

Lesson Twelve - Cookies and Congratulations!

Congratulations! You and the girls you teach have learned a lot about cooking and baking. This cookie lesson may be used at any time, but I've left it for the end because it's a great way to celebrate all of the skills your group has learned.



The girls enjoy baking different types of cookies.

Everyone loves fresh-baked cookies. No doubt you have some favorite cookie recipes. I hope you'll use them and encourage the girls to bring their favorite cookie recipes to share with everyone. Make copies of the recipes and put them together in a little booklet. This would make a nice keepsake for the girls, and family and friends would enjoy a copy too!

In this lesson, the girls will learn:

- Different ways cookies can be made
- How to make one or more types of cookies

Review:

- Creaming butter (Lesson 3)
- Correctly measuring flour (Lessons 2 & 3)

Give each girl a copy of:

- Before I Bake Cookies
- FCH Celebration Cookies Recipe
- Certificate of Achievement (See Appendix C)

Read **“Before I Bake Cookies”** with the girls. Talk about the many different ways of making cookies. Look through cookbooks with the girls. Encourage them to bring one from home. Many cookbooks categorize cookies by the preparation method - drop cookies, bar cookies, rolled cookies, and others.

In a hurry? Bar cookies are the quickest to make. Brownies are a popular type of bar cookie and you'll find recipes for others in most cookbooks.

I encourage you to try some of the other types of cookies. In the **“Extending the Lesson”** section, you'll find a versatile butter cookie recipe that can be used for rolled cookies (with cookie cutters), spritz cookies (with a cookie gun), or refrigerator cookies. Each of these could be taught in separate lessons. Since this dough requires varying times to chill, you may need to make a batch of dough ahead of time for the girls to bake in class.

Let's Celebrate!

Cookies are always fun to make! This is a good end-of-the-year lesson to celebrate the girls' accomplishments. At the end of our school year in May, I like to plan a special activity such as this one, and present each girl with a **certificate**. Sample certificates are included (see Appendix) for you to copy for each girl. Just add their name and date. Print it on a pretty paper or certificate form and make a special presentation to each girl. Take pictures and celebrate!

Freezer bags are heavier than food storage bags. They are “vapor proof” – odors do not seep through the plastic. Squeeze the air out as you seal the bag. To remove more air, open one corner, insert a straw and suck out the air. Air coming in contact with food causes **freezer burn**. Proper packaging can prevent this.

Christmas time is the busiest cookie baking season of the year. Cookies make a nice gift and one the girls can make themselves. **Streamline** your cookie making by mixing many batches on one day and **freezing or refrigerating dough**. Raw dough may be frozen up to 6 months or kept in the refrigerator 1-2 weeks. Tightly wrap dough in waxed paper, plastic wrap or foil, then place in a **freezer bag**, squeeze out the air and seal. It’s better to wrap dough in several smaller batches that will thaw faster than in one large batch.

Thaw the dough and you’re ready for a baking day. Using 4-6 cookie sheets will speed up the process. While one batch is baking, you can place dough on the other cookie sheets. Be sure the cookie sheets are cool; putting dough on warm pans will cause the dough to spread before baking and may ruin your cookies.

Here’s a **tip to cool your cookie sheets quickly**. Put several bath towels in the freezer an hour or so before baking. When the first batch of cookies comes out of the oven, remove them from the cookie sheet. Lay a folded cold towel on the counter and place the cookie sheet on top. The cold towel will cool the pan in a hurry, and protect your countertop at the same time!

Cookies cool best on a wire rack. These are inexpensive and a worthwhile investment. When baking many batches, rotate cool cookies off the racks and onto paper towels or into the cookie jar!

Store crisp cookies in containers with loose fitting lids, such as glass cookie jars. My grandma used to bake thousands of cookies every Christmas and stored crisp cookies in covered roasting pans and stock pots! That works well, too. Store moist, chewy cookies in plastic containers with tight fitting lids. A slice of apple can be added to help keep the cookies moist.

Baked cookies may be kept frozen up to one year. Wrap tightly in heavy-duty foil or store in freezer bags.

The recipe for **FCH Celebration Cookies** is an easy-to-make drop cookie that can be made with any combination of chips, candies and nuts. The dough may be divided and one batch baked with chips, another with candy bits, or your favorite combination.

Enjoy this recipe – and your accomplishments in Future Christian Homemakers – with this “Celebration Cookie”!

What you'll need for this lesson:

Ingredients for FCH Celebration Cookies:

2 1/2 Cups All-Purpose flour
Baking soda
Salt
1 Cup butter (2 sticks)
1/2 Cup sugar
1 Cup brown sugar (light or dark)
2 eggs
vanilla
Chocolate chips, M & M's, or other stir-ins (2 Cups)
1 Cup chopped nuts, optional

Supplies:

Medium sized bowl for dry ingredients
Large Mixing bowl
Set of graduated measuring cups for dry ingredients
Measuring Spoons
Spatula
Mixing Spoon
Small bowl (crack the egg into it before adding to dough)
Electric Mixer (Portable or stand mixer)
Cookie sheets (at least 2)
Cooling racks
Hot Pads
Timer

Certificates (See Appendix C or create your own)

To serve:

Napkins
Small plates (optional)
Milk or juice to drink
Glasses or paper cups

Name:

Before I Bake Cookies

Smelling the aroma of fresh-baked cookies as I walked into my grandma's house is one of my fondest childhood memories. Each October my grandmother began baking thousands of cookies for Christmas. She baked every conceivable type of cookie, and plenty of each.

From the time I was a toddler, my grandma put dough into my hands and taught me how to roll it out and use cookie cutters to create reindeer and snowmen, Santas and stars. For me, the best part was decorating and then eating them!

Whether you make cut-out cookies or chocolate chip, spritz or bar cookies, nothing beats a glass of milk and fresh-baked cookies warm from the oven.

The word "cookie" comes from the Dutch word "**koekje**" or "**little cake**". Many of the same ingredients are used in both cookies and cakes, but cookies have few liquid ingredients and bake much more quickly. Mixing techniques are very similar also. Usually you will cream butter or shortening first, add sugar and eggs, then add the dry ingredients.

Let's look at the different types of cookies and how each is made. **Drop cookies**, such as chocolate chip and oatmeal cookies, are the most common type of cookie. A small amount of dough is dropped from a spoon onto a cookie sheet and then baked. The cookies spread out and flatten somewhat as they bake.

Bar cookies, such as brownies, have fairly thick dough that is spread into a pan, baked and then cut into squares. This is a great way to make many cookies quickly.

Peanut Butter cookies and Pecan Crescents are examples of **molded cookies**. Each cookie is shaped, or molded, by hand. They may be simply rolled into balls and then flattened with a fork or a cookie stamp, or they may be shaped into logs, crescents or other shapes.

Pressed or Spritz cookies are made using a cookie gun or a pastry bag. Soft cookie dough is put into the gun (or pastry bag), and then pressed through a specially shaped plate in the end of the cookie gun. The plates can be changed to create different shapes. You must use a recipe designed for a cookie press or cookie gun so that the dough is the right consistency. This is a great way to make hundreds of small cookies quickly.



The girls use a decorator's bag to ice their cookies.



Three types of cookie guns: an electric, a manual trigger type, and an old-fashioned screw type. Each pushes the dough down the tube through the opening in the end & onto the cookie sheet.

Refrigerator cookies are sometimes still called **icebox cookies** because dough is rolled into a long roll, then chilled in the refrigerator (once called the icebox). The chilled dough is then sliced and baked. This is a great way to make lots of cookies quickly. Slice-and-bake cookie dough can be purchased in the grocery store, ready for baking. It's very convenient, but it is cheaper to mix your own dough and roll it up in waxed paper to make your own tubes or logs of cookie dough.

Rolled cookies are more time-consuming to prepare but they are especially popular at holidays. A basic butter dough is chilled, and then rolled out with a rolling pin on a floured surface. Shapes are cut out with cookies cutters. They can be sprinkled with colored sugar before baking, or frosted and decorated after baking.

Whatever type of cookies you make, it is important to use **the right ingredients**. **Flour for cookie making** is usually All-Purpose flour. Do not use self-rising flour unless the recipe calls for it. Self-rising flour already has baking soda or other leaveners added to it. Be sure to read the label carefully when purchasing flour. You can use bleached or unbleached All-Purpose flour. Most people cannot tell the difference but some prefer flour, such as King Arthur flour, that has not been chemically treated. Cake flour is not well-suited for cookie making as it is made from soft wheat that makes tender cakes, but crumbly cookies.

Butter, either salted or unsalted, is always an excellent choice for cookies. It can be expensive and some people need to avoid butter for dietary reasons. **Margarine** may be substituted if it is regular stick margarine. Do not use diet, "lite", or tub margarine. These contain too much water and can ruin your cookies by spreading the dough too thin. **Shortening** is another butter substitute that gives good results. A butter-flavored variety adds the taste of butter to your cookies without the saturated fat.

Vanilla is an important flavoring. Even though the amount in the recipe may be small, don't omit it. Use pure vanilla extract, not imitation flavoring. While pure extract is more expensive, it is far superior in taste.

Eggs are large size unless otherwise stated in the recipe. Egg substitute may be used if special dietary needs make that necessary. Measure the exact amount carefully, following the guidelines on the carton.

Sugar in cookie dough is usually white, granulated sugar and/or **brown sugar**. If you run out of one or the other, they can be substituted in equal amounts, but the flavor will differ. Brown sugar gets its flavor from molasses and is available in light or dark. Unless a recipe specifies one or the other, you can choose either type. Dark brown sugar has a stronger molasses flavor and yields a darker cookie.

Always use fresh ingredients and be sure you have enough of everything before you begin mixing. Cookies are fun to make and delicious to eat. They're a great snack, dessert, or a gift you can make.

Name:

FCH Celebration Cookies

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 Cups All-Purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 Cup butter, room temperature
- 1/2 Cup sugar
- 1 Cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 2 eggs
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla
- 2 Cups chocolate chips or other stir-in* (12 oz. bag)
- 1 Cup chopped nuts, optional

Method:

1. **Preheat the oven** to 375 degrees. Measure the **flour, baking soda,** and **salt** into a medium sized bowl. Stir well and set aside.
2. Cream the **butter** in a large mixing bowl.
3. Gradually add the **sugar** and **brown sugar**. Beat well. Turn off the mixer. Scrape the sides with a rubber spatula.
4. Add the **eggs**, one at a time. Beat after each addition. Add the **vanilla**.
5. Add the dry ingredients, half at one time, to the creamed ingredients. Mix till blended. Scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl with the spatula (mixer turned off).
6. With a big spoon, stir in the **chocolate chips** (or other stir-in ingredients) and the **nuts**.
7. Drop by the spoonful onto ungreased cookie sheet, 3 inches apart.
8. Bake at 375 degrees for 10-12 minutes.
9. Cool & enjoy!

*Instead of chocolate chips, try any of the following: Peanut butter chips, butterscotch chips, toffee bits, M & M's. Combine your favorite stir-ins! You'll find many other flavored chips available at Christmas time. King Arthur flour sells cherry, lemon, cinnamon and other flavored mini-chips year round. Call 1-800-827-6836 or go to www.BakersCatalogue.com.



Extending the Lesson...
Granny Laurie's 3-in-1 Cookies



A cookie gun presses the dough through templates to create small shaped cookies quickly.

Ingredients:

- 3 1/2 Cups All-Purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 Cup butter, softened
- 1 Cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla or almond extract

Method:

Yield: 3-4 dozen

1. Measure **flour**, **baking powder** and **salt** into a medium sized bowl. Stir well and set aside.
2. Cream **butter** until fluffy.
3. Gradually add **sugar** and continue beating until light and fluffy.
4. Add **eggs**, beating well after each addition. Add **vanilla** and stir well.
5. Stir flour mixture into the butter mixture, adding about 1 Cup of dry ingredients at a time. Blend well after each addition.
6. Wrap dough in waxed paper or plastic wrap and chill.

This dough may be used for three different types of cookies:

1. Rolled Cookies: Chill dough several hours or overnight. On a floured surface, roll out about one quarter of the dough. Keep the rest refrigerated. Roll to 1/4" thickness. Cut out shapes with cookie cutters dipped in flour. Place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees 10-12 minutes or until pale golden in color. Cool on wire racks. Frost and decorate with colored sugars as desired. Or, cookies may be sprinkled with colored sugar before baking.

Yield: About 3 dozen cookies (depending on size of cookie cutters)

2. Spritz Cookies: Chill dough 1 hour. Insert a decorating disk into the end of a cookie gun. Pack dough firmly into the tube and screw on the

trigger end. With the decorating end held straight down on an ungreased cookie sheet, squeeze the trigger to release dough. Lift the gun straight up. If the cookie is not well formed, chill the dough another hour to firm it up. Try different decorating disks; some release dough more easily than others. Bake at 375 degrees 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on wire racks.

Yield: About 10 dozen small cookies

3. Refrigerator Cookies: Spoon a third of the dough in a straight line onto a piece of waxed paper. Shape it into a log and wrap tightly. The diameter of the log will determine the size of the cookies. Repeat with remaining dough. Refrigerate dough at least 4 hours, then slice with a knife into 1/4 inch thick pieces. Bake on an ungreased cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool. Cookies may be iced if desired.

Yield: 3-4 dozen cookies



Create your own “slice-and-bake” cookies. Shape the dough and then wrap it. Waxed paper is easier to work with than plastic wrap.

Variations:

Refrigerator cookies: Roll the log of raw dough into sprinkles (“jimmies”) or finely chopped nuts pressing them gently into the dough, then slice and bake as above. This gives a decorated edge to the cookies.

Spritz Cookies: Color the dough with food coloring. Gel colors, available in tubes in most grocery stores, work better than liquid food coloring. The gel gives more vivid colors and does not thin the dough as liquid coloring may.

Don't have a cookie gun? Use a pastry bag or large cake decorating bag fitted with a large tip. Room temperature dough works best. Here half the dough was colored then placed in the bag with some plain dough giving a swirl effect (use a 1M or other large star tip).

