



## High Yield Baking... The Thrill of Skill

### Q: Why Learn to Bake and Cook?

Children and adults learn a lot together in the kitchen. The “high yield” results of cooking or baking together contributes to functional literacy and stronger relationships at home and in groups. Work place competencies learned include time (resource) management, team skills, following directions, and problem solving. Tummy driven young people add another component of an active, healthy, lifestyle—preparing your own food!

*“Research consistently shows that integrating nutrition and food education into the larger curriculum and providing children with hands-on cooking experiences changes what they are willing to eat.”*

The Cookshop Program. Toni Liquori. *Journal of Nutrition Education*. Sept/Oct. 1998.

**Getting Started:** Read the recipe top to bottom before starting!  
Plan tasks that fit age and coordination.  
Allow enough time; if needed, split the recipe into two days of preparation.  
Review *Tips for Baking Success* Fact Sheet.

### Age-Appropriate Kitchen Tasks

**Preschoolers:** Older children gain from helping younger ones learn.

**2 year olds can learn:** Proper hand washing  
Wipe table tops  
Play with utensils  
Scrub, wash, tear, snap, break into pieces  
Move pre-measured ingredients from one place to another; add ingredients to a bowl

**3 years** *All of the above plus...*  
Handle dough, begin kneading, simple shaping  
Pour cool liquids into mixture  
Mix dry ingredients with wire whisk or spoon  
(use an extra large bowl to contain mess)  
Shake liquids  
Spread soft spreads  
Place things in trash

**4 years** *All of the above plus...*  
Peel loose skinned oranges; hard cooked eggs  
Move hands to form round shapes (dough pieces)  
Mash fruits (bananas) or cooked vegetables  
Cut with dull scissors (snip green onions, dried fruits)  
Set table

### High Yield Results

Make the goal bigger than just making the food! Baking and cooking connect with national education standards.

**Visit:** [www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks](http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks).

**Art.** Creative menu additions, dough shaping, cake/cookie decoration

**Current affairs.** Ask members to gather TV or food and nutrition topics to share. Stroll the food aisles. What’s new? Visit [www.usda.gov/news/usdakids](http://www.usda.gov/news/usdakids)

### History/Social studies.

Explore what people ate in 1700s; the South; Lewis & Clark; pioneers; Native Americans.  
See [www.historycooks.com](http://www.historycooks.com)  
[www.kitchenlane.com](http://www.kitchenlane.com)  
[www.aromancewithbaking.com](http://www.aromancewithbaking.com)

**Cultural Ties.** Find and share favorite family or cultural recipes. Write the recipe and enter it as a Recipe of the Month at [www.homebaking.org](http://www.homebaking.org)  
**An African American Cookbook.** Phoebe Bailey. [www.goodbks.com](http://www.goodbks.com)

**Literacy.** Read a related story together. Reading and following directions. Write recipes, plan events, give directions, prepare invitations, write club food newsletter. Write product labels.  
**Team Nutrition Booklist**  
[www.msue.msu.edu/fnh/tn/booklistintro.htm](http://www.msue.msu.edu/fnh/tn/booklistintro.htm)

**Math.** Calculate the dough or batter volume and weight. How many will it serve? Find your product’s net weight in ounces and grams. Double or halve recipes to produce a certain end quantity. Calculate recipe costs and price products for bake sale profit. Conduct a consumer survey and see what percentage of the group liked or disliked a recipe? Compare food prices and nutritional values.

**Science.** Ingredients have unique functions in batter and dough. Temperatures matter! Accurate weights and measures are critical. What adjustments does high altitude require? What physical and chemical changes occur? More  
**Kitchen Science:** [homebaking.org](http://homebaking.org)

**Technology.** Explore baking/cooking websites. Use small and large appliances; read the

**5-6 years**      *All of the above plus...*  
 Help adult measure ingredients (stir, spoon, level)  
 Cut with a blunt knife (plastic or tableware)  
 Use a hand held egg beater or whisk  
 Crush crackers in a bag with a rolling pin  
 Sprinkle ingredients on salads, cakes, cookies, casseroles

**K-2<sup>nd</sup> graders:** *All of the above plus...*  
 (ages 6-8)      Clean surfaces before and after  
 Wash fruits and/or veggies  
 Gather ingredients, pans;  
 Grease or spray baking pans  
 Stir dry ingredients, spoon in dry measure cup; level off  
 Measure liquid ingredients  
 Add measured dry and liquid ingredients into mixing bowl  
 Learn to crack eggs  
 Cut fruit, margarine or butter sticks with plastic or table  
 knife on cutting board  
 Push buttons on blenders, processors  
 Knead dough  
 Preheat the oven (adults help load products in hot oven)  
 Wash dishes, put away ingredients or utensils

**Get adult help** with sharp knives or peelers, opening cans/bottles, stirring thick mixtures, loading and unloading the oven and handling baking pans

**3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders:**      *All of the above, plus...*  
 (Ages 9-12 and up)      Learn safe knife skills for chopping, dicing, and cutting  
 Teach how to handle food equipment safely  
 Teach to place oven racks and load oven (while oven is cold)  
 Safe operation of electric mixer, microwave, bread machine  
 food processor and hand held blender  
 Follow a recipe, measure accurately and prepare a product  
 Read and interpret ingredient and food labels  
 Handle/store food ingredients and finished products safely  
 Plan and prepare simple meals, snacks  
 Clean up—how and what to wash in dishwasher or by hand

**Teens:**      *All of the above, plus...*  
 Tasks requiring multiple preparation steps or close timing  
 Create new flavor combinations, shapes or decoration  
 Plan and prepare whole menus for meals or entertaining  
 Make shopping lists and shop for ingredients  
 Help younger children learn about food and how to prepare  
 Enjoy cooking with peers

**Pictures worth a thousand words?**

**American Egg Board *Cooking Methods* section.** [www.aeb.org](http://www.aeb.org)  
**Baking for Success video.** Home Baking Association. [www.homebaking.org](http://www.homebaking.org)  
**Betty Crocker's Kids Cook!** General Mills, Inc. [www.bettycrocker.com](http://www.bettycrocker.com)  
**Baking 9-1-1. How to section.** [www.Baking911.com](http://www.Baking911.com)  
**Cooking 1,2,3.** [www.cherrymkt.com](http://www.cherrymkt.com)  
**Kids a Cookin'.** TV and video series. [www.kidsacookin.org](http://www.kidsacookin.org) Spanish and English.  
 Kansas State University Family Nutrition Program, 2001-2003  
**Kids in the Kitchen.** Micah Pulleyn & Sarah Bracken. 1994. Altamont Press.  
 Sterling/Lark Book, 387 Park Avenue South, NY. 10016.

**Cooking/Baking Connects Nutrition What, When and Why**

**Preschoolers:**  
 Promotes a wide variety of foods  
 Need to try new foods over 12 times!  
 Adults model nutritious meals/snacks  
 Connects good food choices with growth  
 Focuses on sensory experiences

**K-2:**  
 Connects food and health—what foods do for you  
 Introduces food groups/Food Guide Pyramid  
 Helps child take food responsibility for choices  
 Offers incentive/rewards

**3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>:**  
 Offers independence  
 Forms lifelong habits  
 Emphasizes skill development  
 Helps expand positive nutrition choices  
 Teaches shopping, menu-planning, cooking confidence  
 Provides practice interpreting ads, media portrayal of body image

**Teens**  
 Helps reduce peer influence, develop own tastes, entertaining skill  
 Food knowledge and skill help reduce erratic eating habits  
 Provides outlet for interest in how nutrition affects them  
 Include use of nutrition analysis software to compare commercial foods and home prepared; assess their diets  
 Part of active lifestyles; emphasize effect on sports, appearance, academic performance

**Ready to Learn?**  
 Cafeteria Classroom  
 School Foodservice & Nutrition. April 2000.  
 Connie Evers, RD