

The Great Bake-Off

Apple Brown Betty knew today was going to be a fantastic day. On her way to school she saw a sign announcing a town bake-off. Apple loved to bake and was famous all over town for her cookies and cakes. But Apple knew that to win this bake-off she would have to make something really stupendous. What could Apple make that would be so great, it would be awarded first prize?

After school, she rushed home to decide what to make for the bake-off. Apple thought about cookies. She loved cookies and suspected the judges must too. There were many kinds of cookies she could make. However, Apple suspected that even great cookies would not be good enough to win, for there would be dozens of cookies at the bake-off. Apple knew she wanted to stand out. Next, she thought about cakes. Her cakes were always scrumptious, but there would be many cakes at the bake-off too. Baking a cake like the other people would not win her first prize. She needed an innovative idea; she wanted to bake something no one had ever seen before. She would have to bake something brand new.

Apple went to her room because she wanted to think some more, and she always thought best in the quiet of her room. As she was sitting there, a great idea came to her. A cookie cake would be the perfect combination for the contest!

She rushed to the kitchen to start preparing her entry. She grabbed bags of sugar, salt, and flour. She also got eggs and baking soda and butter. Apple was so excited that she rushed to make her dessert. She threw the ingredients in a big bowl. She grabbed a wooden spoon and mixed them up well. She wanted to taste the batter but decided to wait. She wanted the judges to be the first people ever to taste her new creation. She put the cookie cake in the oven to bake and thought about the contest.

The next day Apple woke up and prepared to go to the bake-off. She got dressed and went to get her cake. It looked perfect. On her way to the bake-off, Apple saw many people with entries for the contest. Apple looked at the other cakes and thought hers looked the best. She hoped she was going to win the contest. When she got to the bake-off, Apple set her cake on the table. Her name was put by the cake so everyone would know it was hers. She was proud when people looked at the cake and then pointed to her. Apple wandered around the bake-off to see what else was there. She saw lots of cookies and cakes. They all looked beautiful, but none were as special as Apple's. Just then, Apple heard someone whisper that the judging was about to begin, so Apple rushed back to her cake.

The judges walked around to each person. They asked each one to describe what he or she had baked, and then the judges tasted the entry. The first person baked a chocolate cake. The judges said it was very good. The next person made peanut butter cookies. They were also very good. It appeared that the judges liked everything! Apple was the last person in line. As the judges came to her cake, Apple trembled. She really wanted them to like her creative cake. They asked Apple what kind of cake she had baked. Apple told them it was a cookies-and-cream cake; she also told them that she had made the cookies in the cake, too. They smiled at her and took a bite.

One of the judges made a funny face before he turned around and rushed out of the room. Another judge quickly put her piece of cake down as soon as she took a bite. She lifted a napkin to her mouth and tried to hide her face. The third judge looked at her friends. She did not even taste Apple's cake. Instead, she just looked at Apple and sadly shook her head.

Apple didn't know what to think. Everyone was looking at her again, but this time they were pointing at her cake and then nudging each other. Some of them even laughed! Apple Brown Betty wished she had never entered the contest. She felt absolutely awful.

When the bake-off was finally over, Apple hurried home. She did not really want to tell her mom and dad about what had happened. She opened the front door to her house as quietly as she could and tried to go to her room before her parents heard her.

Apple's mom and dad were waiting for her, though. Her mom walked over and gave her a big hug. She told Apple that she was proud of her for entering the contest. She reassured her daughter that people would not keep talking about what had happened for very long.

Apple was not sure what to do. She was almost afraid to speak because she could feel the tears trying to escape. She did not want her parents to feel bad for her. She also felt really silly because people had laughed at her cake.

Apple's dad walked over to her. He put his arm around her shoulders and gave her a hug, too. He said he had tried to figure out what happened and thought he had an answer. Apple wanted to hear what her dad had to say. She wiped her cheeks with the back of her hand.

"What do you think happened, Dad?" she asked. "The judges really hated my cake."

"Well," her dad responded. "Let's start in the kitchen. Show me what you used to make the cake."

They all went into the kitchen, and Apple started to gather all the ingredients she had used in the cake. She pulled out a bag of flour. She pulled out a bag of sugar. Finally, she pulled out a bag of salt.

"Just as I suspected," her dad said. "I think your mom said she bought a huge bag of salt at the store last week. Did you read the labels on those bags?"

Apple gasped. She read the labels and started to laugh. Now she knew why the judges had not liked her cake. She remembered their faces and giggled.

The very next day Apple started planning for the next bake-off. She had all kinds of creative new ideas. She would bake cookies and cakes for her mom and dad. They were very proud of how well Apple baked. But they were even more proud that she used her own ideas. Apple knew she would be prepared for next year's bake-off. She also promised herself she would read the labels of everything she used to make cakes in the future!

1. Why did the cookie cake taste so bad?

- A. Apple used salt instead of sugar.
- B. Apple put in way too much sugar.
- C. Apple didn't mix the batter well enough.

2. What did Apple think about the idea of making cookies to win?

- A. If she made one of her really great cookies, then she would be able to win.
- B. There would be too many good cookies entered for Apple to be able to win.
- C. Many cookies would be entered, but she knew the judges would choose hers.

3. What will Apple probably do the next time she decides to bake?

- A. Slow down and read all the labels on the boxes.
- B. Make sure her ideas work before going to a bake-off.
- C. Follow her recipe exactly so she won't have problems.

4. Why did Apple probably like it when people looked at her name by the cake and then pointed at her?

- A. It showed that people knew Apple was the famous baker.
- B. It meant that people liked the cake and knew it was Apple's.
- C. It meant that people thought her cake was special and would win.

5. What was Apple thinking right after her cake was judged?

- A. She thought the judges must be wrong about her cake.
- B. She thought she knew what might have gone wrong.
- C. She had no idea what went wrong with the cake.

6. What did Apple do right after she put her cake on the table?

- A. She watched people to see if they thought her cake was special.
- B. She went around to look at the other cakes and cookies.
- C. She waited anxiously for the judges to come by the table.

7. What mistake did Apple make when baking in the kitchen?

- A. She put the cookie cake in the oven too soon.
- B. She waited too long before tasting the batter.
- C. She didn't taste the batter before she cooked it.

8. What did Apple decide to bake?

- A. A cake with cookies inside it.
- B. A cake made of only cookie dough.
- C. A large cookie that looked like a cake.

9. When did Apple first know that there was a problem with the cake?

- A. Right after everyone started to stare at her and point at the cake.
- B. As soon as she told the judges there were cookies in the cake.
- C. When the judges acted strangely after tasting the cake.

10. How did the story end?

- A. Apple started to think of new cooking ideas to be ready for the next bake-off contest.
- B. Apple had learned a valuable cooking lesson and wouldn't make the same mistake again.
- C. Apple decided to bake special cookies for her mom and dad using her new recipe ideas.

11. What did Apple try to do when she first got home?

- A. Avoid telling her parents what happened at the bake-off.
- B. Pretend that the bake-off went just fine, but she didn't win.
- C. Hug her parents and tell them what happened at the bake-off.

12. What about Apple made her parents the most proud?

- A. She came up with her own ideas for baking.
- B. She was famous in the town for her baking.
- C. She was willing to try again to win the bake-off.

13. How did Apple's dad deal with what happened?

- A. He thought of ways for Apple to fix the cake.
- B. He thought about what could have gone wrong.
- C. He decided to make the cake again the right way.

14. How did Apple act in the kitchen?

- A. She worked very fast, rushing, throwing, and grabbing.
- B. She worked extra fast but had everything under control.
- C. She was in a hurry to get finished but she shouldn't rush.

15. When did the judges sample Apple's cake?

- A. Right after the peanut butter cookies.
- B. It was the third one they tasted.
- C. It was the last one they tasted.

16. How did Apple's mom feel about what happened?

- A. She was happy that Apple tried to win the prize but unhappy that she hadn't won.
- B. She was proud of Apple and knew that people wouldn't remember it for long.
- C. She was disappointed in Apple and sad that Apple wouldn't be famous anymore.

- 17. Why did Apple think she would win when she saw the cake the morning of the bake-off?**
- A. She had both cookies and cake.
 - B. Her idea was the best one ever.
 - C. The cake looked perfect to her.
- 18. How did Apple's feelings change during the story?**
- A. She knew she was a good cook and never doubted it, even when things went wrong.
 - B. She knew she was a good cook, but she began to doubt it after losing the bake-off.
 - C. She wanted to always be known as a great cook, but in the end she didn't really care.
- 19. Why did Apple laugh when she found out why the cake tasted so bad?**
- A. She remembered how the judges acted.
 - B. She felt silly and was laughing at herself.
 - C. She was glad the problem wasn't her cooking.
- 20. What was this story mainly about?**
- A. What it is like to enter a bake-off contest in your own town.
 - B. What judges do at a bake-off when something goes wrong.
 - C. How a girl who was a famous baker learned a lesson.