

D2

From Barn to Bread in Stuart Times

Making a Loaf

*Please note:
materials contain
allergens*

Teachers' notes:

1. Wheat flour was used only by the rich and for special occasions to make a bread called Manchet.
2. C17th Yeast would be brewer's yeast or ale whey.
3. Yeast is a microscopic plant that must have sugar, warmth and moisture to grow. It is a living organism of the fungi group. It is obtained in its wild state as a minute organism carried in the atmosphere or found in soil. It is wild yeast which enters fruit juices, jams and other sweet liquids when they are exposed to the air, setting up fermentation. Yeast is used in brewing to bring about fermentation of the malt and hops. During this process, the yeast gathers a scum on the top and is collected and sold as Brewer's Yeast.

Yeast causes dough to rise through diastase (an enzyme) present in flour. It converts some starch into dextrine and maltose (forms of sugar). The yeast changes these sugars to form alcohol and carbon dioxide, which will cause the dough to increase in size. During cooking, the alcohol is driven off.

4. Bread was a staple food in medieval times, served with stew. Most people had a first meal of the day: break – fast and a second meal during daylight hours.
5. Bread was sliced thickly to use as a plate, called a trencher. Most people would carry a knife to cut bread and meat and would have serving spoons, called ladles. Forks were only just being introduced in the 1600s.