



Learning, Leading, Living

# Brownie Bake-Off

**Mission Mandate/Project Connection:**

Healthy Living/Foods and Nutrition

**Life Skills:**

- Healthy choices

**Audience:**

4-H youth, all ages

**Length:**

20 – 30 minutes

**Materials Needed:**

- Microwave oven (having two ovens works best)
- Baking ingredients (see recipes for supply lists)
- Baking supplies (see recipes for lists)
- Recipe cards for participants (one of each, per participant)

**Advance Preparation**

- Prepare a display of all the ingredients that are going into the Brownie #1 and #2 recipe.

**Activity Idea and Recipe Source:**

Ellen Andrews

University of Wisconsin-Extension

**Written by:**

Paula Rogers Huff and Kevin A. Palmer, 2012 University of Wisconsin-Extension

## Background

Ingredients can make a big difference in both the taste and the nutrition of a recipe. In this activity, youth will examine the ingredients that go into making that all-time favorite dessert – brownies—and compare the tastes between two recipes. One of the recipes is a traditional brownie, the other has lowered fat and includes whole-wheat flour.



## WHAT TO DO:

- Explain to participants that they will be baking today, in two groups. Divide the group into two, and then into pairs within their group<sup>1</sup>.
- Have each pair compare the recipes, and talk about the differences they see.
- Show the groups the ingredient display for Brownie Recipe #1 and go through each ingredient and ask the group to think about what each does in a baked product. For example, you might ask:

Which ingredients add flavor to the brownies?

(Salt, vanilla, and chocolate)

Which ingredient causes the brownie to rise and increase in volume?

(Baking powder)

Which ingredient adds substance and structure to the brownie?

(White flour)

<sup>1</sup> HINT: Have the group count off by twos, and then get into one line in each group from oldest to youngest. Then have the person at each end of their group line, walk forward and meet the other from the other end (the line is folding on itself). This is their partner. Hand each pair a copy of each of the two recipes as they meet.

Which ingredient adds tenderness and moistness to the brownie?  
(Butter or margarine)

Which ingredient adds sweetness to the brownie?  
(Sugar)

And then there are eggs....eggs do most of the above things except add sweetness. It is difficult to make a tender, fluffy, baked product without eggs.

- Remind the youth that there were two differences between the two recipes: the second recipe uses applesauce and whole wheat flour. Have them decide what those ingredients are replacing in the recipe. Ask for predictions as to the differences in the baked products.
- Have youth leaders assemble the ingredients as youth measure them.
- Bake brownies, cool, and cut into bite-sized pieces. Have youth take one of each, remembering which is which!

#### **TALK IT OVER:**

*Reflect:*

- How were the brownies?
- Which one did you like best?
- Which brownie had healthier ingredients? What were they?
- How did substituting applesauce for the butter affect the brownie for you? Why might a brownie with applesauce instead of butter be considered healthier?
- What about the whole wheat flour – how did that affect the brownie for you? What is the difference between whole wheat and white flour?

*Apply:*

- How do you choose what you eat? What do you think about when you make that decision?
- If you could choose between two things that you liked equally well, but one was better for you than the other, which would you choose?

#### **ENCOURAGING YOUTH LEADERSHIP**

Have emerging youth leaders paired with younger members for the reading of the recipes.

#### **ENHANCE OR SIMPLIFY**

For large clubs, consider more variations of brownies. For example, increasing the flour in this brownie recipe to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup will produce a more cake-like brownie.



## Recipe for: Microwave Brownies #1

### Ingredients

- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate squares
- ½ cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup packed white sugar
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- ½ teaspoon vanilla

### Supplies

- Microwavable glass bowl
- Measuring cups & spoons
- Spoon
- Spatula
- Cooking Spray
- Glass pie plate
- Saucer
- Paper towel or napkin
- Toothpicks

### Directions

1. In a microwave bowl, put in chocolate, butter, and sugar. Cover with a paper towel or napkin.
2. Microwave on Medium (50 % power) for 2 to 4 minutes, or until melted. Stir until well mixed.
3. Add all other ingredients to the bowl. Stir with a spoon until well blended.
4. Spray the pie plate with cooking spray, till well coated. Then pour batter in a microwavable 8" round pie plate. Cover with a paper towel or napkin.
5. Place the pie plate on an inverted saucer to microwave. This helps the brownies bake more uniformly.
6. Microwave on High (100%) 4 to 7 minutes or until done. Rotate plate at the 2-, 4-, and 5-minute mark. Use a toothpick to test when brownies are cooked (poke toothpick into center of plate - if batter remains on toothpick, it needs to be cooked more; but if it comes out clean, it is done).
7. Cool 5 to 10 minutes.
8. Cut into bars and serve.

## Recipe for: Microwave Brownies #2

### Ingredients

- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate squares
- ½ cup applesauce
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- ½ teaspoon vanilla

### Supplies

- Microwavable glass bowl
- Measuring cups & spoons
- Spoon
- Spatula
- Cooking Spray
- Glass pie pan
- Saucer
- Paper towel or napkin
- Toothpicks

### Directions

1. In a microwave bowl, put in chocolate, applesauce, and sugar. Cover with a paper towel or napkin.
2. Microwave on Medium (50 % power) for 2 to 4 minutes, or until melted. Stir until well mixed.
3. Add all other ingredients to the bowl. Stir with a spoon until well blended.
4. Spray the pie plate with cooking spray, till well coated. Then pour batter in a microwavable 8" round pie plate. Cover with a paper towel or napkin.
5. Place the pie plate on an inverted saucer to microwave. This helps the brownies bake more uniformly.
6. Microwave on High (100%) 4 to 7 minutes or until done. Rotate plate at the 2-, 4-, and 5-minute mark. Use a toothpick to test when brownies are cooked (poke toothpick into center of plate - if batter remains on toothpick, it needs to be cooked more; but if it comes out clean, it is done).
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