Read the following information carefully before starting the project.

“Breads around the World” is a project designed for advanced 4-H foods and nutrition members who have already learned how to make both quick and yeast breads. Although every effort has been made to find typical recipes of a country or culture, consider these 14 recipes a starting point. Ask friends or relatives to share their techniques and recipes.

It is very special to have a recipe pass down from generation to generation.

Breads are so much a part of cultural heritage. Many are baked for holidays and celebrations. Some you will have to try again and again to perfect.

To obtain better products, use an oven thermometer to test your oven prior to baking. (Do not use a candy or other type of thermometer!) Measure ingredients carefully, use the equipment specified, and do not incorporate too much flour into the dough. Use the freshest and best ingredients you can find. Follow the directions. Substitutions may be necessary, but these ingredients might affect the final product. A sweet dough recipe has been selected as a base for several recipes to allow youth to practice their skills.

Plan ahead. Some ingredients may be difficult to find! If you travel to large cities, international markets sell a variety of spices. Hard-to-find ingredients can be obtained through specialty catalogs or on the Internet. If purchased ahead, many can be frozen or refrigerated to extend their use. The holidays are a good time to stock up on ingredients you can’t find during other months.

Some ingredients and spices are expensive. They may be sold in small packages to defray the expense. If not, consider reducing the cost to each member by dividing the spices into smaller, well-labeled, and unused food containers.

Enjoy exploring different breads and cultures. Your local library can supply you with additional resources, recipes, and cultural information.

While this project mentions religion, philosophy, and lore, no attempt was made to encourage or demean religious or cultural practices. Because of the limitations of this publication, only a small number of recipes are included. This project showcases cultural breads and the diversity of feelings concerning bread. Encourage youth to try new foods and baking techniques and visit bakeries that specialize in certain ethnic breads.

Some recipes were adapted from Bread of Many Lands, by Clara Gebhard Snyder. If you have recipes or information you would like to share for our next edition, please let the authors know.

Food safety notes: Food preparation requires cooks to tie their hair back and wear nets or caps. Hands should be washed with soap for 20 seconds, rinsed thoroughly, and dried only on clean towels. All counters, bread boards, and equipment should be cleaned with soap or detergent, rinsed thoroughly, and dried naturally or in a dishwasher. Food should be fresh and of high quality. Meat and eggs should never be out of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours. Flour should be free of insects and stored in covered containers in clean cabinets, away from any household cleaners. Flour and spices, in opened containers, should not be used after one year for best results. Whole wheat flour, nuts, and fats can become rancid during long term storage even when stored in the refrigerator.
Hungarians say that “bread is older than man.”

More than 12,000 years ago, people made flat breads by mixing flour and water and placing these “cakes” in the sun to bake. Bread was later baked on heated rocks or in hot ashes.

Egyptians were the first to use a “starter” of wild yeast from the air to leaven dough. According to legend, a royal slave forgot the dough he set aside. When he returned, it had doubled in size. Trying to hide his mistake, he punched the dough furiously and baked it. The finished bread was the lightest anyone had tasted.

The ancient Greeks had more than 50 kinds of bread. This government built public bakeries and ovens for everyone to use. They became popular places for the community to gather.

The Romans continued this idea. They also required every baker to put an identification stamp on their loaves. Grain was ground with millstones and the finest flour was sifted through silk sheets!

Like people, breads have regional and national characteristics. Because of climate, soil, and other conditions, different grains grow better in certain regions. The type of flour(s) readily available, the shape of the loaf, its seasonings, and decoration can denote the bread’s culture, country, and often its baker.
Breads Across Regions and Nations

Certain breads are more popular in different regions of the United States. For example, huge soft pretzels are sold in Philadelphia, runzas in Nebraska, sourdough in San Francisco, and spoon bread and hush puppies in the South. Breads such as Johnny Cakes (also called journey cakes) and corn dodgers were popular in the past because they traveled well. Specrausisi or Pierock (pronounced pea-rock) are “traveling” breads popular in Latvia! They are also served for festive occasions.

Pierock (pronounced “pea-rock”)
Use a rich dough, a hot roll mix, or canned, refrigerated dough.

Filling:
Dice a pound (or less) of lean bacon (turkey bacon works well).
Dice, very finely, an equal amount of onion.
Mix together.
Pepper liberally.
Roll dough to 1/4-inch thick. Cut bread dough into 4-inch circles. Fill each circle with 2 tablespoons of the bacon and onion filling. Seal the edges together and pierce the top three times with a fork to allow steam to escape. Brush the tops of the rolls with an egg and milk mixture to keep them soft and shiny. Bake on a cookie sheet at 400°F for 12–15 minutes — until the rolls are golden brown. (Watch them carefully to prevent burning.) The rolls can also be moon-shaped.

The United States is agriculturally diverse. Wheat, barley, corn, rice, and many other grains are grown here. The amount cultivated depends on weather, the market for grain products, crop rotation, and irrigation. This country is also diverse in terms of people. Most of our ancestors came from other countries and have passed down recipes, stories, and food preparation techniques.

If you travel to a different state or country, find a bakery and try something new. In Switzerland and Germany, a gilt pretzel over the door means it is a bakery! Remember as you travel, items with similar names can taste quite different.

While breads vary across nationalities, they are remarkably similar. Compare a Russian blini, Norwegian lefse, French crepe, and Mexican tortilla to a pancake. Different flour, baking pans, or preparation techniques create these variations.
American Indian Fry Bread

4 cups flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons powdered milk
1 1/2 cups warm water

Mix ingredients with clean hands until the dough is soft. Pat a portion of dough into a flat cake. Melt 1 cup of shortening in a medium frying pan. Brown cakes on both sides, turning them with a spatula. (You may want to wear an apron to prevent splatters from staining your clothes.) Stack fried cakes on a plate and serve with stew or spread with jam, honey, or syrup.

Mexican Indians called tortillas “uahs.” Spanish conquistadors renamed them tortillas, which mean “little cakes.” Fried tortillas are called “toastados.”

Bread is very popular in Japan. More varieties exist in Japan than in the United States. In Japan, bread is about 1 1/2 times the thickness of our sliced bread.

You usually don’t find our packaged, commercial white bread in most countries. However, many still value white flour because it produces a lighter product. Basic dark loaves may be considered peasant food in one part of the world and found only on sophisticated, gourmet tables in another.

If you use recipe books from other countries, you may have to adjust to metric measurements. Dry ingredients, such as flour, may also be weighed instead of leveled in a measuring cup.

Breads’ Symbolism

Many languages have bread metaphors. In American English, “bread” and “dough” are slang for money. A “bread winner” earns money for their family. A “bread basket” often refers to a geographical region that has an important grain supply. Have you ever thought about the expression, “the greatest thing since sliced bread”? The Russian word for hospitality translates into “bread and salt.” In Russia, it is customary to give a round, freshly baked loaf of bread to a guest with a small wooden bowl of salt as a sign of honor and respect.

Bread also coincides with religious, seasonal, and national events. In the bible, 250 references to bread are
found. Legends also play a part in bread-making history and some breads are named for their region of origin or shape. Calzone means “pants leg,” probably because of its resemblance to the billowy trouser legs favored by men in the 18th and 19th centuries. Anadama bread, Sally Lunn, Panettone, Rum Babas, hoe cakes, and hush puppies all have stories of origin.

Anadama bread was named when a Yankee wife left while preparing corn meal mush for her husband. The mush and a pitcher of molasses was all she had set out for supper. The angry husband tossed the mush and the molasses together and baked it as bread. (It was delicious!)

Sally Lunn is a rich, sponge-like “cake” that is made in a deep pan. Sally Lunn was said to have sold cakes in Bath, England during the 18th century. Many versions of this recipe claim authenticity. The name Sally Lunn may have been adapted from “soleil et lunn,” French for the “sun and moon.”

Sunday brunch or an informal supper is a good time to serve Sally Lunn. Any kind of jam or jelly is appropriate to serve with it, but the British mostly use orange marmalade.

**Sally Lunn** *(1 loaf)*

3/4 cup of milk

1 package active dry yeast, or 1 cake compressed yeast

1/4 cup warm (not hot) water

2 tablespoons sugar

1 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons shortening

2 3/4 cups sifted flour

1 egg

Scald milk. Add sugar, salt, and shortening. Stir to dissolve. Pour into a mixing bowl. Cool to lukewarm.

While milk cools, sprinkle yeast into the warm water and stir until dissolved. Add 2 cups flour to cooled milk. Mix well and beat until smooth (about 2 minutes). Stir in dissolved yeast. Add egg and beat at least 1 minute. Stir in remaining flour and beat until smooth (about 2 minutes). Scrape batter down from the sides of the bowl. Cover and let it rise until it doubles (about 1 hour).

Stir down and transfer batter into a greased 9-inch round cake pan that is 1 1/2 inches deep, or into loaf pans 4 1/2 inches wide by 9 inches long. Let batter rise until it doubles (about 1 hour).

Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes. Turn out onto a rack and cool slightly.

Serve warm with margarine, butter, or marmalade. Separate pieces with two forks instead of cutting it with a knife.
According to legend, Rum Babas (baba au rhum) got their name when Polish king Stanislas Leszcynski was exiled to Lorraine. He found the bread, kougloph, too dry and dipped it in rum. The king was so enchanted with his creation that he named it after his favorite hero from *A Thousand and One Nights*, Ali Baba. His chef refined the sweet bread by using brioche dough. A different story claims that the Russian word for granny is “baba” and these rum-soaked cakes, made in tapering molds, resemble old-fashioned skirts.

Hush puppies were said to quiet dogs while fishing. Colonial hoe cakes were made from a simple batter cooked over an open fire on a flat garden hoe and eaten with soup or vegetable stew. Indian corn porridge became popular in the South as “spoon bread.”

At least three explanations exist for the name and origin of panettone, an egg and butter-rich cylindrical loaf that dates back to the 15th century. First, Panett was thought to be eaten daily and, as a result, called panettone. Second, Pan di tono was a “rich and fancy” bread made at Christmas. The third story centers around Tony, a baker, who was given “all the ingredients he needed for the ultimate loaf of bread” by a nobleman in exchange for his daughter. The bread was then called pan-di-Tonio or “Tony’s bread.”
**Panetone** (makes 2 loaves)

A glossy, golden brown and fruited Italian bread.

2 packages active dry yeast

1/2 cup warm water (105–115°F)

1/2 cup lukewarm milk (scalded then cooled)

1/2 cup sugar

1 teaspoon salt

2 eggs

1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened

4 1/2–5 cups flour*

1/2 cup cut up citron

1/2 cup raisins

1 tablespoon anise seed

2 tablespoons pine nuts, if desired

**Glaze**

1 egg

1 tablespoon water

Dissolve yeast in warm water. Stir in milk, sugar, salt, 2 eggs, butter, and 2 1/2 cups flour. Beat until smooth. Mix in fruit, anise seed, nuts, and enough of the remaining flour to make the dough easy to handle.

Turn dough onto a lightly floured board; knead until smooth and elastic (about 5 minutes). Place in a greased bowl and turn the dough until the greased side is up. Cover and let it rise in a warm place until it doubles (about 1 1/2–2 hours).

Punch down the dough and divide it in half. Shape each half into a round, slightly flat loaf. Place each half in opposite corners of a greased baking sheet. Cut a cross 1/2 inch deep on top of each loaf. Let loaves rise until they double (about 1 hour).

Preheat oven to 350°F. While oven is heating, blend 1 egg with 1 tablespoon of water and brush mixture on loaves. Bake 35–40 minutes.

*Do not use self-rising flour in this recipe.

Many superstitions exist about bread. Some people believe that when a crumb drops out of your mouth, death comes in a week or when a loaf is cut from both ends, the devil will fly over your house!

Stories exist of wars being won or lost by bartering freshly-baked bread. At one time, French soldiers demanded white bread to give them courage. Greek women tucked a piece of bread into their husbands’ clothing as they went off to war, as a reminder of their home.

Bakers in many communities celebrate political victories by introducing a specific shape or type of bread. The crescent-
shaped croissant originated in Budapest in 1686, when the Turks attempted to invade the city at night via underground passages. Bakers, who worked through the night, heard the invaders and sounded the alarm to save their city. Afterward, they made pastries in the shape of the crescent on the Ottoman flag to celebrate the victory. Colomba di Pasqua, shaped like a dove and often now made for Easter, might have been created by bakers following the appearance of two, “heaven-sent,” doves that appeared after the defeat of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in the 12th century.

**Italian Easter Dove with Orange-Honey Butter** (easier with a mix)

1 package commercial hot roll mix
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon grated orange peel

Juice of 1 orange, plus hot water, to make 1 cup liquid, or 1/3 cup frozen orange juice concentrate plus 2/3 cup hot water
1 teaspoon almond extract

1 egg, slightly beaten

In a large bowl, combine the hot roll mix and yeast packets. Stir in the orange juice liquid, almond extract, and egg until dry particles are moistened. (Do not over mix.) Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. With greased or floured hands, shape the dough into a ball. Knead it for 5 minutes until smooth. (Follow directions on back of package for kneading.) If necessary, sprinkle flour lightly over the surface to reduce stickiness. Cover the dough and let it rest for 5 minutes. Grease a large cookie sheet. (Do not set the cookie sheet on the floured surface because the flour will burn and bake onto the sheet.)

Divide the dough in half. On a lightly floured surface, with a rolling pin or your hands, shape the first half into a 4-by-8-inch oval (for wings). Place crosswise in the center of a prepared cookie sheet. Shape second half into a triangle 12-inches high and 6-inches across at the bottom. Center the triangle lengthwise over the oval.

Twist the narrow end over to create the head. Pinch a point to form a beak. Fold wide end in the opposite direction for a tail. Make six, 1-inch cuts and separate to make tail feathers. Cover completely with a clean towel and let it rise for 15 minutes over a large pan, containing very hot water. Preheat oven to 350°F.

After 15 minutes, remove the cover. Bake at 350°F for 20–30 minutes or until the loaf is golden brown and sounds hollow when tapped. While the bread is baking, make the spread by mixing:

1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
1/4 cup honey
1 teaspoon grated orange peel

Remove bread from the baking sheet and place on a cooling rack. When it is cool, frost the wings with the butter mixture and place sliced almonds one-by-one, covering the wings with a single layer. Dust the entire “bird” in confectioner’s (powdered) sugar.
Necessity is the mother of invention. Pumpernickel, a German baker, developed a hearty loaf out of rye with a little wheat flour during a famine around 1450. Graham popularized whole wheat flour to increase the nutritional value of bread. Also, pizza may have gotten its start when a Naples cook rolled up and topped leftover scraps of dough with cheese, tomatoes, and seasonings before baking.

Some people believe bread can prevent illness. Although not prevalent in our country today, diseases do occur from a lack of B vitamins such as niacin, thiamin, and riboflavin or from iron deficiency. All-purpose flour is enriched to provide these nutrients. Bread is also a sign of friendship, especially when given to a sick person.

### French Bread (2 loaves, or 1 loaf and 12 rolls)

The French serve this bread with almost every meal. They use pieces to “mop up” gravies and sauces on their plates. For breakfast, they may eat it plain or spread with margarine or butter. Because it is crisp and has a delightful (though bland) flavor, it is good with entrees and salads.

- 2 cups warm (not hot) water
- 1 package active dry yeast, or 1 cake compressed yeast
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 6 cups sifted flour
- 1 egg white, unbeaten

Measure warm water into a warm bowl (rinse the bowl with warm water first). Sprinkle dry yeast over water or crumble compressed yeast into the lukewarm water. Stir until dissolved. Add sugar, salt, and 3 cups flour. Stir to mix and beat until smooth and shiny. Stir in 2 3/4 cups more flour. Sprinkle part of the remaining 1/4 cup flour on a bread board, pastry cloth, or counter. Turn dough out onto the floured surface and knead until satiny smooth (about 5–7 minutes). Shape into a smooth ball.

Grease another bowl lightly with shortening. Press the top of the ball of dough into the greased bowl and turn it over (to coat both sides). Cover with waxed paper and a clean towel. Let bread rise until double (about 1 hour).

Punch down. Divide into halves. Shape each half into a ball. Cover and let it rest for 5 minutes. With a little shortening on the palms of your hands, roll each ball of dough to form a long, slender loaf about 3 inches in diameter. Start rolling at the center and gently work hands toward ends of the loaf. (You can also make the ball into a rectangle and roll it into a jelly roll, starting with the long end).

Place the loaves 4-inches apart on a lightly greased baking sheet.

With a sharp knife, cut diagonal slashes about 3/4-inch deep and about 1 1/2-inches apart on the top of each loaf.

Cover and let it rise until it is a little more than double its size (about an hour).

Bake at 425°F for about 30–35 minutes. Remove the loaves from the oven and brush
them with egg white. Return them to the oven for 2 minutes to brown. Remove loaves from the baking sheet and cool on a rack.

To make rolls, cut the dough into egg-sized pieces. Shape each piece into a smooth ball by folding the edges under each roll. Place rolls on a lightly greased baking sheet about 3-inches apart. With clean kitchen scissors, make a cross-shaped slash 1/2-inch deep in the top of each roll. Cover and let rolls rise until doubled. Bake at 425°F for 15–20 minutes. Remove from oven. Brush rolls with egg white and return to oven for 2 minutes. Remove rolls from baking sheet and place them on a cooling rack. Serve hot or cold.

In many countries, bread is not sold wrapped in plastic. It is not unusual to see people in public holding several loaves of bread. In ancient Egypt, workers were paid with 10 loaves of bread per day. In Tahiti, bread is delivered daily in the mailbox! Israeli bakers may bring bread to the city in a bicycle basket or carried on top of their head.

Bread and Religion

Bread has been offered as a sacrifice. In the Middle East, a hungry man will kiss a piece given to him and murmur an invocation before kneading the dough. In many countries, people consider bread so precious that it is a sin to waste it.

Some types of bread are more popular at certain times of the year due to religious or other holidays. Breads, cakes, and pastries may be difficult to distinguish because of the amount of sugar, fat, and other ingredients used to make them special.

Sweet Breads

A variety of sweet breads are made in most European countries. Some are festive, special-occasion breads. Others are year-around treats to enjoy with a cup of coffee or tea, hot chocolate, or a glass of milk.

The dough for most of these breads is sweet and rich in sugar, eggs, and shortening. Shapes and flavorings make these breads distinct. Some contain raisins, candied citron, cherries, nuts, or a mixture of these ingredients. Almonds are common. Cinnamon and mace are often used spices, and the grated rind of a lemon is a popular flavoring.

A foundation for many of these breads is this Basic Sweet Dough.
Basic Sweet Dough

1 package active dry yeast, or 1 cake compressed yeast
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons melted shortening
1/4 cup warm (not hot) water
2 and 3/4 cups sifted four
1/2 cup milk
1 egg
1/4 cup sugar


Stir in 1 1/2 cups sifted flour. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of the remaining 1/4 cup flour on a bread board or pastry cloth. Turn dough out and knead, adding more flour as needed to make it soft. Knead until smooth and satiny (about 5 minutes). Shape into a ball.

Wash mixing bowl and grease lightly. Press the top of the dough ball into the bowl and turn it over. Cover and let it rise until it doubles (about 2 hours). Punch down. Cover and let it rest 5–10 minutes.

This dough is the foundation for Danish Coffee Twist, Feast Bread of Greece, German Stollen, Austrian Streusel, and Russian Kulich.

Challah (pronounced hall-ah) is a traditional Jewish egg- and butter-rich bread. It means “dough offering” in Hebrew and dates from the Temple period in 280 B.C., when a portion of dough from the Sabbath loaf was given to priests. The act of challah is to burn a small part of the dough as an offering before the rest is baked. Challah is served on Friday nights for the Sabbath dinner and on holidays. Friday night challah is generally braided, but Rosh Hashanah’s is always rounded and smooth. On Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, it is customary to dip a piece in honey to symbolize the sweetness of the upcoming year. This bread is broken (not sliced) at the beginning of the meal. Each person breaks off a piece and passes it around the table. Bakery challahs are often made of six strands of dough (two braids), but symbolic challah has seven strands representing each day of the week.
**Challah** (makes 3 loaves)

1 1/4 cup warm water (105–115°F)
1 package active dry yeast
1/4 cup sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 cup salad oil
2 eggs, slightly beaten
5 1/2 cups unsifted all purpose flour
1 egg yolk
2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons sesame seeds

If possible, check water temperature with a thermometer. In a large bowl, sprinkle yeast and sugar over water, stirring until dissolved. Add salt, oil, eggs, and 3 cups flour; beat with electric mixer until smooth (about 2 minutes). You can also knead by hand.

Gradually add the remaining flour, mixing with your hands until the dough is stiff enough to leave the sides of the bowl. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured pastry cloth or board. Knead until smooth and elastic (about 5 minutes). Place in a lightly greased large bowl, turning the dough over to bring the greased side up. Cover with a towel and let dough rise in a warm place, free from drafts, for about 1 hour, until double in bulk.

Turn out dough onto a lightly floured pastry cloth or board. Divide two-thirds of the dough into three equal parts. Using the palms of your hands, roll each part into 20-inch long strips. Braid the three strips and pinch the ends together. Place on a large, greased cookie sheet. Divide the remaining one-third into three equal parts. Roll each into 18-inch long strips, braid the three strips, and pinch the ends together. Place on top of the larger braid. Cover with a clean dish towel and let it rise in a warm place (85°F), free from drafts, until it doubles in bulk (about 50–60 minutes). Preheat oven to 375°F.

Brush surface of the loaf with the egg yolk mixed with 2 tablespoons of water. Sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake for 35–40 minutes, or until a rich, golden brown. If the crust seems too brown after 25 minutes of baking, cover with foil or brown paper. Remove to a wire rack to cool. Serve bread warm or cold.

Many Jewish people eat matzoh during Passover. The flat bread, made without yeast, recalls their history. Their ancestors could not wait for the dough to rise as they fled from the pharaoh’s army. Flat bread is a convenience food for much of the world because it can be prepared quickly and used to scoop or hold other foods. In India, chapatti is an inflated crisp cracker the size of a large dinner plate. Iranian bread is called “naan” and is similar to chapatti.

Saint Antonio Abate is the patron saint of bread bakers, and many varieties exist that are dedicated to religious figures.

The feast of Saint Joseph’s Day, March 19, is held to give thanks for special blessings received during the past
year such as recovery from an illness, a visit from a long-lost relative, or the birth of a child. Family, friends, and even complete strangers are welcome to participate. The bread everyone shares is shaped into a number of designs—braids, lilies, crowns, crosses, or carpenter’s tools. The loaves are either individual size or slightly larger.

December 13, the shortest day and longest night in Sweden’s old calendar, is widely celebrated in Sweden, Italy, and other countries to honor Saint Lucy. She was a 4th century Sicilian who became a Christian and devoted her life to serving the poor. She was tortured and killed in an unsuccessful attempt to get her to renounce her faith.

On Saint Lucy’s day in Sweden, the oldest daughter wears a white robe and lighted crown and treats her parents to breakfast in bed, serving hot coffee and saffron buns (Lussekatter) before dawn. This bread can be shaped in many ways, including a crown, cross, wreath, or simple “S” figures that represent the eyes of Saint Lucy. The lighted crown and saffron dough symbolize the return of the sun.

**Christmas Breads**

On Epiphany, January 6, Hispanic families gather to feast on a fruit and nut-filled yeast bread and sip coffee, hot chocolate, or limeade.

Julekage, or Yule cake, is a sweet yeast Christmas bread served in Norway, Denmark, and Iceland. It is similar to the Italian panettone, but has cardamom (instead of lemon and vanilla) as its chief flavor. It can be a round or rectangular sandwich-type loaf or a braid or braided wreath. Each baker has his or her own combination of dried fruits, nuts, sugar, icing, and way of shaping the bread. Scandinavians tend to collect julekage recipes.

Scottish Black Bun is a moist loaf served during the Christmas holidays and especially for New Year’s Eve celebrations. Fruits and nuts are mixed into a portion of the dough, and then wrapped inside the rest of the dough. During rising and baking, the bread is weighted to create a uniform loaf that is dense in texture.

In Iceland, lace bread is cut and fried in melted butter. Families gather before Christmas to prepare this treat, each person decorating them with his or her own designs.

Christopsomo is a Greek bread (“psome” means bread) decorated with an early form of the Christian cross and has ends that split and curl into circles. Sometimes initials, birth dates, and ages are added to celebrate other occasions. It is a rich, round loaf scented with wine-soaked figs, anise, and orange. The bread sometimes contains mastihi, a dried-pine
resin of the Middle East. It is served with honey on Christmas Eve. Families leave pieces on the table, believing Christ will eat the bread during the night.

German stollen is oval in shape and folded in half after it is filled with almonds, candied cherries, currants, citron, grated lemon, orange peel, and a cinnamon mixture laced with schnaps or brandy. Germans traditionally serve it for Christmas breakfast. Thin slices are sometimes given with coffee or a glass of wine to visitors during the holiday season, much like fruit cake. The stollen’s shape may represent the Christ child in swaddling clothes.

**Stollen** (1 loaf)

1 recipe basic sweet dough
1/2 cup chopped, blanched almonds
1/4 cup finely cut candied citron
1/4 cup finely cut candied cherries
1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
1 tablespoon soft margarine or butter
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Make basic sweet dough recipe. Stir in almonds, citron, cherries, and lemon rind before adding the last cup of flour (or dust added ingredients in flour before adding them to the dough). Shape into a smooth ball. Place in a lightly greased bowl, turning the dough over to bring the greased side on top.

Cover and let it rise until it doubles (about 2 1/4 hours).

Punch down. Cover and let it rest for 5–10 minutes. With the palms of your hands, press dough into 1/2-inch thick, oval shape. Spread half of the oval with soft margarine or butter. Mix sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over margarine or butter. Fold other half lengthwise over the sugar and cinnamon half, making edges even.

Lift onto a lightly greased baking sheet. Cover the ends slightly. Press the folded edge down (not the open edge), which will help the loaf keep its shape as it rises and bakes.

Cover and let it rise until it doubles (about 1 1/4 hours). Bake at 350°F for 30–35 minutes. Remove from the baking sheet. When cool, frost and decorate.

**Frosting:**

3/4 cup sifted confectioner’s sugar
1 tablespoon condensed milk or cream
3 candied cherries, sliced
2 tablespoons chopped or slivered almonds

Mix sugar and cream to make a smooth, thick frosting. Pour it over the top of the baked loaf, letting the frosting drip down the sides. Decorate with sliced cherries and sprinkle with almonds.
Moravian love feast bread is traditionally made in the shape of sweet rolls and served after church services on Christmas Eve. This wonderfully sweet bread has an orange and spice taste.

Bara Brith is a Welsh, speckled bread made for special occasions such as Easter, Christmas, and the Harvest festival. It is one of more than 20 Welsh loaves, each differing in shape and taste.

Easter Breads
Crescia is savory egg bread eaten during Easter celebrations in Italy. The dough is speckled with coarsely ground black pepper and flavored with shards of aged Parmesan cheese.

On Good Friday, fruitied and frosted hot-crossed buns are traditionally made in many countries.

Kulich is a bread from Russia, which is baked in tall, slender cans. When the dough rises above the top of the can, it resembles the dome of many Orthodox churches. The icing represents the melting snow. The letters XV, “Christ is Risen,” are sometimes added to the top of the loaf with tiny strips of dough and colored sprinkles on the icing. A rose is also traditionally laid across the icing. The bread is so delicate that bakers used to put pillows around the pan (while cooling) to prevent it from falling into itself. It was also sometimes forbidden to walk through a Russian kitchen with heavy boots until the Kulich loaves were safely out of the oven.

Kulich (2 loaves)
Originally a holiday bread, Kulich is also appropriate at other times of the year. Its round slices add interest to any meal, whether served fresh or lightly toasted.

1 recipe for basic sweet dough
1/4 cup chopped almonds
1/4 cup raisins
1 teaspoon grated lemon rind

Make the basic sweet dough. Stir in raisins, almonds, and lemon rind before mixing in the last cup of flour. Finish mixing dough and knead. Shape into a ball and place in a lightly greased bowl, turning over to grease the bottom of the dough as well as the top. Cover and let it rise until it doubles (about 2 hours).

Punch down. Divide it into halves and shape into balls. Press each ball into a clean, greased 1-pound coffee can. Cover and let each rise until they double (about 1 1/4 hours).

Bake in a moderate oven (350°F) for 30–35 minutes. Remove bread from the cans and cool on a wire rack. When cool, add frosting and decorate. To serve, cut round slices (keeping the dome to replace on the top of the uncut bread to preserve freshness) or cut slices from top to bottom so each has frosting.
**Frosting:**
1/2 cup sifted confectioner’s sugar
2 tablespoons slivered almonds
2 teaspoons top milk or cream
2 candied cherries, sliced

Mix sugar and milk to make a smooth, thin frosting. When the loaves are cool, pour it over the tops, allowing the icing to drip down the sides. Decorate with almonds and sliced cherries or sprinkle with small, colored candies.

Want to make tall, slender loaves in coffee cans, molds, or specially made pans? A few tips can help.
1. Fill the pan a little more than half full. The oven spring during the first 8–10 minutes will make it higher.
2. Make sure the oven rack is low enough, so the top of the bread does not touch the oven or broiler.
3. Grease the pans well before shaping and rising.
4. Let the bread cool on its side for 5 minutes before removing it from the pan.
5. Cut the bread on its side.

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**Milestones**

Many cultures use bread to celebrate milestones in life such as marriage, birth, and death.

**Wedding Breads**

On All Hallow’s Eve in Ireland, baking a wedding ring in the Barm Brack (literally “yeast bread”) dough is a tradition. The finder will become engaged by the end of the year. Barm Brack is a spicy, round bread dotted with currants. It was originally baked in a cast-iron pot suspended over a fire. Barm Brack is similar to Bara Brith, but is sweeter and more cake-like.

The Greeks celebrate engagements, weddings, and births with a bread ring called “Koulores.” It is as beautiful and intricate as any wedding cake. In the northern part of Greece, this bread is decorated with wildflowers. On Crete, it is decorated with small figures and symbols made of dough.

In southern Mexico, bread is served at weddings to symbolize the couple. Sardinian wedding breads are delicate and resemble valentines.

German Kugelhopf molds are highly decorated and were once an essential part of a woman’s trousseau. On the wedding day, the mother would give the bride the family’s Kugelhopf recipe.
Kugelhopf (or Guglhupf)

1/2 cup milk
1 package active dry yeast or 1 cake compressed yeast
1/4 cup warm (not hot) water
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
1/2 cup melted margarine or butter
2 1/2 cups sifted flour
1/2 cup chopped raisins
1 teaspoon grated lemon rind (zest)

For pan: 1 tablespoon margarine or butter, 2 tablespoons fine bread crumbs or finely
ground almonds, 15–16 whole, blanched almonds.

Scald milk. Pour the milk into a mixing bowl and cool until warm (not hot). While milk
cools, sprinkle dry yeast into warm water in a cup or crumble compressed yeast into
lukewarm water. Stir until dissolved.

To the milk in the bowl, add sugar, salt, and 1 1/2 cups flour. Mix well. Add dissolved
yeast and beat until smooth. Add eggs and beat thoroughly. If you prefer, beat the eggs
first in a separate bowl. Add melted and cooled margarine or butter, about a tablespoon
at a time, mixing the ingredients well before adding more. Stir in the remaining 1 1/4
cups flour and beat the batter for about 5 minutes (an electric mixer set at moderate
speed works well). With a rubber scraper, scrape batter down from the sides of the
bowl. Cover and let it rise in a warm place until it doubles (about 1 1/2 hours).

While batter rises, prepare baking pan. Use a fancy mold that holds a quart, two 1-pint
molds, or a 7-inch angle food cake pan. Grease the inside of the pan generously with
margarine or butter and sprinkle with fine bread crumbs, coating all surfaces. Arrange
almonds in a design on the bottom of the pan. When the batter has doubled, stir it
down. Mix in the raisins and lemon rind and carefully spoon the batter on top of the
almonds to preserve your design. Cover and let the batter rise in a warm place until it
doubles (about 1 1/4 hours).

Bake in a moderate oven (350°F) for 45–50 minutes. Check the cake after it has
baked for 15 minutes. If it starts to brown, lay a piece of foil or clean brown wrapping
paper over the top as it continues to bake (this rich batter browns quickly). When it is
done, turn it out of the pan onto a wire rack. If you wish, dust lightly with confectioners’
(powdered) sugar. To make a design, lay a scalloped lace paper doily on the cake and
sift confectioners’ sugar over it. Lift the doily carefully.
In Ukraine, bread is an integral part of wedding ceremonies. Seven bridesmaids grind flour from wheat grown in seven different fields. This flour is sifted together and made into bread dough. Rosettes, doves, and cupid hearts made out of bread sometimes ornament this good-luck loaf.

Throughout much of Europe it is customary to briefly place bread in a newborn’s mouth to ensure the baby’s health and happiness. Pieces tucked into a bride’s shoe were thought to help her have children.

**Bread and Death**

At Welsh funerals, a loaf of bread represents the sins of the dead. Many think that eating this bread frees the spirit and keeps it from haunting the living.

In ancient Egypt, a prayer for the deceased began with a wish of 1,000 loaves of bread for his or her spirit. They placed bread in tombs to provide energy for the long journey to the afterlife. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City has a loaf, found in an Egyptian tomb, thought to be more than 3,500 years old!

Pan de los Muertos, literally “bread of the dead,” commemorates departed family members on All Souls’ Day, November 2. Mexican bakers fashion it into a number of shapes—a doll, cross, flower, or plain loaf—and may write the name of the deceased on the top with icing or beans.

Vilipuri twist is from Karelia. The bread is based on an ancient calendar sign—a circle with a dot in the center—that signified the solstice. To anchor the dot, the circle was divided into four quadrants, representing the seasons.
National Symbols

French Agriculture Minister, Philippe Vasseur, launched an ad campaign to boost sales of baguettes, which had been declining for several years: “Bread is a part of our national identity...if there isn’t any left, we won’t know who we really are.” Many other countries hold a similar sentiment.

The traditional bread of Ireland is soda bread, which is made from self-rising flour and buttermilk and cooked on top of a stove in a heavy, cast-iron skillet. Recipes appear in many cookbooks and magazines close to Saint Patrick’s Day.

The Swedes make a variety of rye breads, but limpe is one of their favorites. They bake it in plump, round loaves or in a regular loaf pan. Caraway seeds, cumin, fennel, and orange give it a spicy flavor. Limpe may be served with cheese, and it makes excellent sandwiches. In Swedish homes, it almost always appears on the table at smorgasbords.

**Swedish Limpe** (2 loaves)

1 1/2 cups water
1/2 cup warm (not hot) water
1/4 cup brown sugar
1 package active dry yeast, or 1 cake compressed yeast
2 teaspoons caraway seeds
2 tablespoons shortening
4 cups sifted white flour
2 teaspoons salt
2 cups sifted rye flour

In a small saucepan, mix 1 1/2 cup water, brown sugar, caraway seeds, shortening, and salt. Bring to a boil and simmer gently for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and pour into a small mixing bowl. Add 1 cup cold water and place into a large bowl. Into a cup or another small bowl, measure 1/2 cup warm water. Sprinkle dry yeast over water or crumble compressed yeast into lukewarm water. Stir until dissolved.

While yeast is dissolving, measure 2 cups of white flour into the large bowl with the water and add the water, shortening, and seasoning mixture. Blend ingredients and incorporate the yeast mixture. Add the remaining 2 cups white flour and mix well. Stir in 1 1/2 cups of rye flour, reserving the remaining 1/2 cup for kneading.

Sprinkle 1/4 cup rye flour on a bread board or pastry cloth. Turn dough out onto the floured board or cloth and knead until smooth and satiny. Use the remaining 1/4 cup rye flour only if the dough feels sticky and too soft. Place this ball into a greased bowl, pressing the top of the dough into the bowl to coat it lightly with fat. Turn the ball over to grease both sides. Cover and let the dough rise until it doubles (about 1 1/4 hours).
Punch down. For a finer-grained bread, let the dough rise a second time. Divide dough into halves. Shape each half into a ball. Place them on a lightly greased baking sheet about 4-inches apart. If desired, make 3 or 4 cuts, 1/2-inch deep, with a sharp knife across the tops of the loaves. Cover and let them rise until they double (about 1 hour).

Bake in a moderate oven (400°F) for 45–50 minutes. Remove from the baking sheet and cool it on racks away from drafts. For a shiny crust, brush tops of loaves with milk or egg white and return to the oven for 2 minutes. Dough can also be shaped into regular loaves and baked in bread pans.

Pupusas are El Salvador’s national dish. These white, cornmeal griddlecakes are flavored with cheese and topped with chili-pickled cabbage and carrots.

Iceland’s branch bread is crisp, long-lasting, and unleavened. They roll it as thin as a flower petal and serve it with soups, cheeses, pâtes, and dips. It is sometimes given to teething babies when the topping has no salt.

Kaiser and brotchen rolls are German staples. Kaiser rolls are large, with a five sided pinwheel design (a press to make the imprint may be found in catalogs). Brotchen are smaller, oval-shaped, and sprinkled with coarse salt and caraway seeds.

A number of traditional British breads are recognizable by their shape and design: bloomers, coburgs, rumpies, cottage loafs, baps (rolls), Devonshire splits and scones (eaten with clotted cream and jam), English muffins, and crumpets.

**Mock Clotted Cream** (makes 1/2 cup)

Real clotted cream is not pasteurized and, as a result, is not available in the United States. The following recipe simulates its taste and texture. Beat together 2 ounces of whipped cream cheese and 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) of softened, unsalted butter. Use as a spread with raspberry jam.

Each Italian village has its own style of focaccia. “Focaccia” derived from “focus” and is similar to pizza in shape but has “poke marks” covering its surface.

Almost all Europeans bake braided loaves. They can be basic sweet dough or filled with fruits and nuts. The loaves may be served plain, glazed, frosted, or sprinkled with chopped nuts. Some even have layers of three or four braids. In Austria, these breads are called Striesel.
**Viennese Strüdel** (1 large loaf)

1 recipe basic sweet dough
1/8 teaspoon mace
1/4 cup seedless raisins
1/2 cup confectioners’ sugar
1/4 cup chopped, candied cherries
1 tablespoon top milk or cream
2 tablespoons chopped, candied orange rind
1/4 cup chopped nuts

Make basic sweet dough. Stir in raisins, cherries, orange rind, and mace before mixing in the last cup of flour. Add the last cup of flour and finish mixing the dough, then knead. Shape into a ball and place in a lightly greased bowl, turning it over to grease both sides. Cover and let it rise until it doubles (about 2 1/4 hours).

Punch down and divide into nine pieces. Shape each piece into a ball. Cover and let them rest for 5 minutes. Roll each piece into a 15-inch long strand. Weave four strands into a loose braid. Lay them on a lightly greased baking sheet, overlapping at the center. Start braiding from the center and continue toward each end. With the sides of your hands make a “trench” down the center. Braid the next three strands loosely, starting from the center towards each end. Lay this braid on top of the first one, placing it in the trench. Twist the two remaining strands loosely around each other and lay them on top of the loaf. Tuck the ends under the loaf.

Cover and let the dough rise until it doubles (about 1 1/2 hours). Bake at 350°F for 40–45 minutes on the center rack. Make frosting by mixing confectioner’s (powdered) sugar with small amounts of milk or cream. When the bread has cooled, spread on the loaf and sprinkle with chopped almonds or walnuts.

You can add fruit and nuts to basic sweet dough in two ways. Adding them just before stirring in the last cup of flour is the easiest. At this stage, the dough is still soft and fruit can be distributed evenly. You can also make basic sweet dough and let it rise until it doubles. When you punch the dough down, turn it out onto a pastry cloth and flatten it with your hands. Sprinkle the fruit or nuts over half of the dough. Fold the other half over and knead until the fruit or nuts are well distributed, which takes 5–8 minutes of kneading. Cover and let the dough rest for 10 minutes. It is then ready to shape.

These recipes describe only some of the thousands of varieties of bread throughout the world. Special bread can make any day festive. It can also symbolize larger concepts such as community and friendship: “The staff of life and the bond of friendship. To break it is to share. To make it is to care.”
BASIC RULES AND STEPS

1. Dissolving the yeast:

When making yeast breads, temperature is important. The yeast is first dissolved in warm water, which separates the individual cells so each can start to grow and leaven the batter or dough. Active dry yeast softens quickly in warm water. Too hot or too cold water kills the yeast. (A thermometer in the water should read between 100–105°F. A drop placed on the inner side of your wrist would feel pleasantly warm, but not hot.) Compressed yeast is more sensitive to heat, because it is already moist. Lukewarm water is needed to soften it, which means the water is 90–95°F and feels scarcely warm on your wrist. Use the appropriate temperature for the yeast. The recipes in this project used regular yeast packages. Rapid Rise ™ or similar brands allow for hotter water and their technique is different.

2. Kneading the dough:

Stirring, beating, or kneading forms gluten in the batter or dough. The gluten traps the leavening gas the yeast manufactures and causes the bread to raise.

Beating can be by hand or with an electric mixer. Beating vigorously, after the first two cups of flour have been stirred in, starts good gluten formation. When the batter leaves the sides of the bowl and follows the spoon, you can stop. It will look shiny and smooth.

Knead a bread mixture that is too thick to stir. To knead, turn the dough out of the bowl onto a lightly floured bread board or pastry cloth. A clean canvas pastry cloth or a firmly woven dish towel will make kneading especially easy.

If dough becomes too sticky, sprinkle with more flour, but do not incorporate too much flour into the dough.

To start kneading, flatten the dough with palms of your hands. Pick up the edge farthest from you, fold it over to the edge closest to you, and push gently, but firmly. Turn the dough a quarter, fold it over again, and push. Repeat this turning, folding, and pushing motion until it is smooth and satiny. Also use a rocking-rolling motion as you knead. When the dough looks smooth and does not feel sticky, you can stop kneading.

Rising:

After you knead the dough, place it on a counter or baking
sheet and cover it with a clean pastry cloth. Meanwhile, wash and dry the mixing bowl. Grease the inside of the bowl lightly. Press the top of the ball of dough into the bowl and turn it over, which greases the surface lightly so it can stretch as it expands. Cover the dough with a piece of waxed paper and a clean towel and set it in a warm, draft-free place until it doubles.

In very hot kitchens, you may have to set the dough in a cool pan of water to keep it at the proper temperature.

3. Testing for lightness:

With the tip of your finger or a spoon, make a dent about 1/2-inch deep. If it disappears, let the dough rise a little longer. If it remains, the dough is ready for the next step.

4. Punching down:

After the dough has doubled, punch it down. Plunge your fist into the center of the dough. Fold the edges to the center, and turn the ball of dough so the bottom is on top.

5. Shaping breads:

After punching the dough, divide it into portions with a large knife. Shape each piece into a ball. Cover with a clean pastry cloth or towel, and let the dough "rest" for 5 minutes. This rest period makes it easier to handle and allows the bread to hold its shape.

6. Testing for lightness:

After shaping, allow breads to rise again until they double. Use the previous methods to test for lightness. After the bread has risen, it is ready for baking. If time is not a problem, some like to raise their bread twice in this fashion.

7. Baking:

Always bake yeast-leavened batters and dough in a preheated oven. This heat will allow the bread to rise quickly during the first 5–10 minutes, which is called “oven-spring.” During this time, the bread should not brown.

Plain batters and doughs are baked at moderately hot temperatures (400–425°F). Richer dough is baked at moderate temperatures (350–375°F). If bread browns too rapidly, cover it with a piece of heavy brown paper or foil and finish baking.

8. Cooling:

When breads are done, remove them from the baking pans to cool. Place them on wire cake racks or across the top edges of baking pans to allow air to circulate around them.
BREADS AROUND THE WORLD RECORD BOOK:

Name: ___________________________ County: ___________________________
Age: ___________________________ Year in 4-H: ___________________________
Club: ___________________________________________________________________
Parent or guardian’s signature: ___________________________
Leader’s signature: ___________________________________________________________________
Breads prepared in this project: ___________________________________________________________________
Other foods prepared during the year: ___________________________________________________________________
Title of demonstration, show and tell, or talk given this year about this project: ___________________________________________________________________
Location: ___________________________________________________________________
A menu that includes one of the breads: ___________________________________________________________________
People who helped you with this project: ___________________________________________________________________
Research you may have conducted about breads: ___________________________________________________________________
Which activities did you try? (Or indicate an experiment you may have designed on your own) ___________________________________________________________________
My “Breads around the World” story: ___________________________________________________________________
Indicate what you learned about making bread, other cultures, and yourself through this project. Which bread did you enjoy the most and least? Did you locate other recipes outside of this project book? What was your exhibit at the fair or round-up? ___________________________________________________________________


HOW TO JUDGE YOUR BREADS:

When judging your bread, answer the following questions:
Is it attractively shaped?
Is it a fairly even golden brown on the outside? Is the color consistent on the inside?
Is the crust crisp or tender? (depending on the type of bread)
Is the bread done—not doughy?
Does the crumb have many little holes similar in size? (Breads from dough usually have finer grain than those from batters.)
If the bread contains fruits, are they evenly distributed throughout the loaf or did they sink to the bottom?
Does the bread taste good?

MORE ACTIVITIES

• Weigh 1 cup of all-purpose, bread, and whole wheat flour. Are they the same weight?
• Most nations have recipes with measurements in kilos. Weigh the flours in kilos, if you have a metric scale, or convert the measurements from pounds to kilos.
• Use a U. S. map to plot where grains are grown, and taste breads that are popular in various regions.
• Talk to family members about their heritage and prepare a recipe that has been handed down at least one generation or enjoyed for a long time.
• Ask people from other countries (or regions of the United States) about their culture and taste their breads.
• To ensure that recipes that are divided in half are equal, measure on a scale. How accurate are your eyes versus the scale?
• Read a story or share a bread recipe from another country.
• Try recipes from other places and learn to enjoy new tastes and experiences.