

# Oklahoma Stone Soup

Times were rough back in the early days of Oklahoma Territory, and people didn't always have enough to eat. One day a cowboy rode into a settlement and began asking questions, as if he planned to stay for the night.

"There's not a bite to eat in the whole place," he was told. "Better keep moving on."

"Oh, I have everything I need," he said. "In fact, I was thinking of making some Oklahoma Stone Soup to share with all of you."

He pulled an iron pot from his saddle bag, filled it with water, and built a fire under it. Then, with great ceremony, he drew an ordinary-looking stone from a leather bag and dropped it into the water.

By now, hearing the rumor of food, most of the settlers had come to see what was going on. As the cowboy sniffed the "broth" and licked his lips in anticipation, hunger began to overcome their skepticism.

"Ahh," the cowboy said to himself, rather loudly, "I do like a tasty stone soup. Of course, stone soup with tomatoes—that's hard to beat."

Soon a settler approached hesitantly, holding some tomatoes she had gathered from her garden, and added them to the pot.

"Wonderful!" cried the cowboy. "You know, I once had stone soup with tomatoes and a bit of beef as well, and it was fit for a king."

The local butcher managed to find some beef. . . .and so it went, through potatoes, onions, carrots, okra, and so on, until there was indeed a delicious meal for all. The settlers offered the cowboy a great deal of money for the magic stone, but he refused to sell and traveled on the next day. And from that time on they reminisced about the finest soup they'd ever had.

## ACTIVITY: LITERAL COMPREHENSION, INFERENCE, ANALYZE

Students should read the story above and answer the following comprehension questions:

1. What did the cowboy cook the soup in?
2. What did "with great ceremony" mean in paragraph 4?
3. When the cowboy said, "Of course, stone soup with tomatoes – that's hard to beat." what was he suggesting?
4. Was it the magic stone that caused the soup to taste good? If not, what was it?

P.A.S.S. Reading—Grade 3: 4.1d; Grade 4: 4.2a,4c; Grade 4: 3.1, 3.2, 3.4; Grade 5: 3.1, 3.2, 3.4

Answers: 1. iron pot; 2. made a big deal or big show of it; 3. that someone get some tomatoes to add to the soup; 4. the variety of items they all put in and that they all worked together to make it.

Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom is a program of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

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## Oklahoma Stone Soup

beef chuck roast, cubed      2-3 strips bacon

At least three of the following vegetables commonly grown in Oklahoma gardens. Let your students decide: tomatoes, carrots, corn, potatoes, green beans, peppers, okra, squash, onion

1. Cook the bacon in a large cooking pot. Put the bacon aside, and brown the onion in the bacon fat. Add the beef, and stir until it is browned on all sides.
2. Transfer all to a crock pot. Add two cups of water, and let it cook while students decide which Oklahoma vegetables they want to add (at least three—Encourage students to try vegetables they have never tasted before.)
3. Prepare the vegetables, and add them to the pot.
4. Let the soup cook in the crock pot on high for 2-3 hours.
5. Serve with crackers, corn bread or fresh bread.