

## Activity #1: *Stack 'em High*

### Objective 02: Basic Understanding

In this activity, students practice recalling details from an informational passage.

**Description:** Students read a passage, use a graphic organizer, and answer questions.

#### ► **Directions**

1. Divide the students into small groups. Distribute copies of the passage and graphic organizer found on the following pages to the students.
2. Read the passage aloud as a class. Then ask the small groups to complete the graphic organizer.
3. Review the graphic organizer as a class.
4. Practice student understanding by asking the following questions:
  - Why were cornmeal pancakes a common meal for settlers in the Midwest?
  - What group of people called pancakes “sweat pads”?
  - What was a nickname given to miners in Alaska?
  - When did pancake restaurants become popular nationwide?
  - Why is it no longer necessary to use sourdough to raise fresh batter?
  - Describe a typical breakfast for a lumberjack.
  - What is another name for a johnnycake?
  - Name three ingredients found in a johnnycake.
  - What is another name for a pancake?
  - What is another popular breakfast treat that is similar to a pancake?
5. (Optional) Instruct students to save their copy of the passage for later use (Activity #2 on Page 6.7).

**Variation:** Ask students to invent the pancake of the future and create a short history or background for it.

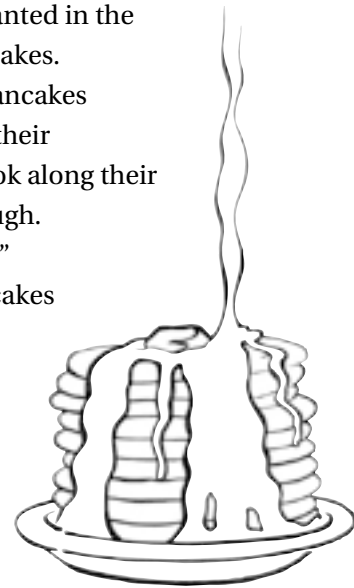
## Stack 'em High

Next time you hear the expressions “flat as a pancake” or “selling like hotcakes,” keep in mind that these flat disks of cooked dough have their place in American history.

In Colonial times, pancakes were popular food items. Sometimes called griddlecakes or johnnycakes, pancakes were made by mixing flour or cornmeal, eggs, milk or buttermilk, and butter to make a batter. Then the batter was cooked on a hot griddle or flat pan. Today we use soda to make pancakes rise, but colonists let a small amount of batter sit out overnight to turn “sour.” They used this sourdough to make the fresh batter rise. They always remembered to keep some of the fresh batter to “sour” for the following day.

As settlers moved to the West, pancakes continued to be an important food. One of the first crops that settlers planted in the Midwest was corn, which was used in cornmeal pancakes. Lumberjacks ate hearty breakfasts of sausages and pancakes smeared with bacon grease or molasses. They called their pancakes “sweat pads.” Miners heading for Alaska took along their recipes for making pancakes and bread from sourdough. Eventually, the miners were even called “sourdoughs.”

A hundred years later, in the 1950s and '60s, pancakes were so popular that pancake houses began appearing throughout the country. Offering a variety of pancakes, syrups, waffles, and other breakfast treats all day, these restaurants continue to be popular. Today we can buy special fancy pancake mixes, or microwave a stack of pancakes in minutes. We're still flipping for flapjacks.



## A Graphic Organizer for “Stack ’em High”

The passage describes how pancakes have changed throughout America’s history. Use the graphic organizer to organize the information from the passage. In the blanks above the pancake stacks, write the time periods of three different stages of pancake development. Then, underneath the time period, on the lines provided, list all the information from the passage about that specific kind of pancake phase. One has been started for you.

*Colonial Times*

