

History at Home: Make a WWII Ration Cake

Purpose:

In these difficult times of the COVID 19 virus pandemic, we thought it might be interesting to look back at another time of great crisis in our nation. This activity will help kids learn a little about World War II, and also practice their measuring and baking skills with adult supervision.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION

Nº 920315 BM

WAR RATION BOOK No. 3 *Void if altered*

Identification of person to whom issued: PRINT IN FULL

(First name) *Anderson* (Middle name) *F. Smith* (Last name)

Street number or rural route _____

City or post office _____ State _____

AGE	SEX	WEIGHT Lbs.	HEIGHT Ft. In.	OCCUPATION

SIGNATURE _____
(Person to whom book is issued. If such person is unable to sign because of age or incapacity, another may sign in his behalf.)

WARNING
This book is the property of the United States Government. It is unlawful to sell it to any other person, or to use it or permit anyone else to use it, except to obtain rationed goods in accordance with regulations of the Office of Price Administration. Any person who finds a lost War Ration Book must return it to the War Price and Rationing Board which issued it. Persons who violate rationing regulations are subject to \$10,000 fine or imprisonment, or both.

LOCAL BOARD ACTION

Issued by _____ (Local board number) _____ (Date)

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OPA FORM NO. R-130

Info for Parents or Guardians:

You could share a little or a lot of the historical information below with the children depending on their ages before you start the activity. This activity is geared toward children in grades 4-6. If the children are younger, speak in more general terms and provide a greater amount of help in baking the cake. Older children (9 and up) might be able to measure ingredients, and make the cake batter themselves. An adult should put the cake in oven and take it out when finished.

Vocabulary:

- war effort:** All that is being done to win a war. A coordinated effort to mobilize and apply a nation's resources to the support of a military force.
- ration: (verb)** to control an amount of something that an individual can use. **(noun)** a fixed amount of something allowed to each person during a time of shortage, as in wartime.

Rationing during World War II

During World War II, our nation joined other nations in the fight against the Axis Powers: Germany, Italy and Japan. These nations had invaded neighboring nations and started World War II.

World War II was the largest war that the world has ever known. It may be the greatest crisis that the world has ever faced. In the United States, peacetime industries were converted to war time industries. Tanks, airplanes, ships, and weapons had to be mass produced very rapidly. Millions of U.S. troops were sent to war in Europe, Asia and the Pacific, and they all had to be supplied with food, weapons and supplies.

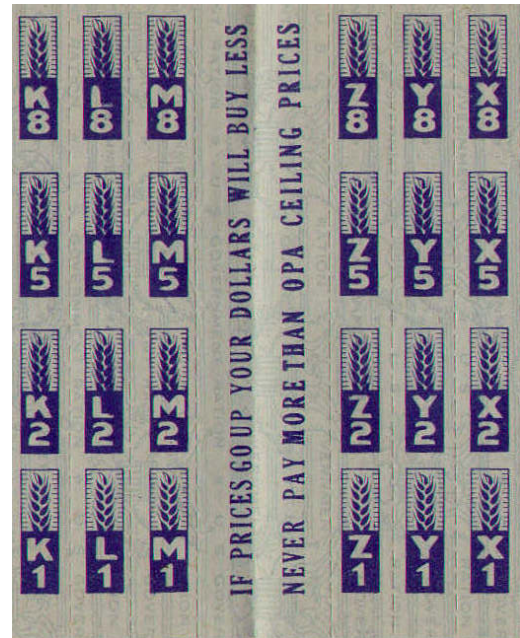
The United States also tried to help its Allies, other nations that were at war with Germany and Japan. Some of these included: Great Britain, the Soviet Union, France, and China. The United States helped to provide these nations with food, weapons, and supplies. Since the war took place in the Pacific, Asia and Europe, our country had the advantage of being somewhat isolated from the war. This meant that the nation was able to



continue to grow food and produce supplies for the **war effort**. Even though the United States was a land of much abundance, feeding and providing for this many people created food and supply shortages.

As a result, people were forced to ration certain things like gasoline and food items. The federal government provided each person in our country with a ration book. Ration books consisted of stamps that allowed a person to buy rationed items. A person could only buy a rationed item if they had money, of course, but they also had to have a stamp to give the store clerk at the time of purchase. When a person was out of a stamp for a rationed item, they could no longer buy that item until a new ration book was issued. Some examples of food items rationed include: sugar, butter, meat, and cheese.

Ration stamps typically had a drawing printed on them. Examples include: airplanes, guns, tanks, aircraft carriers, ears of wheat, fruits, etc. and a serial number. Some stamps also had alphabetic lettering. Red stamps were used for meat and butter, and blue stamps were used for processed foods.



The United States and the Allies were able to defeat the Axis Powers through their massive war effort. This effort involved a temporary change to the American way of life at the time. People rationed food, grew gardens to supplement the food available, recycled metal objects and tires, were subjected to curfews, and went without some things until the war was over. During World War II, people often had to create or adapt recipes to use less of a rationed item or to include substitute items in place of missing ingredients.

Activity:

We have included two authentic World War II era cake recipes below. The Mayonnaise Cake substitutes mayonnaise for eggs.

The One Egg Victory Cake recipe allows for two ingredient substitutions.

Choose one of the recipes below and follow the directions in order to make one of the cakes. These cakes can be made with gluten free flour instead if you prefer. Expect the cake to taste the same, however, it will be less fluffy and slightly more crumbly.



Mayonnaise Cake

Recipe from Mary Spurling who was the great grandmother of Assistant Curator of Education, Scott Corcoran, and lived in Carleton, Michigan during WWII.

INGREDIENTS

For the cake pan:

- 1 teaspoon of butter or Crisco
- 1 tablespoon of flour

For the cake:

- 2 cups of sifted flour
- 1 cup of sugar
- ¼ teaspoon of salt
- 3 tablespoons of cocoa
- 1 heaping teaspoon of baking soda
- 2 teaspoons of vanilla extract
- 1 cup of mayonnaise or miracle whip salad dressing
- 1 cup of room temperature water



DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Smear butter or crisco all over the inside of a 9" X 13" pan. OR you can use 8" or 9" round cake pans if you want to make it into a layer cake.
3. Put about a tablespoon of flour into the cake pan(s) and rotate to coat the inside of the buttered pan.
4. Add the dry ingredients to a mixing bowl.
5. Stir the dry ingredients together.
6. Add the wet ingredients to the mixing bowl.
7. Stir together until all the ingredients are mixed well.
8. Pour the mixed batter into the cake pan.
9. Scrape the bowl with a spatula or spoon to get most of the batter into the pan.
10. Bake for 30 minutes. An adult should put the cake in the oven.
11. Insert toothpick or knife in center of cake to see if cake is done. If cake doesn't stick to toothpick or knife, the cake is done. An adult should remove the cake from the oven.



One Egg Victory Cake

This recipe originally came from the Royal Baking Powder cookbook and has been modified to include alternate ingredients that can be used. The directions have also been made clearer.

INGREDIENTS:

For the cake pan:

- 1 teaspoon of butter or Crisco
- 1 tablespoon of flour

For the cake:

- 1/3 cup shortening (butter is fine if you don't have shortening)
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 egg, well beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup light corn syrup (substitute honey, or even pancake syrup if you don't have this ingredient)
- 1 cup milk
- 2 cups flour (Cake flour if you have it. Gluten free flour is fine also.)
- 2 1/2 teaspoons Baking Powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Smear butter or crisco all over the inside of an 8" X 8" cake pan.
3. Put about a tablespoon of flour into the cake pan and rotate to coat the inside of the buttered pan.
4. Cream shortening or butter well.
5. Add the sugar slowly, beating in well.
6. Add the beaten egg and vanilla.
7. Beat until well blended.
8. In a separate bowl, blend the syrup or honey and milk together.
9. Sift together the dry ingredients.
10. Add dry ingredients to butter and sugar mixture.
11. Then add the liquid ingredients to the butter and sugar mixture.
12. Stir together and blend well.
13. Pour batter into square pan.
14. Bake in the oven at 350°F for about 1 hour. An adult should put the cake in the oven.
15. Insert toothpick or knife in center of cake to see if cake is done. If cake doesn't stick to toothpick or knife, the cake is done. An adult should remove the cake from the oven.

