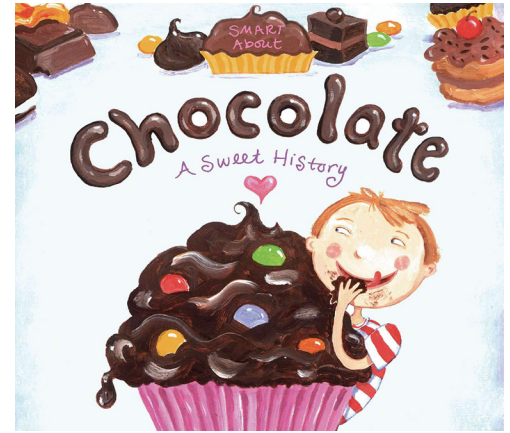


Smart About Chocolate: A Sweet History by Sandra Markle

Book Synopsis: *Smart About Chocolate: A Sweet History* by Sandra Markle and illustrated by Charise Mericle Harper is an educational book that tells the sweet history of a favorite treat, chocolate. Learn all about how chocolate is made from bean to bar and how many people over time helped create the sweet treat people still enjoy today.



Connection to Iowa History

Did you know one of the most famous names in chocolate, Russell and Clara Stover, have an Iowa connection? Clara Lewis-Russell was born in Oxford, Iowa, in 1882, and Russell, although not born in Iowa, spent his childhood at his grandfather's Iowa farm. They both met as students in Iowa City, and married in 1911. In 1918, he and his family moved to Des Moines to work for Irwin Candy Co. During this time, he developed a partnership with Christian Nelson to develop a chocolate covered ice cream bar which became known as the Eskimo Pie. In 1923, the couple began to make candy in their Denver home. This company eventually grew into Russell Stover Candies. When Russell passed away in 1954, the candy company was producing 11 million pounds of candy a year.

Storytime Activity

After reading the story, create your own sweet treat with this easy chocolate fudge recipe to share with a sweetheart or friend on Valentine's Day.

Instructions ([Video Instructions Available](#))

- 1 **Prep.** Prepare the pan for the fudge by lining it with aluminum foil. The ends of the foil should extend over the sides. Set aside.
- 2 **Mix.** In a medium sized microwave safe bowl, combine the chocolate chips, sweetened condensed milk and vanilla extract. Stir together to mix.
- 3 **Microwave.** With an adult's help, place the bowl in the microwave and microwave for one minute.
- 4 **Stir.** After the first minute, stir the mixture.
- 5 **Microwave again.** After stirring, place the mixture back in the microwave for 30-second intervals. After each 30 seconds, stir the mixture until it is smooth. This usually takes an additional 90 seconds.
- 6 **Pour.** Pour the hot mixture into the prepared pan, which is lined with aluminum foil. Make sure it is even and spread out in the pan.
- 7 **Set.** Place the pan into the refrigerator for at least one hour to set.

Materials

- Microwave
- Microwave safe bowl
- Spoon/spatula
- 8-inch square pan
- Aluminum foil
- 1 (12 oz) bag of chocolate chips
- 1 (14 oz) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract

Instructions continued on next page

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Instructions continued

- 8 **Enjoy.** Remove from the pan and cut into squares to share with friends and family.
- 9 **Share!** After you create your treat, share your work with the State Historical Museum of Iowa. Email a photo to museum.education@iowa.gov. We want to share your creation with others!
- 10 **Questions to Spark Learning**
 - Iowa has been home to many different people who have made food history over the years by creating new types of food. If you had to invent a new type of food, what would it be?
 - Chocolate can be found in many different types of desserts. What are some of your favorite treats to enjoy?
 - Food is usually associated with celebrations. Why do you think food is important when celebrating something, like holidays, throughout the year?