Name: _____ Date: _____

How a Black Skillet Gets Its Slick Coat

Circle group

A cast-iron pan is heavy and dark. Cooks say it gets better with use. The reason is a thin layer called seasoning. Seasoning is not a spice. It is a hard, slick coat made from oil.

To make it, a cook rubs a thin coat of oil on the pan. Then the pan is baked in a hot oven. The heat changes the oil. It sticks to the iron and turns into a smooth, dark coat. Each time the pan is heated with a little fat, a new layer can form. The pan gets smoother and blacker.

A pan with good seasoning is better in two ways. Eggs slide off it. And the coat helps keep the iron from rust. Iron rusts when water stays on it. So a cook dries the pan right after washing it. Many people rub on a drop of oil too.

A scratched pan is not ruined. If it rusts, the cook can scrub off the rust and season the pan again. That is why these pans last so long.

Questions

1. What is seasoning on a cast-iron pan?

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_____

2. How does a cook make the coat?

_____

_____

3. What does the heat do to the oil?

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_____

4. Why does a cook dry the pan right after washing?

_____

_____

5. Why might an old pan cook eggs better than a new one?

_____

_____

6. What can a cook do if the pan rusts?

_____

_____

Words to know

seasoning: a hard coat of baked oil on a pan
rust: the reddish flaky layer that forms on iron left wet

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: _____

How a Black Skillet Gets Its Slick Coat

Triangle group

A cast-iron skillet is heavy, dark and a little rough, and cooks often say it improves the longer it is used. The reason has to do with a thin layer called seasoning. Seasoning is not a spice. It is a hard, slick coating made from cooking oil.

To build it, a cook rubs a very thin coat of oil over the whole pan and bakes it upside down in an oven for about an hour. Heat transforms the oil, and its tiny molecules link together into long chains and bond to the iron, turning the oily film into something like a dark, smooth plastic. Each time the pan is heated with a little fat, another layer can form, so the surface slowly becomes smoother and blacker.

A well-seasoned pan has two advantages. Eggs and pancakes slide off it more easily, and the coating helps protect the iron from rust. Iron is a metal that rusts when water and air stay on it, which is why a skillet should be dried right after washing. Many people wipe it with a drop of oil before putting it away.

If the coating gets scratched or the pan starts to rust, it is not ruined. Scrubbing off the rust and seasoning the pan again brings it back, which is one reason these pans can last for generations.

Questions

1. What is seasoning on a cast-iron skillet?

_____

_____

2. How does a cook build the coating?

_____

_____

3. What happens to the oil when it is heated?

_____

_____

4. Why should a skillet be dried right after washing?

_____

_____

5. Why might an old, well-used skillet cook eggs better than a new one?

_____

_____

6. What can a cook do if the pan rusts?

_____

_____

Words to know

seasoning: a hard coat of baked oil on a pan
molecules: extremely tiny bits that make up all matter
bond: to stick tightly to something
rust: the reddish flaky layer that forms on iron left wet
generations: groups of family members born around the same time

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: _____

How a Black Skillet Gets Its Slick Coat

Square group

A cast-iron skillet is heavy, dark and slightly rough to the touch, and experienced cooks often insist that it improves the longer it is used. The explanation lies in a thin layer known as seasoning. Despite its name, seasoning has nothing to do with spices. It is a hard, slick coating that is formed from ordinary cooking oil.

To build it, a cook rubs a very thin film of oil over every surface of the pan and bakes it in a hot oven for some time. The heat transforms the oil. Its tiny molecules link together into long chains and bond firmly to the iron, so that the greasy film becomes something resembling a dark, smooth plastic. Whenever the pan is heated with a little fat afterward, another layer can form, and the surface gradually grows smoother and blacker.

A well-seasoned pan offers two clear advantages. Eggs and pancakes slide off it far more easily, and the coating helps shield the iron from rust. Iron is a metal that rusts whenever water and air remain in contact with it, which is why a skillet should be dried immediately after washing. Many people also wipe it with a drop of oil before they put it away.

Even if the coating is scratched or the pan begins to rust, it is by no means ruined. Scrubbing away the rust and seasoning the pan again restores it, which is one reason these heavy pans can last for generations.

Questions

1. What is seasoning on a cast-iron skillet, and what is it made from?

_____

_____

2. How does a cook build the coating on the pan?

_____

_____

3. What happens to the molecules in the oil when it is heated?

_____

_____

4. Why is it important to dry a skillet immediately after washing it?

_____

_____

5. Why might an old, well-used skillet cook eggs better than a new one?

_____

_____

6. How can a cook restore a pan that has begun to rust?

_____

_____

Words to know

seasoning: a hard coat of baked oil on a pan
molecules: extremely tiny bits that make up all matter
bond: to stick tightly to something
rust: the reddish flaky layer that forms on iron left wet
generations: groups of family members born around the same time

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: How a Black Skillet Gets Its Slick Coat

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

Circle: How a Black Skillet Gets Its Slick Coat

Easier · 176 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.7

1. A hard, slick coat made from oil.
2. By rubbing on a thin coat of oil and baking the pan in a hot oven.
3. It makes the oil stick to the iron and turn smooth and dark.
4. Iron rusts when water stays on it.
5. It has many layers of seasoning, so it is smoother.
6. Scrub off the rust and season the pan again.

Triangle: How a Black Skillet Gets Its Slick Coat

This passage · 225 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7

1. A hard, slick coating made from cooking oil.
2. By rubbing on a thin coat of oil and baking the pan in a hot oven.
3. Its molecules link into long chains and bond to the iron.
4. Iron rusts when water and air stay on it.
5. Years of use have built up many layers of seasoning, so the surface is smoother.
6. Scrub off the rust and season the pan again.

Square: How a Black Skillet Gets Its Slick Coat

Harder · 247 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.3

1. A hard, slick coating made from ordinary cooking oil.
2. By rubbing a very thin film of oil over it and baking it in a hot oven.
3. They link into long chains and bond firmly to the iron.
4. Iron rusts whenever water and air remain in contact with it.
5. Years of use have built up many layers of seasoning, so its surface is smoother.
6. By scrubbing away the rust and seasoning the pan again.