

Lesson Three - Quick Breads

Quick Breads are simple to make and delicious to eat. The girls will enjoy making their own loaf of banana bread and they will learn important skills that apply to the preparation of many other baked goods.

In this lesson, the girls will learn to:

- Grease a pan
- Differentiate between baking soda and baking powder
- Cream butter or margarine using a hand-held electric mixer
- Recognize abbreviations for cup, tablespoon and teaspoon
- Test quick breads for doneness

Review:

- Measuring dry ingredients (Lesson 2)

Give each girl a copy of:

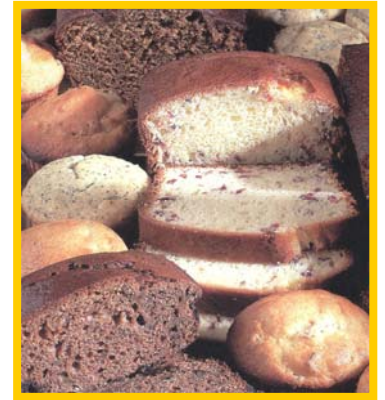
- Learning to Bake Quick Breads
- Best Banana Bread recipe
- Recipe Abbreviations worksheet (see Appendix)

Read the student page together "Learning to Bake Quick Breads".

Demonstrate the action of baking soda and baking powder. First, put a quarter cup of warm water in a glass measuring cup or a drinking glass. Add 1 teaspoon of **baking powder**. Watch and listen to it foam and fizz. If it does not foam, it's time to buy a fresh supply of baking powder! To ensure freshness, baking powder should be replaced about every 6 months.

Add a quarter cup of warm water to another glass. This time, add 1 teaspoon of **baking soda**. It dissolves, but there's little foaming action. Next, add 1 teaspoon of lemon juice. Baking soda produces many more bubbles when it's mixed with an acid rather than with water alone. This is the reason lemon juice, or some other acid like vinegar or buttermilk, is often used in quick breads to enhance rising. If kept dry, baking soda may be stored indefinitely.

Baking soda and **baking powder** are not the same, but both produce carbon dioxide bubbles to make the bread rise. Why did the baking powder produce bubbles when only water was added to it? Remember: Baking powder is comprised of two acids plus baking soda. Water alone will start the reaction between the acids and the baking soda. That's why it's important to keep baking powder dry and tightly covered.



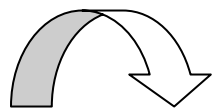
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Baking Powder =
Baking soda + 2 acids +
cornstarch

Baking Soda =
Pure sodium bicarbonate

Our recipe for Best Banana Bread contains **1 teaspoon of lemon juice**. After this demonstration, students should understand why it's an important ingredient.

Leader's Tips:



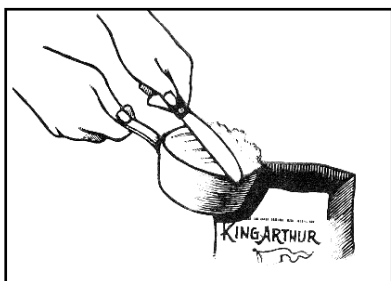
Preheat the oven
to 350 degrees.

Loaf pans may be made of aluminum, glass or foil. If you are working with several girls, disposable foil pans may be a good choice. The girls can write their name on the bottom (outside) of the pan with permanent marker before they begin. Since foil pans full of batter are less stable than regular pans, an adult should take them in and out of the oven.

Be sure there is enough room for air to circulate around all the pans in the oven. The back of the oven is hotter than the front, so watch the pans in the back to be done first. You can rotate the pans from back to front after the first 30 minutes of baking.

I found the 8" x 4" disposable foil pans purchased in the grocery store worked very well. I had two girls work together to make one recipe of banana bread and then split the batter between their two pans.

Whatever type of pan you use, show the girls how to **grease the pan**. If you use a cooking oil spray, hold the pan over the sink and then spray the bottom and sides lightly. Or, put about 1 T. of shortening on a paper towel and thoroughly rub the bottom and sides of the pan. Discard any excess.



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Review measuring dry ingredients. In Lesson Two, the girls learned to measure Bisquick® baking mix. We'll measure flour the same way.

It will be easier for the girls to **measure the flour** if it is in a canister. Show the girls how to fluff the flour with a spoon. Although it is already pre-sifted, it does pack down in shipment. Gently spoon the flour into a 1 Cup measure. Run the straight edge of a knife across the rim to level the flour. Repeat for the second cup of flour, then add the other dry ingredients (Step 4).

Measure baking powder, baking soda and salt with measuring spoons. Scoop the teaspoon into the baking powder, then level it with the straight edge of a knife. Be sure the girls can identify the ½ teaspoon, 1 teaspoon, and tablespoon. It's best to measure the dry ingredients first, and then the same set of spoons can be used later to measure the liquids.

Set out the **butter** or margarine ahead of time so that it will soften. Do not melt it! **Creaming the butter or margarine** (Step 5) incorporates air into it, creating little spaces for the leavening to expand the batter as it bakes. Creaming can be done by hand with a large spoon, but an

electric mixer makes the job easier. Medium-high speed works well for creaming butter.

Show the girls how to place the beaters down into the bowl and safely **operate the mixer**, keeping fingers and utensils out of the bowl while the mixer is running. Each pair of girls needs a mixer to use. Ask several girls to bring a portable hand mixer from home. Note: a battery-operated whisk is not strong enough to cream butter.

When the butter is light and fluffy, slowly **add the sugar**, (Step 6) beating thoroughly after each addition. Do not worry about over-beating at this stage; the fluffier the better!

Before adding the eggs to the batter, I suggest the girls crack one egg at a time into a custard cup or small bowl, check it for eggshells, and then add it to the batter. It's much easier to fish out a piece of eggshell from a small bowl, than trying to remove it from the batter! Turn the mixer off and scrape the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula to be sure the ingredients are well blended.

After adding the eggs, **add the bananas, milk and lemon juice** to the creamed mixture. Encourage the girls to read the recipe carefully and note that the milk is measured in tablespoons, the lemon juice in teaspoons.

Next, the **dry ingredients are added** (Step 10). Once the flour is added, it is very important not to over-mix the batter. Often the girls have had so much fun using the mixer that they don't want to stop beating! But now it's time to set the mixer aside and stir in the dry ingredients with a large spoon - just until everything is completely moistened. Over-mixing at this point will cause tough bread.

Baking times in most recipes are given as a span, (55-60 minutes), because ovens vary. The type of pan you use, and how many pans are in the oven, will affect the baking time. If the oven is full of pans, the bread will take longer to bake. Start checking the bread a few minutes before the lowest baking time given.

Show the girls how to **test for doneness**. Insert a toothpick into the center of the bread. If it comes out clean, the bread is done. If not, bake another 5 minutes and recheck with a clean toothpick. Repeat until the toothpick comes out clean. **This should be done by an adult**. Oven mitts will protect your hands better than hot pads.

Cool the bread in the pan for 10 minutes before removing it. It's nice for the girls to take home their loaf of bread to share with their families. The bread can remain in the pan to make it easier to transport. Use your demonstration loaf for snack, or make some ahead of time so the class can enjoy some bread together.

If you have any leftover, Quick Breads **freeze** very well. When the bread is thoroughly cool, wrap it tightly in heavy-duty aluminum foil. Label and date it. Freeze for up to 3 months.

After the kitchen has been cleaned up, give each girl a copy of the **Recipe Abbreviations** worksheet (see Appendix). This will reinforce what they have learned in the kitchen. You may want to complete the page together or ask the girls to write in their answers and then go over it with them. This is not a test, but a worksheet designed to teach them common measurement abbreviations .

What you'll need for this lesson:

Ingredients (per recipe):

2 Cups All-Purpose Flour
Baking Powder
Baking Soda
½ Cup butter or stick margarine
1 Cup sugar
2 eggs
2-3 bananas
2 Tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon lemon juice
Cooking Spray or Shortening to grease pan

Supplies:

Loaf pan(s)
Large Mixing Bowl
Medium Mixing Bowl
Portable Electric Mixer
Measuring Cup for dry ingredients
Measuring Cup for liquids
Measuring Spoons
Large Mixing Spoon
Rubber Spatula
Fork
Table knife
Small bowl or custard cup
Small plate



Bring from home

To serve Banana Bread for snack:

Napkins
Small plates
Knife to slice the bread (on a cutting board or plate)
Cups or glasses
Milk or juice to drink

Name:

Learning to Bake Quick Breads

Your Notes

There are two main types of bread: Yeast breads, which we will explore in another lesson, and quick breads. Both types contain the same basic ingredients: Flour, liquids, and leaven (rhymes with heaven). There can be any variety of other ingredients, but these three are the building blocks of bread.

Yeast is one type of **leavening**. For centuries, people used yeast to make their bread rise. Bread dough made with yeast requires a long rising time, usually several hours, before it is baked.

Quick breads use **baking soda** and/or **baking powder** instead of yeast. Like yeast, these produce carbon dioxide bubbles in the dough, causing it to rise. But, unlike yeast, baking soda and baking powder work quickly, so we call these “quick” breads. The bread must be baked as soon as the dough is mixed; there is no rising time (as there is with yeast breads).

Some examples of quick breads include: muffins, biscuits, pancakes, doughnuts, fruit and nut breads, savory breads and coffeecakes.

What’s the **difference between baking soda and baking powder**?

Baking soda is pure sodium bicarbonate. When mixed with something acidic and wet, it starts producing carbon dioxide immediately. When your dough contains baking soda, it’s important to get it into a preheated oven right away, before all the carbon dioxide bubbles have dissipated.

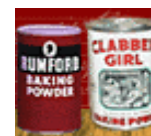
Baking powder is comprised of baking soda plus two acids, with some cornstarch to keep the acids from reacting with each other. Most of the baking powder we use today is “double acting”. One of the acids produces carbon dioxide bubbles as soon as it gets wet; the other acid does not react until it is heated. Most baking powder has this “double action” and you may see that on the label.

Flour forms the structure of breads. Our banana bread recipe calls for All-Purpose flour. This is plain, white flour and works well for most of our baking needs. Do not confuse it with Self-Rising flour, which has baking powder and salt already added to it. You would have too much leavening if you used Self-Rising flour in our recipe. When you buy flour, read the label carefully.



**Baking
Soda**

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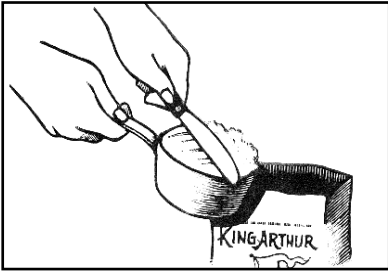


**Baking
Powder**

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Whole-wheat flour is light brown because it includes the wheat germ and wheat bran. It has more fiber and vitamins than All-Purpose flour. You can substitute equal amounts of whole-wheat flour for All-Purpose flour in this recipe. That will result in a denser loaf of bread. You may want to substitute half (or less) of the All-Purpose flour with whole-wheat flour at first. Experiment with different amounts to see what flavor and texture you prefer.

Measuring flour correctly is very important! Be sure to use a set of measuring cups designed for dry ingredients. A set will have cups in graduated sizes from ¼ Cup to 1 Cup. The lip of each cup is flat, making it easier to level the flour.



Careful measuring is essential.

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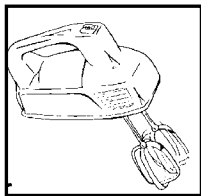
Flour packs down in the bag or canister. Fluff it with a spoon. Gently spoon the flour into the one-cup measuring cup. Run the straight edge of a knife across the rim of the cup to level the flour.

If you simply scoop the flour out and shake off the excess, you will end up with an extra ounce of flour – or more! The extra flour will make your bread dense and dry.

The **liquids** in our recipe are milk and lemon juice. Use measuring spoons to accurately measure them. Why do we need 1 teaspoon of lemon juice? It's such a small amount, some cooks might be tempted to leave it out. Remember, baking soda reacts with an acid (lemon juice) to make carbon dioxide bubbles that cause the bread to rise.

Eggs make baked goods tender and rich. Large eggs are used in most recipes, unless otherwise noted. You can use an egg substitute if you prefer. Read the carton to find the amount that equals two eggs.

Butter helps make our bread moist and gives it flavor. You may substitute **stick margarine**. Do not use tub or diet margarines as they contain a lot of water and will not work well in most baked goods.



An electric hand mixer
makes creaming the butter
easier.

The butter should be at room temperature so it can be easily beaten. We call this very important step “**creaming the butter**”. As you beat the butter, whether by hand or with a mixer, you work air into it. This will help the bread to rise better and have a lighter texture.

You will need 2-3 **bananas** to equal one cup of mashed bananas for our recipe. The best flavor comes from very ripe bananas that are turning brown. Even if the entire banana is brown, it should be perfect for baking!

Read your recipe carefully and make sure you have everything set out before you start cooking.

Name:

Best Banana Bread

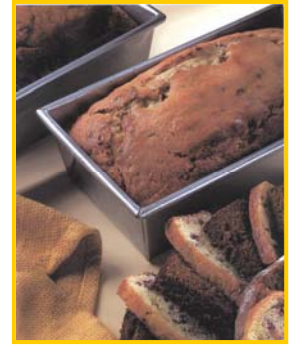
Ingredients:

2 Cups All-Purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 Cup butter or margarine, room temperature
3/4 Cup sugar
2 eggs
1 Cup mashed ripe bananas (2-3 bananas)
3 Tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon lemon juice

Method:

Yield: One large 9"x5" loaf,
2 medium, or 3 mini-loaves

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Grease one 9" x 5" loaf pan, or 2-3 smaller pans loaf pans.
3. Carefully measure the **flour** into a medium sized bowl.
4. Add the **baking powder**, **baking soda** and **salt** to the flour and stir well. Set aside.
5. In a large bowl, cream the **butter** or margarine. Beat with a mixer (or by hand) till fluffy.
6. Turn off the mixer. Add about half of the **sugar**. Beat until well blended. Turn off the mixer and add the rest of the **sugar**. Beat till light and fluffy.
7. Add **eggs**, one at a time. Beat well after each addition. Turn off the mixer; scrape the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula to be sure all ingredients are well mixed.
8. Mash the **bananas** with a fork on a small plate until you have 1 Cup.
9. Add **bananas**, **milk** and **lemon juice** to the butter mixture. Stir thoroughly. There will be some lumps from the bananas.
10. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the banana mixture. Stir with a spoon just until all ingredients are moistened. Do not over mix!



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11. Pour the batter into greased pan(s). Bake 55 – 60 minutes for 9” x 5” pan, 40 - 45 minutes for 8” x 4” pans. Check mini loaf pans after 30 minutes. When done, a toothpick inserted in the center should come out clean. Ask an adult for help; the pan will be very hot!

12. Cool in pan 10 minutes, then carefully remove from the pan. Cool. Eat and enjoy!

Variations: Add ½ Cup of chopped nuts, raisins, or mini chocolate chips.

Extending The Lesson... Quick Breads

There are so many different types of Quick Breads. Just about anything leavened with baking soda or baking powder can be considered a Quick Bread: Biscuits, muffins, donuts, pancakes, many types of cakes and breads. Here are some recipes for donuts and pancakes for your group to try. Ask them to check cookbooks for other quick bread recipes that they could share.

According to King Arthur Flour, **donuts** originated in New England where they were shaped like nuts, hence the name. The Pennsylvania Dutch added holes to them. The hole in the center allows the oil to penetrate the dough quicker and the donuts cook more evenly.

Quick & Easy Donuts

Refrigerated biscuits (buttermilk or country biscuits)

Oil

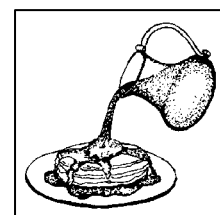
Powdered Sugar or Cinnamon Sugar

Open the can of refrigerated biscuits. Separate the biscuits. Remove the top from a bottle of dish detergent; rinse it thoroughly and dry. Make a hole in the center of each biscuit by pressing down into the dough with the bottle top. Twist it and lift out the donut hole. Save them for cooking.

Pour enough oil into a skillet or electric frying pan to a depth of at least one inch. Heat the oil to medium-high, about 375 degrees (this part needs to be done by an adult!). Fry the donuts and holes for about one minute, then turn with tongs and fry the other side until the donuts are golden brown. Drain on paper towels. When cool enough to handle, press the donuts into powdered sugar or cinnamon sugar on a plate.



You can make **pancakes** from a mix, but it's easy to make your own, and less expensive. In class, have the girls make the pancakes from scratch. To save time at home, tell them the dry ingredients can be mixed ahead of time. Store in a zippered bag or tightly closed container for up to 6 months. When you're ready for pancakes, just add the liquid ingredients and cook.



For added convenience, the batter can be mixed ahead of time. Store, covered, in the refrigerator up to 3 days. If the batter thickens, add a little more milk before cooking.

Try the Pancake Master Recipe first (next page) and some of the variations another time.

Pancakes – Master Recipe

2 Cups All-Purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 Tablespoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt, optional
2 eggs or ½ Cup egg substitute
1 ¼ Cups milk
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 Tablespoons oil

Thoroughly stir together the dry ingredients. In another bowl, stir together the wet ingredients. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and stir only until just blended; there will be lumps. Do not over mix or the pancakes will be tough.

Allow the batter to rest a few minutes. This lets the gluten relax and gives a more tender pancake.

Pour a thin layer of cooking oil in a frying pan or griddle. Heat until a few drops of water sprinkled on the surface “dance”. Pour ¼ Cup of batter into the frying pan. The first side is done when the bubbles burst and don’t fill in. Turn pancakes only once. The second side should take only half as much time to cook as the first. To keep the first batch warm, put the pancakes on an oven-safe plate in a 250-degree oven.

Variations

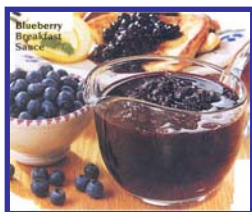
Buckwheat Pancakes: Substitute 1 Cup of buckwheat flour for 1 Cup of the white flour.

Fruit or Berry Pancakes: Gently fold into the pancake batter 1 Cup of blueberries or 1 Cup of finely chopped fruit.

Nutty Pancakes: Add ¼ Cup of chopped pecans or other nuts to the batter.

Light & Fluffy Pancakes: Separate the eggs and add only the yolks to the liquid ingredients. Beat the whites until they form stiff peaks. Fold them into the batter just before cooking.

Whole Wheat Pancakes: Substitute 1 Cup of whole wheat flour for 1 Cup of the white flour.



Make this yummy **Blueberry Breakfast Sauce** to top your pancakes. You’ll find the recipe in the fruit chapter (chapter 10).

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