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# Paper Bag Piñatas

## materials

Paper Lunch Bag	Candy	String
Glue Stick	Crepe Paper	Scissors
Construction Paper*		

\*Optional

## Tips

- When adding the crepe paper, start at the bottom and work up.
- Fill the bag with tissue paper or loose crepe paper. This will make it easier to decorate the outside.

## Background Information

Papier mâché piñatas originated in China, where Marco Polo is believed to have seen Chinese paper animals covered with colored paper and filled with seeds. When struck with a stick, the seeds spilled out. The custom then spread from Italy to Spain, where the first Sunday in Lent became a fiesta called the ‘Dance of the Piñata.’ The Spanish used a clay container called “la olla,” the Spanish word for pot.

When the Spanish conquered America they realized that the indigenous population had a similar tradition. The Aztecs would fill a clay jar with offerings and decorate it with colorful feathers. They would break the jug in celebration of the Aztec god of war, Huitzilopochtli. When the piñatas were broken, the treasures would fall on to the god’s feet as an offering. Similarly, the Mayans played a game in which the player’s eyes were covered while hitting a suspended clay pot by a string.

The Spanish missionaries combined both traditions. The original piñata had seven points symbolizing the seven deadly sins and the stick used to break the pinata represented love. Today, pinatas come in different shapes and sizes and are used for many celebrations.

Children and Youth in History | Piñata [Object] ([gmu.edu](http://gmu.edu))



## Procedure

1. Pour candy into the brown paper bag.
2. Tie the top with string. Cover with one paper plate and hot glue together.
3. Choose the color for your piñata and cut long pieces of crepe paper..
4. Fold the crepe paper into 2-inch sections.
5. Create fringe by cutting along the bottom edge of the section, and only up to halfway on the crepe paper.
6. Unfold the crepe paper and add glue to the top edge.
7. Starting from the bottom of the paper bag, attach the crepe paper around the paper bag.
8. Continue cutting the crepe paper and gluing it to the paper bag until it is covered.



### Optional:

Add faces with construction paper. Breaking a piñata: Tie the piñata to a long piece of rope. Both ends have to be tied or held. Using a long stick, hit the piñata until it breaks and collect the candy.

# 2

# Old Fashion Sugar Cookies

## materials

4 Cups Flour
1 Teaspoon Baking Powder
½ Teaspoon Baking Soda
½ Teaspoon Salt
½ Teaspoon Nutmeg
1 Cup Soft Butter
1 ½ Cup Sugar
1 Egg
¾ Cup Dairy Sour Cream
1 Teaspoon Vanilla Extract
Red and Green Sanding Sugar

“I first found this recipe sixty years ago when I first learned to bake. It has been a favorite Christmas cookie all these years. I sprinkle them with sanding sugar, but they can also be frosted with icing.”

– Genevieve, Director of Community Programs at Bowers Museum





## Procedure

1. Sift flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and nutmeg and set aside.
2. In large bowl of an electric mixer beat butter, sugar, and egg at medium speed until fluffy.
3. At low speed, beat in the sour cream and vanilla until smooth.
4. Gradually add flour mixture, beating until well combined.
5. Scrape up the dough from the bowl and form 4 balls.
6. Wrap the balls in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 2 hours.
7. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 375 F. Lightly grease cookie sheets.
8. Roll dough out on floured surface to ¼ inch thickness. Cut out cookies with floured cookie cutter.
9. Using a spatula, place cookies 2 inches apart on the cookie sheet.
10. Sprinkle with the sanding sugar.
11. Bake 10 to 12 minutes, or until golden on the bottom and edges. Place on wire rack to cool.





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