



Making Butter



INTRODUCTION

Show the children a jar full of milk and have them guess what's in the jar. (They'll say milk). Explain that it is actually a kind of milk that is extra thick which means it has more fat. Ask what they think will happen to the milk if they shake it? Tell students the class is going to make Butter, and it only takes 1 ingredient, Cream!

THE SHAKING PROCESS

Fill a small glass or plastic jar about 1/3 full with heavy cream. Make sure the lid is tightly closed. Demonstrate the shaking technique by gripping the jar firmly with both hands and moving it vigorously up and down. Pass the jar around the circle so each student can take a turn shaking. Use a clear jar so they can see through it without removing the lid- have children look for "windows" in the cream. That's how you know it's getting closer to butter. The cream will first thicken to a whipped-cream texture, but don't stop, it's not butter yet!

THE TRANSFORMATION

After 5-10 minutes of continuous shaking, listen carefully for a sloshing sound inside the jar. Look at the jar. You should see a yellow solid mound (butter) in a thin liquid (buttermilk). This indicates that the butter has separated from the buttermilk, a pale, watery liquid now surrounding a solid mass of butter. Pour the jar's contents through a colander, allowing the buttermilk to drain away while a golden lump of butter remains behind. If you're storing the butter for later, rinse it under cold water to remove any remaining buttermilk. Kids can help with this by squeezing the ball of butter in their hands under cold running water. If eating immediately, this step isn't necessary. You can have the buttermilk for baking projects.

TASTING & REFLECTION

Flavor your butter if desired with the salt, or cut up fresh herbs, or for a sweet twist try honey, cinnamon or maple syrup. Spread the fresh butter on bread or crackers and enjoy! As students eat, guide a conversation. What did students think was going to happen to the cream when they shook it? Were they surprised by anything? How does the butter taste? Is it different from the butter they eat from the store?