



SOCIAL STUDIES

TITLE: Popcorn Poppers

SUBJECT: History

GRADE LEVEL: 4-6

OBJECTIVE(S): To research different kinds of popcorn poppers and the interesting history behind them.

OVERVIEW: In 1885, American citizen Charles Cretors invented the popcorn machine. His newly designed patent was originally a peanut roaster, to which he simply added a machine part to make popcorn pop. The world's first portable popcorn machine was introduced at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, by C. Cretors and Company of Chicago. This machine was considered "light," weighing [only] 400 or 500 pounds and could be pulled around "by a boy or by a small pony to any picnic ground or fair."

1. Ask students to research different kinds of popcorn poppers.
2. Have them investigate all aspects of the popcorn maker (i.e. when were they invented, who used them, how did they pop popcorn).
3. After the research has been conducted, ask the students to compare their findings to today's poppers. What makes poppers today different than the ones they just researched?
4. Students will be surprised to find out the complexity and creativity behind the invention of popcorn makers.

References

Smith, Andrew F. *Popped Culture: A Social History of Popcorn in America*. University of South Carolina Press, 1999.

Woodside, Dave. *What Makes Popcorn Pop?* Atheneum, 1980.