

ACTIVITY!

COOK A HOE CAKE

The simple cornmeal pancake has long roots in America. It was George Washington's favorite breakfast. The dish gets its name from a flat pan called a hoe griddle. Enslaved people did not have this type of griddle. Instead, they baked their corn cakes on garden hoes in fires near the fields where they worked. Try your hand at cooking this staple of a slave's diet.

Find a recipe for hoe cake in *American Cookery* by Amelia Simmons, published in 1798 at this website.



Amelia Simmons hoe cakes 



Do an online search for modern recipes for hoe cake. How do they differ from the historic recipe?

Choose one recipe to prepare and taste test.

- * What does it taste like? Is it filling?
- * Why might this food appeal to slaves who have to work all day?

EXPLORE MORE: Some recipes for hoe cake call for yeast. What function does yeast serve in bread recipes? Would enslaved people have used yeast? Why or why not?