Name: _____ Date: _____

Chocolate Begins in a Pod on a Trunk

Circle group

Chocolate starts on a tree. The cacao tree grows in warm, rainy places near the equator. The equator is a line around the middle of Earth. You cannot see it. The pods grow right out of the trunk and branches. A ripe pod looks like a small football. It can be yellow, orange, or red.

Workers cut the pods down and open them. Inside are seeds called cacao beans. They are in white, sweet pulp. The beans are not sweet yet. They taste bitter.

The beans sit for a few days. Then they dry in the sun. A factory roasts the beans and grinds them into a paste. Sugar and milk are added. Now it is sweet chocolate.

Questions

1. Where do the pods grow on a cacao tree?

_____

_____

2. What are the seeds inside the pod called?

_____

_____

3. Are the beans sweet when they come out of the pod?

_____

_____

4. What happens to the beans after they sit?

_____

_____

5. What does a factory do with the beans?

_____

_____

6. Why are sugar and milk added to the paste?

_____

_____

Words to know

cacao: the tree whose seeds are used to make chocolate
pod: a case that holds seeds
equator: an invisible line around the middle of Earth
pulp: the soft, wet part inside a fruit
roast: to cook with dry heat until brown

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Chocolate Begins in a Pod on a Trunk

Triangle group

Chocolate does not start on a store shelf. It starts on a tree. The cacao tree grows in warm, rainy places near the equator. The equator is an invisible line around the middle of Earth. The pods of the cacao tree grow right out of the trunk and thick branches. A ripe pod looks a bit like a small football. It can be yellow, orange, or red.

Workers use a tool to cut the pods down. They open each pod. Inside are seeds, called cacao beans, wrapped in white, sweet pulp. The beans are not sweet or chocolatey yet. They taste bitter.

The beans are piled up and left to sit for a few days. Then they are dried in the sun. Factories roast them and grind them into a thick paste. Sugar and milk are mixed in to make the sweet chocolate that we know.

Questions

1. Where do the pods grow on a cacao tree?

_____

_____

2. What are the seeds inside a pod called?

_____

_____

3. Do the beans taste sweet when they come out of the pod?

_____

_____

4. What happens to the beans after they sit for a few days?

_____

_____

5. What do factories do with the beans?

_____

_____

6. Why do makers mix sugar and milk into the paste?

_____

_____

Words to know

cacao: the tree whose seeds are used to make chocolate
pod: a case that holds seeds
equator: an invisible line around the middle of Earth
pulp: the soft, wet part inside a fruit
roast: to cook with dry heat until brown

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Chocolate Begins in a Pod on a Trunk

Square group

Chocolate does not begin on a store shelf but on a tree. The cacao tree flourishes in warm, rainy regions near the equator, an invisible line that circles the middle of Earth. Its pods grow directly out of the trunk and the thick branches, and a ripe pod, which resembles a small football, may be yellow, orange, or red.

Workers use a tool to cut the pods down and then open each one. Inside are seeds, known as cacao beans, wrapped in white, sweet pulp. At this stage the beans are neither sweet nor chocolatey, and they taste quite bitter.

The beans are piled up and left to sit for a few days, and afterward they are dried in the sun. Factories then roast the beans and grind them into a thick paste. Finally, sugar and milk are mixed in to create the sweet chocolate that we know.

Questions

1. Where on the cacao tree do the pods grow?

_____

_____

2. What are the seeds inside a pod called?

_____

_____

3. How do the beans taste when they are first taken out of the pod?

_____

_____

4. What is done to the beans after they have sat for a few days?

_____

_____

5. What do factories do to the beans before adding other ingredients?

_____

_____

6. Why do chocolate makers add sugar and milk to the paste?

_____

_____

Words to know

cacao: the tree whose seeds are used to make chocolate
pod: a case that holds seeds
equator: an invisible line around the middle of Earth
pulp: the soft, wet part inside a fruit
roast: to cook with dry heat until brown

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Chocolate Begins in a Pod on a Trunk

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Chocolate Begins in a Pod on a Trunk

Easier · 118 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.9

1. Right out of the trunk and branches.
2. Cacao beans.
3. No, they taste bitter.
4. They dry in the sun.
5. It roasts them and grinds them into a paste.
6. The beans are bitter, so they make the chocolate sweet.

Triangle: Chocolate Begins in a Pod on a Trunk

This passage · 146 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.6

1. Right out of the trunk and thick branches.
2. Cacao beans.
3. No, they taste bitter.
4. They are dried in the sun.
5. They roast them and grind them into a thick paste.
6. The beans are bitter, so sugar and milk make the chocolate sweet.

Square: Chocolate Begins in a Pod on a Trunk

Harder · 148 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.1

1. Directly out of the trunk and the thick branches.
2. Cacao beans.
3. They taste quite bitter, not sweet.
4. They are dried in the sun.
5. They roast them and grind them into a thick paste.
6. The beans are bitter, so the sugar and milk make the chocolate sweet.