

Class Starters & Enders

Making the Most of Instructional Time Five Minute Lessons

Class Starters and Enders help utilize the last minutes of class when a lesson ends but there is not enough time to start another, or for an interest approach at the beginning of class. Mini-lessons correlate to GPS in the programs areas below.

Who's that Guy in the Toque?

Program Areas: Culinary Arts and Family & Consumer Science

Instructions: Read the narrative and make notes of important points, answer the questions and be ready to discuss this topic.

In a restaurant or on a cook show you may have noticed the tall white hat worn by many chefs. This distinguishing article of clothing has an interesting and complex history. The toque dates back to the 13th century when the toque style hat was common in many trades. A toque (tōk) is a type of hat with a narrow brim or no brim at all. Today the toque is known as the chef's hat.

During the 16th century there were many artisans, including chefs, being imprisoned or executed for their free thinking ways. To avoid being executed, many chefs hid in the **Orthodox Church** among the priests. They wore the same clothing as the priest, including the hats. The only difference was that the priests wore black, while the chefs wore grey. In the middle 1800s, **Marie-Antoine Careme**, a popular French chef, is credited with developing the current chef's uniform. The tall hats had already been introduced, but Careme wanted to create a specific uniform to honor the chef. White was chosen for the chef's uniform since it is symbolic of cleanliness.



Toques were worn by many people of the upper class other than chefs. They were popular from the 13th to the 16th century in Europe, especially France. Now, it is primarily known as the traditional headgear for professional chefs. The height of the hats and the number of pleats are sometimes used to indicate rank within a kitchen. Many toques have exactly 100 pleats. The symbolism of the 100 pleats of the toque are said to represent the many different ways a chef can prepare eggs. During the 16th century, the head chef had 100 pleats on his toque. Also the taller the toque, the more experienced the chef. Today the head chef may not have 100 pleats on his or her hat, but their hat will have the most pleats and be the tallest hat in the kitchen.

Today the chef's hat is worn more for hygiene, than symbolism. Toques help prevent hair and sweat from falling into the food. Chef's hats began with the intent to distinguish chefs from other people in the community. Today toques still distinguish chefs from cooks and other culinary and food service workers all over the world.

Review

1. What is a toque?
2. Why are chef's uniforms white?
3. What do the 100 pleats symbolize?
4. Which chef wears the tallest hat? Why?
5. Name two reasons chef's hats are worn today.
6. During the 16th century what did the different height of the toque represent?
7. T or F: Before 1600 many people wore toques other than chefs.
8. T or F: The head chef wears the shortest hat.

History Connection

Look up the answers to the following and record in notes.

What events in the 16th century led to the toque being used by chefs?

Language Connection

Write a paragraph on the following:

How does the toque relate to professionalism of the culinary industry?