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Southern Cooking

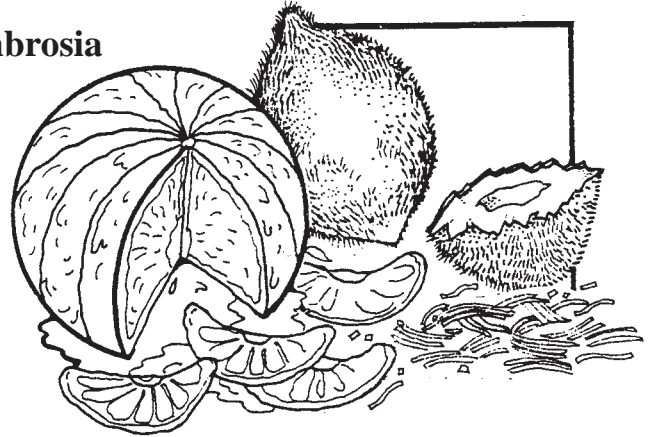
In Chapter 7, Cassie describes the food for the Logan family Christmas. “By the dawn, the house smelled of Sunday: chicken frying, bacon sizzling, and smoked sausages baking. By evening, it reeked of Christmas. In the kitchen sweet-potato pies, egg-custard pies, and rich butter pound cake cooled; a gigantic coon ...baked in a sea of onions, garlic, and fat orange-yellow yams; and a choice sugar-cured ham ...awaited its turn in the oven.”

Southern cooking is one of the unique regional cuisines of the United States, yet it really is several cuisines. Southern can mean Creole, Cajun, Tex-Mex, soul food and barbecues.

Southern Ambrosia

4 large sweet seedless oranges
1 cup (240 mL) shredded coconut
1/3 cup (80 mL) confectioner's sugar

Peel the oranges. Slice or section them with a knife. Put them in a bowl. Add the coconut and mix gently. Sprinkle with confectioner's sugar and chill until ready to eat.



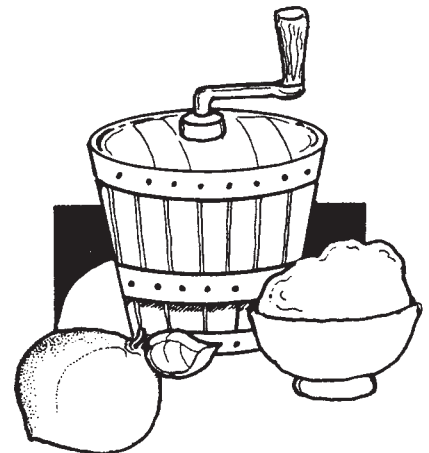
Pecan Waffles

Use ready-made batter, or have the class make their own. Add 1/2 cup (120 mL) finely ground pecans for each 10 medium sized waffles. Pour mixture on surface of an electric waffle iron and cook according to manufacturer's instructions. (This will be a special treat for those who have never seen a waffle iron “in action.”)

Homemade Peach Ice Cream

This will be an experience for many of the students who have never seen an ice cream freezer. Most of the freezers will be electric, but if you can get a hand-cranked type, the students will each feel they had a “hand” or “arm” in making the ice cream.

Follow the directions from the manufacturer. Any flavor will be enjoyed, but peach is especially delicious and “southern.”



Sweet Potatoes

If you have access to an oven, bake some sweet potatoes and serve with a bit of butter. These are definitely southern and Cassie mentions eating them in the book. (NOTE: Sweet potatoes are native to the United States, but yams are not. Sometimes the dark-orange yam is called a “sweet potato.” The true sweet potato is lighter in color.)

Dialect and Non-standard English

In Chapter 6, Cassie says, “Mama, he got something else he gotta do.” Would you give this same information using the same words as Cassie? Maybe you would say, “Ma, there’s sumpin’ else he’s got to do,” or “Mother, he has to do something else.” All of these sentences give the same information. However, the place where we were raised and the people we listened to as children give us our own special way of speaking.

Dialect is defined as a manner of speaking that is characteristic of a certain group or of the people of a certain geographical region. Dialects may differ from one another in the way vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar is used. As in most countries, one dialect has become dominant. In America, this is called Standard English and can be heard from news broadcasters. Most people, however, speak a different dialect. Some writers, such as Mark Twain, Langston Hughes, and Mildred Taylor, use dialect in the dialogue of their writings in order to let the reader know how the character would actually sound.

In groups of two or three, read each of the expressions below and determine how it might be said in Standard English.

Example: “He was just a-settin’ quiet-like” means “He was just sitting quietly.”

- (New England) 1. Didn’t aim to tote it the whole way.
- (New England) 2. Can’t for the life of me understand.
- (New York) 3. He was givin’ me the one-two look with his eyes.
- (New York) 4. He’s the type person who lies.
- (Southern) 5. He run off every which way.
- (Southern) 6. If I had my druthers, I’d go.

Pick out five examples of dialect from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. Write them down and have your group put them into Standard English.
