, which was your favorite tasting and why?
2. Which was the most visually appealing and why?
3. Which baked good had the best texture and why?
4. Which was your favorite aroma and why?
5. How does sampling all of the different baked goods change your view of birthday celebrations?

Food Photography: Social Media Post



Name: _____

Date: _____

Points: /20

Instructions: Take a photograph of your birthday cake in a visually appealing way and write a caption that briefly describes the cake, culture, and traditions. This post will be hung around the classroom, so others can see your traditional cake. *Optional: You can post this on social media to see other's reactions.*

Your post should include:

- Country
- Food prepared
- Description of ingredients and food
- Brief history of the food

Extra Credit: At-Home Lab



Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Select one of the birthday cakes and prepare for a family member or friend. Evaluate the cake below. Include a photograph of the cake.

Insert photo here:

1. Which cultural cake did you choose to prepare and why?
2. What was the person's reaction to receiving a traditional birthday cake?
3. Would you prepare a traditional birthday cake again?
4. What was the most difficult part about preparing the cake?
5. What was the most rewarding part about preparing the cake?
6. How did preparing the cake help you bond with the person you prepared the cake for?

Perfect Birthday Cake Recipe

Ingredients for the cake

- 1 ½ cups (3 sticks) butter, softened
- 2 ¼ cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 1 Tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 ¼ cups milk
- ½ cup sprinkles, plus more for garnish, if desired

Ingredients for buttercream

- 1 ½ cups butter, softened
- 6 cups powdered sugar
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- pinch of kosher salt



Instructions

1. Make cake: Preheat oven to 350° and line three 8" cake pans with parchment paper. In a large bowl using hand mixer (or in the bowl of a stand mixer), beat together butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla and mix until combined.
2. In another large bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, baking powder, and salt. Add half of the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, beating until just combined. Pour in the milk and mix until fully incorporated. Add remaining dry ingredients and stir until just combined. Fold in sprinkles.
3. Divide batter evenly between prepared cake pans. Bake until slightly golden on top and a toothpick inserted into the middle comes out clean, about 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool completely.
4. Meanwhile, make buttercream: in a large bowl using a hand mixer, beat butter until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add powdered sugar, sour cream, vanilla, heavy cream, and salt and beat until smooth.
5. Assemble cake: Place the bottom layer of the cake on your serving platter and spread with buttercream; repeat with the second layer of cake. Place the last layer of cake on top, then frost the entire cake with buttercream. Garnish with more sprinkles, if desired.

Source: *Perfect Birthday Cake* by Lena Abraham

Abraham, L. (2021, November 1). Get festive with this dreamy birthday cake. Delish. Retrieved January 26, 2022, from <https://www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a23120595/funfetti-cake-birthday-cake-recipe/>