

Fast Food of the Past
By Shirley Peters and Tammy Lashway

Grade: 2-4

Focus: At the end of the lesson the students will:

1. Be able to identify the parts of the chuck wagon.
2. Be able to describe the role and responsibilities of the camp cook.
3. Compare the difference between cooking today and on the cattle drives.

Standards at the end of 4th Grade

Social Studies Content Standard 4: Benchmark 1, 5

Speaking and Listening Content Standard 2: Benchmark 2, 3, 4

Mathematics Content Standard 5: Benchmark 3

Summary: Students should appreciate the relative ease of modern cooking compared with the responsibilities of the camp cook.

Exploration: *Today we are going to be exploring fast food of the past. We will compare the differences in food preparations of the past and present.*

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever cooked a meal? What did you cook?
2. Have you ever cooked over a fire while camping? What did you cook?
3. How do you think cowboys on the trail got their meals? Were there any fast food restaurants?
4. Who prepared the meals for the cowboys? What do you think his job included? What do you think they ate?

Defined Terms:

Chuck- term used by cowboys for food

Chuckwagon- a wagon redesigned by Charles Goodnight to carry food supplies. The cook drove it during round-ups and on trail drives. Food was prepared from the wagon.

Cattle drive- the moving of a herd of cattle from one area to another that took at least a month

Dutch oven- A large heavy cast iron pot. Coals from the fire were placed under the pot and on top of the lid. Heat from the top and bottom helped to cook or bake the food evenly.

Materials Needed:

1. Pictures of cattle drives and chuck wagons
<http://wyomingtalesandtrails.com/cattle5.html>
<http://www.wagons-wheels.com/chuckwagons.html>
<http://www.phudpucker.com/bluebonn/chuck%20wagon.htm>
2. The American Frontier: Pioneers, Settlers and Cowboys 1800-1899 by William C. Davis, New York: Smithmark Publisher Inc., 1992. ISBN 0 8317 1825 0
3. Cast iron Dutch oven
4. Cowboy Educational Trunk—available from Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site

Activity:

Teacher will use pictures, book and cowboy trunk to describe and explain the history of the chuck wagon.

As a class create a T-chart comparing cooking at the chuck wagon vs. modern cooking.

Application:

Pre-arrange a class visit at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS. Be sure to request a visit to the chuck wagon. Have students observe how the meal is prepared and cooked on the fire. While the meal is cooking, visit the bunkhouses and lower-yard that is related to the cowboy's lives. Return to the chuck wagon to sample "fast food" of the past.

Optional Activity:

Have students prepare a meal using a Dutch oven. Find recipes at
<http://geocities.com/ocktober7/chuckwagon2.html>
<http://www.nps.gov/grko/historyculture/index.htm>