

## Cooking Dilemmas

**Directions** Answer the questions in the cooking dilemmas below. Then try the Discovery activity.

1. Elena plans to make a beef stew for a family dinner tonight at 6 p.m. In the morning she gets a call from a friend who needs some help. Elena must leave soon and will be gone until about 5 p.m. Her recipe calls for simmering the stew on the range for several hours. Since she will not be home, she can not cook it that way. What alternative method could she use and still have dinner ready on time?

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2. Hiro is preparing salmon fillets for friends who want to limit their fat and calorie intake. What cooking method would you recommend that he use?

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3. Rachel and her friends have been working on a school project on Saturday afternoon. She wants them to stay for dinner with her and her mother. They have a variety of vegetables on hand and a pound of boneless chicken breasts. How could they prepare a meal to serve five people? What might she serve with the meal?

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4. Sean is making potatoes as a side dish with eggs for breakfast. He wants to cook them so they are low in fat but a little bit crispy. What cooking method could he use to prepare the potatoes? Why is this a good choice?

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### Discovery

**An Original Dilemma** Write a cooking dilemma similar to the ones above. Think of a situation that calls for using a particular cooking method. Read your scenario to the class to see whether they can identify the cooking method you have in mind.

## Cooking with Flair

**Directions** Have you ever seen a television cooking show with a professional chef as the star? Now it is your turn to shine. Team up with a partner to put on a cooking show of your own for classmates in the school foods lab. Follow the steps below.

- 1 Choose a dish to prepare.** With your partner, decide what dish to prepare during the cooking show. Keep these guidelines in mind:
  - A familiar recipe is best. It might be one you have made at home or perhaps a family favorite. You do not want to demonstrate something that you barely know how to do yourself.
  - The recipe should have enough steps to fill the time, but not be too complicated.
  - Make sure you can finish in one class period. If time is a problem, what could you do ahead? Cutting vegetables and mixing ingredients work well during a demonstration. Some tasks, however, take more time than you have. A professional chef might show how to prepare dough, then set it aside and bring out dough that has risen and is ready to use. You could do this too.
  - Do you need extra cooking time? If so, making a finished product ahead works well. In making a cake, for example, the chef shows how to prepare the batter. The batter goes in the oven, and a separate baked cake comes out. The baked cake is then filled or frosted to complete the recipe in the time available.
  
- 2 Plan the preparation.** With your partner, go over the recipe. How will you divide up the food preparation tasks? Remember that cooking shows include narration, so you'll be preparing the food and explaining what you are doing at the same time. Here are some possible ways to divide up the tasks:
  - One of you can do all of the food preparation while the other narrates.
  - You can trade off between food preparation and narration. First one person works while the other narrates, and then you switch roles.
  - You could take turns working and narrating at the same time. For example, one person slices carrots while explaining the sizes and shapes. Then you "cut" to the other chef, who grates cheese while giving tips for doing the task neatly.
  - For more entertainment value, you could talk back and forth as you work. You both handle different tasks at the same time while having a conversation about what you are doing. Throwing in a little humor, if it works for you, can keep your audience interested.

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**CHAPTER 21: Basic Cooking Techniques (Continued)**

**Focus on Media**

- 3 **Plan the narration.** What will you say about each step in the recipe? Explain difficult steps as you do them. For simple steps, you may need filler material to talk about as you work. While frying onions, for example, you could talk about how the onions smell while cooking or how important it is to stir them frequently to keep them from burning.
- 4 **Make some notes.** Write the steps of your demonstration on index cards. Include notes about what you want to say. Since you will be talking and working at the same time, a complete script is not a good idea. Reading and chopping vegetables at the same time could be hazardous. Instead, let short notes remind you of what to say. Place the index cards where you will be working. An alternative is to copy your lines on large cue cards and have an assistant hold them up while you work.
- 5 **Practice as a team.** You should work together smoothly, moving from step to step without confusion or interruption. You should also practice what you will say. When you know the plan well, a little improvisation is easier and can be fun. If you need any foods prepared ahead, you could take care of that during a practice session.
- 6 **Check supplies.** Before putting on your show, make sure you have all the ingredients and supplies you need to prepare your dish. Check the school foods lab to make sure all the equipment is in place. If anything you need is missing, bring it from home on the day of the show. Also, be sure you know where to find everything in the foods lab. Fumbling around to find things during your performance takes valuable time.
- 7 **Put on your show for the class.** If possible, arrange to tape the show so you can watch it afterwards.

**Evaluate the Results**

What impressions did your audience have of your show? Summarize below what you learned about the challenges of working in television. What went well in planning and carrying out your cooking show? What could have been done better?

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