

# NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION FOR ALL RESOURCES

Partnership of IllumiNative and the National Indian Education Association



ILLUMINATIVE



Grade Level

6-8

Subject

Social Studies

Lesson Title

Food Traditions: Making Cherokee Bean Bread

**Activity Description:** This activity introduces the legend of Cherokee bean bread, also called cornbread, derived from the Trail of Tears. Included is a demonstration of the traditional way to make the bread. This activity also features a modern and traditional recipe for Cherokee bean bread. Bring the family together to enjoy some of the other traditional recipes featured as well

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- WiFi access (optional)
- Digital or print version of [The Legend of Cherokee Corn bread](#)
- Digital or printed recipe for [modern and traditional Cherokee bean bread](#)
- **Ingredients:** cornmeal, flour, baking powder, sugar, milk, shortening, egg, honey, brown beans
- Baking pan or iron skillet
- Access to an oven

## STEPS

Many times Native American traditional foods come from times of suffering or great change, such as Navajo frybread or this featured food, Cherokee bean bread. Follow these steps to learn about the history and method of making bean bread. Then, make some to share with your friends or family. Be sure to ask permission to use the ingredients and be sure to have adult assistance.

### Before the Activity:

1. Watch this YouTube video to Learn to Cook a traditional [Cherokee Corn bread](#)
2. Read the [legend of Cherokee Corn \(bean\) bread](#) recorded by the National Park Service.
3. Bake the [modern recipe for Cherokee Bean Bread](#) by the United Cherokee Nation. This site also explains the traditional way to make the bread as well.

### Activity Steps:

If WiFi is not available, here is the modern version of the recipe for Bean Bread:

#### Ingredients

1 cup of cornmeal	1/2 cup flour	2 tsp baking powder
1 tbsp sugar	2 cups milk	1/4 cup melted shortening
1 beaten egg	2 tbsp honey	4 cups drained brown beans

Pre-heat oven to 450° then thoroughly mix all of these ingredients together, except the beans. Once it is mixed, then fold in the beans. Pour the batter into a greased, heated pan. Bake at 450° until brown (usually about 30 minutes).

# NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION FOR ALL RESOURCES

Partnership of IllumiNative and the National Indian Education Association



ILLUMINATIVE



Grade Level

6-8

Subject

Social Studies

Lesson Title

Food Traditions: Making Cherokee Bean Bread

## HELPFUL TIPS

**Parents and caregivers:** Cooking traditional foods together can help families build relationships, create memories, and sustain their culture. You can also make some of the traditional recipes from your own community and tell any stories connected to the foods. Sometimes these stories are connected to historically traumatic events which could lead to questions or difficult emotional feelings. This is an opportunity to discuss resilience and the importance of remembering the suffering of tribal ancestors. Here are a few recommendations for sharing this activity with your child:

- Share the meaning of *resilience*: being about to recover from difficulty or a terrible experience, toughness
- Talk about the ways that your family, tribe, or community has grown stronger through difficult times
- Talk optimistically about the future and why it is important that your family and community keep their culture and heritage alive through the youth.
- Continue to do these types of activities together to build a strong family relationship. You can try other traditional recipes from this list from [The People's Path](#)

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

**Families and educators:** If young people want to learn more about the Trail of Tears or traditional food culture such as ingredients used by tribal ancestors, visit the sites below:

- To learn about the Cherokee Trail of Tears bean and how you could grow them [read this article](#)
- If you want to learn more about the Trail of Tears and the resiliency of the Cherokee people read ["Never, ever going to forget": 180 years since the end of the Cherokee Trail of Tears"](#)
- If you want to learn more about traditional ingredients and seeds, look at this presentation [Heirloom seed: Our Cultural Past](#)

### Activity Adapted from:

- "Learn to Cook a traditional Cherokee Corn bread" YouTube video by *Belleville-News Democrat* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDxo6Uh0asw>
- "The Legend of Cherokee Corn bread" recorded by the *National Park Service* <https://www.nps.gov/common/uploads/teachers/lessonplans/Reading-The-Legend-of-the-Corn-Bread.pdf>
- "Cherokee Bean Bread" recipe by the *United Cherokee Nation* <http://theucn.com/beanbread.html>

### Additional Resources:

- "Cherokee Favorites" recipes from *The People's Path* <http://www.thepeoplespaths.net/NAIFood/CherokeeFavorites.htm>
- Cherokee Trail of Tears bean <https://themarginalized.com/2010/07/08/cherokee-trail-of-tears-beans/>
- "Never, ever going to forget": 180 years since the end of the Cherokee Trail of Tears" from *Tulsa World* [https://www.tulsaworld.com/news/state-and-regional/never-ever-going-to-forget-years-since-the-end-of/article\\_0c816f6f-b0f1-5d4e-b412-9423f4387d80.html](https://www.tulsaworld.com/news/state-and-regional/never-ever-going-to-forget-years-since-the-end-of/article_0c816f6f-b0f1-5d4e-b412-9423f4387d80.html)
- Heirloom seed: Our Cultural Past sponsored by the *United States Department of Agriculture* [https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/nrcs141p2\\_015559.pdf](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs141p2_015559.pdf)