

51 - Cookies

Do you think chocolate chip is the most popular cookie? Well, it's not! It's the Oreo! But who invented the cookie? And why?

Believe it or not, cookies started out as a way for early bakers to test ovens for baking cakes -- but today cookies are a massive worldwide treat, with billions eaten every year. So, how did cookies become so massively popular? Turns out, there were actually two main factors: kids and war.

After the Persians began baking cookies, the bakers gave the little bits to children, who discovered just how tasty they were. And, as you know, if the kids like it, it's going to catch on. At the same time, in the year 711, not long after the cookie was invented, Arabic forces invaded and conquered the region that is now Spain. While the Europeans did not like seeing outsiders take over their lands they did enjoy the sweet treats the Arabs brought with them.

Arabic cooking recipes soon spread to other parts of Europe, including France and Italy. In the 1500's, Renaissance cookbooks of Italy had lots of cookie recipes. One Italian cookie that was light and crunchy on the outside and soft inside, was brought to France during that time, and the French chefs found a way to perfect it. They called it - le Macaron!

Things You'll Learn

1. How and why did little globs of cake become cookies?
2. How did cookies spread across the world? What are some other names for cookies?
3. How were chocolate chip cookies invented?

Activities

1. Read [If You Give a Mouse a Cookie](#) by Laura Numeroff or [The Duckling Gets a Cookie!?](#) by Mo Willems. What kind of cookies do the Mouse or Duckling like? What is your favorite kind of cookie?
2. Here are some fun activities with a [cookie sheet!](#) Cookie sheets are for more the baking!

3. Make [no bake cookies!](#) There are lots of different kinds of cookies and some don't need to be baked in the oven! Try no bake cookies for a fun, quick, low mess activity.

Additional Resources

How are sandwich cookies like Oreos made? Watch [here!](#) What is your favorite part of a sandwich cookie? Do you prefer the cookie part or the frosting? Do you eat the whole thing or do you separate the pieces? For those who can't have gluten, Oreo just released a gluten free version of their classic cookie.

Kid News

Have you ever gotten lost or accidentally walked away with the wrong group? The same thing can happen to penguins! [This](#) video of Rockhopper penguins was taken on the Falkland Islands. Two groups meet and seem to have a conversation but one of the penguins gets confused and has to be reminded of what he was doing by a friend. Everybody needs a friend to look out for them sometimes!¹

¹ This activity guide is for the Who Smarted? podcast www.WhoSmarted.com