



The Book Planter



Ag in the Classroom

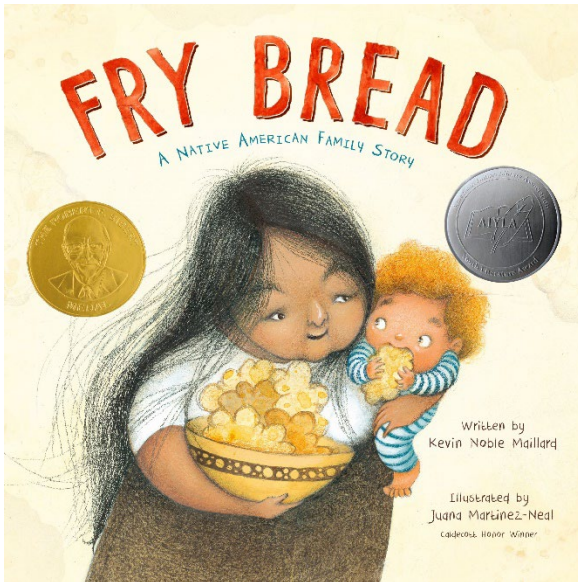
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Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story

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Illustrated by: Juana Martinez-Neal



Told in lively and powerful verse, *Fry Bread* is a depiction of a modern Native American family.

Fry bread is food.

It is warm and delicious, piled high on a plate.

Fry bread is time.

It brings families together for meals and new memories.

Fry bread is nation.

It is shared by many, from coast to coast and beyond.

Fry bread is us.

It is a celebration of old and new, traditional and modern, similarity and difference.

Did You Know?

- North Carolina has the largest American Indian population east of the Mississippi River, and the eighth largest population in the U.S.¹ ([map](#) attached of North Carolina Tribal and Urban Communities)
- The State of North Carolina recognizes eight tribes: Eastern Band of Cherokee, Coharie, Lumbee, Haliwa-Saponi, Sappony, Meherrin, Occaneechi Band of Saponi Nation, Waccamaw-Siouan.

Interest Approach – Engagement¹

1. Get students to challenge stereotypes and explore who American Indians are. Start by investigating the endpapers of *Fry Bread*, which include the names of hundreds of indigenous nations and communities in the U.S. Help students understand that the terms Native American, American Indian, and Indigenous Americans include many diverse cultures and peoples and that there is no single story that represents what it means to be Native American. Together, explore what a stereotype is and reflect on the role of stereotypes in our society. Talk about what steps the author and illustrator of *Fry Bread* take to challenge stereotypes of Native

Americans. Ask students what steps they can take, or have taken, to challenge stereotypes they encounter and lead a discussion that allows students to share their ideas.

Questions for Discussion and Reflective Writing¹

Have students answer the following questions after reading *Fry Bread*.

1. What is fry bread? What did you learn about fry bread from this book?
2. What did you learn about the origin of fry bread?
3. How is fry bread part of everyday life and special occasions in this book? What foods are part of special occasions that you take part in?
4. Do you have a favorite food in your family or culture that is special or has a special history? Who makes this special food? How did they learn to make it?
5. How does food help tell the history of a people? What stories have you heard about foods your family eats?
6. What are the words on the endpapers of the book?

Activity 1: Exploring and Writing Concept Books

Fry Bread is considered by the Sibert Committee to be a concept book, a subgenre of nonfiction. Have students share what they notice about how the book is organized. Use this conversation as a way to draw their attention to the use of headings, the repetition of “Fry bread is...”, and the use of four or five lines of verse to explain each topic. Gather other concept books in your classroom or school library and have students explore them taking note of similarities and differences in how the books are organized. Help the students brainstorm topics they could create concept books about using *Fry Bread* as a mentor text for writing and illustrating.

Activity 2: Family and Community Food Stories³

Using *Fry Bread* as a guide, support students to think about food that is important to their families or communities. Do they have an equivalent of a “fry bread lady” who is the keeper of a special recipe that gets passed on? Do they have foods that are important to family or community get-togethers such as holidays? Invite students to interview family members or adults in their community or faith community about food stories. Ask students to find out how certain foods became important and who have been the recipe keepers over time. Invite students to choose a genre that best supports what they learned such as an informational book, poetry, song, wordless picture book, or family story. Invite families and community members to bring in the featured food for a class potluck and writing celebration.

Activity 3: I Never Knew: Gathering Facts³

The Author’s Note is full of important facts about the diversity of Native American people, the removal and displacement of Native Americans, data about where Native Americans live in the United States, and federally recognized Native American tribes and the recognition and denial process. Much of the

information may surprise and may even enrage students. Support students to read with a lens towards “I never knew” as they approach the Author’s Note. Have students record what they never knew and their reaction to the information. Have a class discussion to have students compare the facts they recorded and how they felt about them.

Activity 4: Food Deprivation and Resilience³

As explained in *Fry Bread*, the origin of the food comes from the government-caused deprivation that happened when people were isolated from meats, fruits, and vegetables of their native land through the forcible removal of Native people. As federal rations of powdered, canned, and other dry foods were issued by the government, fry bread was born. In what ways did forced relocation cause food denial and hardship for Native peoples? What do students think about this history? In what ways does the book help readers to learn about the role of food in the survival and resilience of Native peoples? Maillard explains that some Native people are pushing back on making and eating fry bread because of its lack of nutritional value. Yet, *Fry Bread* draws our attention to the larger problem of a lack of access to farmable land or fresh food markets. Extend this learning by researching with students school lunch guidelines and federal funding regulations for free and reduced meals that have been put in place or dismantled in recent years. In what ways is access to healthy food a right that governments should be supporting rather than limiting? *(We recommend awareness and sensitivity to parallels students may have to food insecurity in their families and communities during this discussion.)*

Activity 5: Three Sisters Garden

Background

Native Americans from different parts of North America use a wide range of agricultural techniques. Perhaps the best known is the inter-planting of corn, beans and squash – a trio often referred to as the “three sisters.” Cultivating these companions in your school garden, a small planting near your school, a large container or even indoors, can inspire studies of Native American customs and nutrition, and investigations of plant growth and relationships.

In a “three sisters” planting, the three plants benefit one another. Corn provides support for beans. Beans, like other **legumes**, have bacteria living on their roots that help them absorb nitrogen from the air and convert it to a form that plants can use. Corn, which requires a lot of nitrogen to grow, benefits most. The large squash leaves shade the soil, prevent weed growth, and deter pests. The three sisters also complement each other nutritionally. Corn supplies carbohydrates and a variety of amino acids. Beans have protein, including two amino acids that corn lacks. Squash contributes vitamin A.

It’s hardly surprising that these crops were considered by many Native Americans to be “special gifts from the creator.” They play an important role in the agriculture and nutrition of many Native people of the Americas. Because of the sisters’ central role as sustainers of life, a host of stories, customs, celebrations and ceremonies are associated with them.

In this activity students will begin to understand a portion of the agricultural history of our nation by learning how Native Americans preserve natural resources and soil nutrients to harvest crops.

1. Explain to your class that they will be investigating the traditional story of the Three Sisters which focuses on the agriculture and food production techniques used by Native Americans. The three sisters refer to three crops that were commonly planted together – corn, beans and squash.
2. Handout the [Three Sisters Investigation](#) activity sheet and facilitate a class discussion that allows students to share what they know about corn, beans, and squash. (Examples could include: Corn – tall plant, kernels grown on ears, yellow in color, etc.) Instruct students to list the items in the chart. Share the information found in the *Background* section or have students research the three crops using the internet or other resources to add to their chart.
3. Divide your class into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group one of the attached [Three Sisters](#) handouts. Instruct the students to read through their handout as a group and record characteristics of each sister in their chart on the *Three Sisters Investigation* activity sheet. After the groups have read and discussed in a group, have each group share the characteristics of each sister (plant) with the whole class. They should also decide which crop each sister represents.
4. As a class, discuss how the traditional stories relate to how the three sisters can help each other when planted together. For example: Several of the stories describe the sisters “becoming stronger together” or “three sisters helping and loving each other.” Examples of how the actual crops benefit each other include the corn providing a trellis or pole for the bean to climb; the bean providing nitrogen to the soil to help the corn grow; and the squash preventing weeds from growing and deterring pests.

Links

- NC Tribal and Urban Communities Map
<https://ncadmin.nc.gov/media/5686/download>
- Three Sisters Investigation activity sheet (**Activity 5**)
https://cdn.agclassroom.org/media/uploads/LP297/Three_Sisters_Invesitgation_Worksheet.pdf
- Three Sisters Handouts (**Activity 5**)
https://cdn.agclassroom.org/media/uploads/LP297/Three_Sisters.pdf

Sources

1. <https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/read-across-america/find-your-book/fry-bread-native>
2. <https://www.ncpedia.org/tribes#:~:text=North%20Carolina%20has%20the%20largest,1.24%20percent%20of%20the%20population.>
3. <https://theclassroombookshelf.com/2020/02/03/fry-bread-a-native-american-family-story-a-love-letter-to-indigeneous-nations-and-communities/>
4. <https://agclassroom.org/matrix/lesson/297/>

K-5 Subject Areas: Reading, Speaking and Listening, Science, Social Studies

Reading

- **RL.K.1** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **RL.K.3** With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
- **RL.K.4** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about words in a text that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
- **RL.K.6** With prompting and support, define the role of the author and illustrator in telling the story.
- **RL.K.7** With prompting and support, describe how the words and illustrations work together to tell a story.
- **RL.K.9** With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.
- **RL.K.10** Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.
- **RL.1.1** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **RL.1.2** Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- **RL.1.3** Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.
- **RL.1.4** Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
- **RL.1.7** Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.
- **RL.2.2** Recount events from familiar stories from diverse cultures.
- **RL.2.3** Identify the actions of the characters in a story.
- **RL.2.7** Identify illustrations or objects/tactual information in print or digital text that depict characters.
- **RL.2.10** Actively engage in group reading for the purpose of connecting prior knowledge and experiences to text.
- **RL.3.1** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **RL.3.2** Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- **RL.3.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, identifying words that impact the meaning in a text.
- **RL.4.1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **RL.4.2** Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- **RL.4.5** Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems and drama when writing or speaking about a text.
- **RL.4.9** Compare and contrast the use of similar themes and topics and patterns of events in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.
- **RL.5.1** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **RL.5.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, recognizing specific word choices that contribute to meaning and tone.
- **RL.5.5** Explain how chapters, scenes, or stanzas provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.
- **RL.5.7** Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or aesthetics of a text.
- **RI.K.1** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **RI.K.2** With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
- **RI.K.3** With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
- **RI.K.4** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about words in a text.
- **RI.K.6** With prompting and support, define the role of the author and illustrator in presenting ideas or information in a text.
- **RI.K.7** With prompting and support, describe how the words and illustrations work together to provide information.
- **RI.1.1** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **RI.1.2** Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
- **RI.1.4** Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.
- **RI.1.5** Know and use various text features to locate key facts or information in a text.
- **RI.1.6** Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.
- **RI.1.7** Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.
- **RI.1.8** With guidance and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support ideas in a text.
- **RI.2.1** Answer who and what, where questions to demonstrate understanding of details in a familiar text.
- **RI.2.2** Identify the main topic of text.
- **RI.2.3** Identify individuals, events or details in an informational text.
- **RI.2.4** Identify words that relate to the topic of a text.
- **RI.2.5** Locate key facts or information in a familiar text.
- **RI.2.6** Identify the purpose of the author and the illustrator.
- **RI.2.7** Identify images, objects, or tactuals that illustrate key ideas in a text.
- **RI.2.8** Identify points the author makes in a familiar informational text.
- **RI.2.10** Actively engage in group reading of information text for the purpose of connecting prior knowledge and experiences to text.
- **RI.3.1** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **RI.3.2** Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
- **RI.3.3** Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
- **RI.3.5** Use text features and search tools to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
- **RI.3.7** Use information gained from illustrations and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text.
- **RI.3.8** Describe how the author connects ideas between sentences and paragraphs to support specific points in a text.
- **RI.4.1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

- **RI.4.2** Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **RI.4.3** Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
- **RI.4.5** Describe the overall structure of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.
- **RI.4.7** Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- **RI.4.8** Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.
- **RI.5.1** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **RI.5.2** Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **RI.5.8** Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).

Speaking and Listening

- **SL.K.1** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.K.2** Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
- **SL.K.3** Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
- **SL.K.4** Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.
- **SL.K.5** Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.
- **SL.1.1** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.1.2** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- **SL.1.5** Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
- **SL.2.1** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.2.2** Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- **SL.2.4** Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent and complete sentences.
- **SL.3.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.3.2** Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- **SL.3.3** Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.
- **SL.3.4** Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly in complete sentences at an understandable pace
- **SL.4.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Science

- **K.L.1.2** Compare characteristics of living and nonliving things in terms of their: structure, growth, changes, movement, basic needs.
- **1.L.1.1** Recognize that plants and animals need air, water, light (plants only), space, food and shelter and that these may be found in their environment.
- **1.L.2.1** Summarize the basic needs of a variety of different plants (including air, water, nutrients, and light) for energy and growth.
- **2.L.2.1** Identify ways in which many plants and animals closely resemble their parents in observed appearance and ways they are different.
- **3.L.2.1** Remember the function of the following structures as it relates to the survival of plants in their environments: • Roots – absorb nutrients • Stems – provide support • Leaves – synthesize food • Flowers – attract pollinators and produce seeds for reproduction
- **3.L.2.2** Explain how environmental conditions determine how well plants survive and grow.
- **3.L.2.3** Summarize the distinct stages of the life cycle of seed plants.
- **4.L.1** Understand the effects of environmental changes, adaptations and behaviors that enable animals (including humans) to survive in changing habitats.
- **4.L.2** Understand food and the benefits of vitamins, minerals and exercise.
- **5.L.2** Understand the interdependence of plants and animals with their ecosystem.

Social Studies

- **K.B.1** Understand cultural practices in local communities and around the world.
- **K.G.1** Apply simple geographic representations, tools, and terms to describe surroundings.
- **K.G.2** Understand interactions between humans and the environment
- **K.H.1** Understand change over time
- **1.B.1** Understand how culture, values, and beliefs shape people, places, and environments.
- **1.C&G.1** Understand how people engage with and participate in the community.

- **1.G.1** Apply geographic representations, tools, and terms to describe surroundings.
- **1.G.2** Understand interactions between humans and the environment in different places and regions around the world.
- **1.H.1** Understand how people and events have changed society over time.
- **2.B.1** Understand how values and beliefs shape culture in America.
- **2.G.1** Understand how interaction between humans and the physical environment is impacted by movement and settlement.
- **2.H.1** Understand how various people and events have shaped America.
- **3.B.1** Understand how values and beliefs of individuals and groups influence communities.
- **3.G.1** Understand how geography impacts the development of regions and communities.
- **3.H.1** Understand how various people and historical events have shaped local communities
- **4.G.1** Understand the role geography has played in the development of North Carolina.
- **4.H.1** Understand the role of various people, events, and ideas in shaping North Carolina
- **5.C&G.2** Understand the ways in which the federal government has protected individual rights of citizens.
- **5.H.1** Understand the role of various people, events, and ideas in shaping the United States.