

Maple Syrup

Quick Facts

Famous food: maple syrup

Often made in: _____

Tapped from: _____

Eaten with: _____



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you like to eat maple syrup? Why or why not?
2. What do you typically eat with maple syrup?
3. How is maple syrup made?
4. Who were the first people to enjoy maple syrup?
5. Have you every tried any flavored maple syrup, such as blueberry? Did you like it?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ 1. sap | a) a sticky, sweet substance inside the trunk of a tree |
| _____ 2. starch | b) the main wood stem of a tree |
| _____ 3. trunk | c) substances that help protect the body's cells from oxygen damage |
| _____ 4. pressure | d) a carbohydrate found in roots, seeds, and stems |
| _____ 5. be equipped with | e) to have the necessary tools |
| _____ 6. tubing | f) not the real thing |
| _____ 7. evaporator | g) long hollow hoses for transporting liquid |
| _____ 8. filter | h) to remove a substance from a liquid |
| _____ 9. granule | i) a machine that turns liquid into vapor |
| _____ 10. texture | j) a tiny grain of a substance such as sand |
| _____ 11. antioxidant | k) the feel of a substance |
| _____ 12. imitation | l) physical force placed on an object |

Reading

1. One thing Canada is famous for is maple syrup. About 75% of the world's maple syrup is produced in Quebec. Maple syrup is made from the **sap** of a variety of maple trees. Sap was discovered long ago by native people in North America.
2. Sap comes from **starch** that lives in the **trunks** of trees. It is gathered in springtime when the nights are still cool and the days are warm. At this time of year, water from the soil enters the maple tree. Warm air creates **pressure**, causing the water to travel back down the trunk of the tree. This pressure causes the release of the sticky sap.
3. Traditionally, buckets were used to collect the sap. These days, maple trees **are equipped with** special **tubing**. The sugaring season is usually in March and April. If done correctly, tapping does not hurt the tree.
4. The next step is to transfer the sap to the sugarhouse. Here the sap is boiled down into syrup. Special **evaporators** are used to remove large amounts of water. Before the syrup is bottled, it is **filtered**. **Granules** called "sugar sand" are removed to improve the taste and **texture**.
5. When trees are tapped at the beginning of the harvest season, the sap is light and sweet. This is called grade A syrup. Later in the season, the sap becomes darker and heavier. Grade B syrup has a stronger maple flavor. People typically eat syrup with pancakes, french toast, and waffles. Maple syrup is also used to flavor fish, meat, salads, and ice cream.
6. Pure maple syrup is a natural sweetener. Does that mean it's good for you? Yes! Maple syrup contains **antioxidants**. Table syrups that you buy in a store are often **imitation** maple syrup. These syrups are full of colors and additives, and may contain 0–5% pure maple syrup. If you're looking for health benefits, be sure to check the labels!

*"We elves try
to stick to the
four main food
groups: candy,
candy canes,
candy corns,
and syrup."*

—Buddy the Elf

Comprehension

A. True, False, or Not Mentioned?

Read the statements below. Write T if the statement is true. Write F if the statement is false and correct the information. Write NM if the fact is not mentioned.

- _____ 1. The majority of the world's maple syrup production takes place in Quebec.
- _____ 2. Maple syrup is harvested in the winter.
- _____ 3. You can kill a maple tree if you tap it too early.
- _____ 4. Grade B syrup is lighter and sweeter than Grade A syrup.
- _____ 5. Imitation maple syrup is high in antioxidants.

B. Timeline

Place the following in chronological order (1-9). One item is not mentioned in the reading. Place a star beside it and guess where it belongs.

- _____ The sap is collected in buckets or tubing.
- _____ The syrup is filtered and bottled.
- _____ Labels are placed on the bottles.
- _____ Warm air causes the water to travel back down the trunk.
- _____ People buy the syrup for their pancakes or waffles.
- _____ The pressure brings sap out with the water.
- _____ The sap is boiled in the sugarhouse.
- _____ Water is removed from the sap.
- _____ Water from the soil enters a maple tree.

Vocabulary Review

Choose seven bolded words from the text. Using this vocabulary, write a summary of the syrup-making process in your own words. Use your notebook if you need more room.

Words

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Summary

Pancake Recipe

A. Verbs

Write some verbs that you often see in recipes.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

B. Recipe

Write out the steps for making pancakes, waffles, or french toast.
(Look up a recipe and rewrite it in your own words if you don't know how.)
What are some alternative toppings to maple syrup that you could use with your recipe?

How to Make _____ :

Discussion

1. What did the reading NOT mention about maple syrup?
2. What ingredients or foods is your country famous for?
3. What other types of foods or materials are “graded”?
4. Do you prefer sweet, sour, or salty food? What are your favorites of each?
5. What other types of foods have “imitation” varieties?

Pair Activity

FIELD TRIP TO THE SUGAR BUSH

Imagine one of you works as a guide in a sugar bush (which is an area with many maple trees). The other person is a teacher. The teacher is going to bring her elementary school students to the sugar bush for a field trip tomorrow.

Create a dialogue between these two people. What questions would the teacher have? What instructions would the guide have? Share your dialogue with the class. You can also try recording your dialogue. Listen to your pronunciation, and share your recordings with your friends, family, and ESL Library!

Teacher: _____

Guide: _____

Teacher: _____

Guide: _____

Teacher: _____

Guide: _____

Teacher: _____

Guide: _____

Teacher: _____

Guide: _____

How many words from the vocabulary list did you include in your interview? _____