



Recipes Rediscovered

Lesson Plan



Topic/Grade Level

- Cursive Writing
- Elementary (K-5)

ELA Standards

- 3-5.F.H.3: Read texts written in cursive.
- 3-5.F.H.4: Use fine motor skills to form legible letters and words in cursive.

SS Standards

- L6-8RHSS1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources
- L9-10RHSS1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- L11-12RHSS1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

Materials Needed:

- [Mrs. Hardee's recipe book](#) (GHS 0361)
- [Images of Strawberry Shortcake](#) (PDF)
- [Recipes from Mrs. Hardee's recipe book](#) (PDF)
- [Transcription of Chocolate Pudding](#) (PDF)
- [GHS Cursive Alphabet Chart](#)
- Whiteboard
- [Analyzing Primary Sources Teacher Guide](#)
- [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#)



Lesson Summary

“Recipes Rediscovered” invites students to explore history through food—something we all need daily. Recipes are relatable primary sources that each of us interact with at some point in our lives. Through carefully reading old handwritten recipes from the Georgia Historical Society (GHS) collection, transcribing them, and asking thoughtful questions about the people who wrote them, students can discover that recipes can tell us a lot about people—what they like, where they live, their family’s traditions, and more.

Mrs. Hardee’s recipe book (GHS 0361) was handwritten by Mrs. John L. Hardee, a woman who lived in Savannah, Georgia, during the 1800s. Her husband and sons worked together at the family business, N.A. Hardee & Co., which sold fertilizer and had a cotton factory. While there is little known evidence about Mrs. Hardee and her life, she was likely well-connected socially in Savannah and wrote the recipes in this notebook over time in the mid-to-late 1800s.

Students will read cursive, analyze a primary source, and transcribe a short excerpt using tools from the GHS website. This lesson is part of Decoding Histories, an education program of the Community Archives Initiative, which helps students build literacy, critical thinking, and historical inquiry skills while engaging directly with Georgia’s past.



Introduction

(part of the lesson that you excite/engage about what is being introduced)

Start by asking students, “Do you think we cook the same foods as people 150 years ago?” and discuss their answers briefly.

Display the images of Strawberry Shortcake, but do not reveal what it is yet. Tell students that this is the same food using two different recipes. Allow students to describe what they see. Ask students to guess what this item is.

Display Recipe 1, Strawberry Shortcake, from “Mrs. Hardee’s recipe book.” Introduce the word transcription and explain that scholars transcribe old handwritten documents to better read and learn from them. Then introduce Mrs. Hardee to the class. Ask them what they notice about the handwriting and how difficult it might be to read. Go through together and transcribe the title of the recipe.

When the title has been transcribed, reveal that this recipe tells us how to make Strawberry Shortcake, the item they saw in the picture. Strawberry Shortcake is a dessert that has its roots in English history. The first known shortcake recipes were made in England in the 1500s, and they were predecessors to Strawberry Shortcake as we know it today. Older recipes made a cake that was short, or dry and crumbly, more similar to a biscuit or scone’s texture. Ask students: Have you eaten this before or something similar?

Explain that by looking at Mrs. Hardee’s recipes, the students will explore more recipes from Georgia’s past, learn how cooks write recipes so they can easily follow steps to make food from scratch, and practice their transcribing skills. Transcription is an important way to preserve history and allows others to learn from old documents. Recipes, whether written or memorized by heart, are things that almost everyone uses in their lifetime and are important windows into the past.

Direct Instruction

(part of the lesson where you are teaching the new skill)

Start by asking students: If we were to make this recipe today, what ingredients would we need to buy from the grocery store?

Inform the students that they are now going to work together to transcribe the recipe in order to answer this question. Review or introduce the GHS cursive alphabet chart to help students recognize the letters. Model reading two to three lines aloud and demonstrate how to transcribe them line-by-line on the whiteboard. Work through the ingredients list on the recipe, and assist students by highlighting important tips:

- Look for familiar letters and words.
- Pay attention to punctuation and spelling.
- Use context clues to figure out words that are hard to read.
- Recipes have their own similarities that can help with transcription:
 - Cooks often split recipes into two sections: a list of ingredients, or the foods you need that are used to make the recipe; instructions, or the method of making the recipe, which are often written step-by-step. Look for repeated words in each section.
 - Cooks measure the amount of ingredients they use. Notice whole numbers or fractions, as well as units of measurement.
 - Cooks often abbreviate common cooking terms. These may look like only part of a longer word. Go over some common abbreviations, such as those for tablespoon, teaspoon, and others.

As a class, briefly discuss what challenges they ran into when transcribing the recipe.

Bonus enrichment:

If desired, allow the class or some students to transcribe the entire recipe.

Guided Practice

(part of the lesson where students practice the skill they just learned)

Begin by splitting the students into small groups or pairs. Provide each group with a copy of Recipe 2, Chocolate Pudding, from “Mrs. Hardee’s recipe book.” Allow each group to work together to transcribe the recipe. After about 10 minutes, pause the students. As a class, briefly discuss what challenges they ran into when transcribing the recipe.

Display the Transcription of Chocolate Pudding document. Provide each student with a copy of the Primary Source Analysis Tool. Using the Analyzing Primary Sources Teacher Guide, lead students through a brief primary source analysis: give them 1-3 minutes per section, pausing between each to have a few students share.

After completing the analysis, guide a discussion by asking questions such as who wrote the recipe, what the recipe makes, when the food might be cooked and eaten, why it might be important, and whether we still cook and eat this food today.

Independent Practice

(part of the lesson where students independently practice the skill)

Provide students with Recipe 3, Tomato Soup or Mock Bisque, from “Mrs. Hardee’s recipe book.” Allow students to pick one line in the recipe to transcribe independently.

Bonus enrichment: If desired, modify this activity in the following way(s):

- Allow students to transcribe the entire recipe, rather than one line.
- Use Recipe 4, Portsmouth Orange Cake, or Recipe 5, Chicken Croquette, and assign different lines to each student. Challenge students to put their pieces together in order to create the recipe, using what they have learned about how recipes are written.

Closure

(part of the lesson where you complete a quick review of the lesson)

Gather the class to reflect on the lesson. Guide a discussion by asking the students the following questions:

- What have you learned about recipes and transcription today?
- Do you think we cook the same foods as people 150 years ago?

As a ticket-out-the-door exercise, provide students with the following questions and have them write their responses:

- If you could have any one of your family member's recipes handwritten, whose recipe would you have? Why?
- Describe the recipe. What ingredients go into the recipe? Does the recipe have a lot of steps? How long does it take to make? What does it look like when it is done? What does it taste like?
- Draw the recipe. What does it look like when it is done?
- Does your family make the recipe often or is it for a special occasion?

Remind students that transcribing helps us decode the past by making it easier to understand what someone wrote many years ago. Recipes give us a unique look at people in the past by showing us what they could eat every day or for special occasions.

1 cup butter
 4 " flour
 1 tea spoon soda
 1 large cup chopped
 raisins.
 Spice to taste.

Strawberry Shortcake

Miss Paulson

1 pt. flour before sifting
 1/2 tea spoon baking powder
 1/4 " " salt
 2 Table spoons sugar
 4 " " butter
 1 tea cup milk
 1 qt. strawberries
 1 cup sugar.

EW as soon as taken from oven.

Wip other dry ingredi-
 ents with flour, sift, but in
 2 spoons butter - add milk
 make in 4 balls & roll out
 use two jelly tins to bake in
 butter top of layer put
 in pan first - bake in
 quick oven 20 minutes - Wash
 berries & sugar together - must
 not stand long - put between lay

Chocolate Pudding

1 qt. milk
1 oz. grated chocolate
Sugar
Vanilla
6 eggs
6 Tbl. Brown powdered sugar.
Put chocolate in milk
with sugar & vanilla to taste.
Boil thoroughly. Cool 15 min-
utes. Stir in beaten yolks
& bake in pudding dish
until like custard. Make
meringue of whites & powdered
sugar. ——— " ———

Sunderland Pudding

1 cup flour
1 " milk
1 egg
Salt.
Bake $\frac{3}{4}$ hour in muffin
tins.

Tomato Soup or Mock Bieguer

1 qt. cooked tomatoes
3 pts. water
1 pt. milk
1 Table spoon butter
2 Table " flour.

Boil water & tomato 20 min.
Thicken with flour rubbed into a
little water - strain ~~add a piece~~
~~of soda~~ - add boiling milk, pepper
salt & butter. ~~add soda~~ while
boiling & stir as long as it frams.

Black Bean Soup.

1 1/2 pts. black bean
small piece pork
1 level Table salt
2 eggs
1 Lemon
1 wine glass wine.

Soak bean over night. Put on to
boil with 2 qts water - boil down to
1 qt. 1 pt. Add salt & pork, boil
a few minutes. Strain through
2 wire.

Slice Lemon & hard boiled eggs
in to tureen - put in wine - pour
in soup.