

Sample Lesson #3

THEN: A Pink Confection

Next time you're at a circus, county fair, or carnival, stop and think about the pink cotton candy you might be enjoying. Cotton candy is made according to a very simple recipe. It begins by heating sugar. When sugar is heated, it turns into a liquid. Color and flavor are added to the hot liquid. A disc at the center of a machine spins and forces the hot liquid out of tiny holes. The spinning shoots thin lines of the liquid toward the outside edge of the machine. The lines cool and become candy threads. Then, the vendor dips a thin paper cone into the machine and runs it along the edges to collect them. When the threads pile up into a cloud of pink, it's ready! You can gently pull off tufts of pink cotton and let it dissolve on your tongue.



Cotton candy got its start about 700 years ago in Italy. Back then, only the very wealthy could enjoy a treat of heated sugar. To begin with, sugar was very expensive. Besides that, making cotton candy was a difficult and time-consuming process. The candy maker melted sugar, and dipped a fork into the liquid. As the sugar trailed off each tine, it was drizzled over a shape like an upside-down bowl. As it cooled, the strands hardened into a dome shape. The cook then placed the dome of sugar threads over a small cake or other treat. It was as beautiful as it was sweet!

Fast forward to the late 1800s, and the price of sugar had come way down. Two men (one of them was a dentist) invented a machine that changed the process forever. Their electric machine spun around at great speeds. The hot liquid splattered onto the side of the machine's bowl. There, it cooled into fine threads of sugar. The two men collected the threads, which they called fairy floss, by twirling them around a paper cone. They introduced their treat at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. Two servings of fairy floss cost as much as a ticket to get into the fair! But the curious fair-goers paid the price, and that was the beginning of America's love for cotton candy.

- RI.4.5 1. How does the author mainly organize the information in the passage?
- A) by stating a problem and giving the solution
 - B) by comparing and contrasting ideas
 - C) by explaining the cause and effect of an event
 - D) by telling events in the order in which they happened
- RI.4.3 2. Number the phrases from 1 to 5 to show the correct order of steps for making cotton candy.
- ___ lines cool and become candy threads
 - ___ collect the threads on a paper cone
 - ___ heat sugar until it becomes a liquid
 - ___ spin and force hot liquid through tiny holes
 - ___ add color and flavor
- RI.4.1 3. What did inventors call the treat they sold at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904?
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- RI.4.1 4. Cotton candy got its start about 700 years ago. In the passage, underline two reasons why only the very wealthy could enjoy it back then.
- RI.4.8 5. In the last paragraph of the passage, why does the author include the phrase that is in parentheses?
- A) The paragraph tells how easy it was to make cotton candy.
 - B) No one knows what the other man did for a living.
 - C) It's surprising that a dentist invented a cotton candy machine.
 - D) A dentist knows a lot about making machines.
- RI.4.4 6. As the sugar trailed off each tine, it was drizzled over a shape like an upside-down bowl. What does the underlined word mean?
- A) a drizzle of sugar
 - B) a point on a fork
 - C) an upside-down bowl
 - D) a fork handle