Let's face it, there are so many things we'd rather be doing than preparing food. Reading a favourite book, writing a poem, and chatting with friends are much higher on our lists than stirring soup. But we can't live without food, so a group of bloggers and writers from all over the world contributed recipes to make our lives easier. First, you'll find recipes that are perfect for kids to make, maybe with a little help from someone older. Next you'll find quick and easy ideas for yummy treats, including lots that are simple enough to make with your kids.

So grab a cup of something fragrant, and explore the Book Chook Cook Book. As an added bonus, links will take you to contributors’ websites and blogs, and you’ll also find some literacy quotes. Because after all, you can never have too much literature or literacy!

Tif of Tif Talks Books and Susan of The Book Chook
**Pancakes**

**Ingredients**
- 1½ cups White Whole Wheat Flour
- 1½ Teaspoons Baking Powder
- 1 Teaspoon Brown Sugar
- 2 Eggs
- 3-4 Tablespoons Honey (a rough estimate will work)
- About 1 cup of milk

**Directions**

Preheat a pancake pan to medium-low. Combine all ingredients except milk. Add milk and stir until proper consistency. I truly do not know the exact amount of milk, but you want to leave the batter slightly thick. Experiment on how you like your pancakes. Do not over-stir, it is okay to leave some lumps. If the mixture is perfectly smooth you have probably over mixed and the pancakes will turn out flatter.

After having mixed the pancakes, lightly grease the pan. I usually use an olive oil based cooking spray. Evenly space the pancakes and cook until bubbles appear on the top. Check for proper color on the bottom, generally a golden brown, then flip pancakes. Cook other side until the same color. The second side usually cooks quicker than the first.

Remove pancakes from pan, smear with butter and your favorite maple syrup. Makes 7 - 9 medium sized pancakes.

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**Cooking with Kids**

This is a favorite in our house and without a doubt The Turkeybird (our son) requests to "help" stir and make the pancakes (and sometimes waffles). He’ll run to the nearest chair, push it next to the counter where dad is, and look up pleading to stir once the ingredients are mixed somewhat so that they won’t spill over. They both love it, Dad and Turkeybird, and it gets even better when we occasionally top them with berries and cream. That’s a special treat! Submitted by Danielle (the1stdaughter) of There's a Book.
Here are some recipes for kids from Australian author, Jeni Mawter’s Freewheelers series. They have been hugely popular, and are quick and easy. They’re all no cook so they’re safe for kids.

**Fluffernutters**

**Ingredients**
- Marshmallow Fluff
- Peanut butter (smooth or creamy)
- 2 slices bread

**Directions**
- Spread peanut butter onto one slice of bread.
- Cover with Marshmallow Fluff.
- Top with second slice of bread and enjoy!

**Rocky Road**

**Ingredients**
- 500g milk chocolate
- 1 packet of white/pink marshmallows
- 1 packet of soft jelly worms
- ½ cup crushed nuts (walnuts, pecan or unsalted peanuts)
- ½ cup sultanas

**Directions**
- Place marshmallows, nuts, and raisins into a bowl. Put chocolate into the top of a double boiler over simmering water; stir until melted. Pour melted chocolate over ingredients in bowl, quickly fold to blend well and spread in a greased 30 X 20 cm tin. Chill until firm then cut into squares to serve.

**Bugs and Dirt**

**Ingredients**
- Loose plain biscuits
- Chocolate sprinkles (ants)
- Jelly worms
- Raisins (beetles)

**Directions**
- Crush the biscuits in a bowl. Add ants, beetles and worms to the ‘dirt’. Place bowl in centre of table. Grab a spoon and scoop up as much as you can eat.

**Banana in a Blanket**

**Ingredients**
- 1 flour tortilla
- Peanut butter
- Mini M&M’s®
- Banana

**Directions**
- Heat tortilla in microwave on a paper towel for about 15 seconds.
- Spread tortilla with peanut butter.
- Sprinkle M&M’s® on peanut butter.
- Lay peeled banana on the edge of tortilla. Roll tortilla around banana.

**Ants on a Log**

**Ingredients**
- Peanut butter
- Celery sticks
- Sultanas

**Directions**
- Wash the celery and cut into pieces 12 centimetres long. Spread peanut butter into u-shaped part of celery, from one end to the other. Press sultanas into the peanut butter.

**Gorp**

**Ingredients**
- Sultanas
- Sesame seeds
- Oatmeal
- Dried apricot
- Sunflower seeds
- Peanuts
- Pretzels
- Chocolate chips
- Cheese puffs
- Candy coated chocolate balls
- Mini marshmallows

**Directions**
- Mix together what you’d like and enjoy!
**Jelly Bean Bird’s Nests**

**Ingredients**
- 4 cups of crispy chow mein noodles
- One packet of jelly beans
- ¼ cup of butter
- 2 cups of miniature marshmallows
- Patty cases

**Directions**
In a saucepan combine marshmallows and butter. Cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until combined. Stir in noodles until very well coated. Spoon mixture into patty cases and make a well in the middle. Refrigerate two hours until firm. Remove nests from patty cases and fill with jelly beans.

**Squisharoonies**

**Ingredients**
- One packet of green jelly crystals
- 24 large marshmallows
- Water in a spray bottle

**Directions**
Pour jelly crystals into a bowl. Wet marshmallows and roll 3 or 4 in the jelly crystals at a time to coat.

**Chocolate Muesli Crackles**

**Ingredients**
- Three-quarters of a 250 g block of copha
- 1 ½ cups of icing sugar
- 3 tablespoons of cocoa
- 3 cups of toasted muesli
- Cooking oil spray
- Baking tray

**Directions**
In a large bowl, mix muesli, icing sugar, and cocoa. Slowly melt the copha in a saucepan over a low heat. Allow to cool slightly. Add to muesli mixture, stirring until well combined. Spoon mixture into greased baking tray and refrigerate until firm.

**Molasses Milk**

**Submitted by Regina Higgins of Teaching the World on a Shoestring**

**Ingredients**
- 1 8 oz. glass of milk
- 1 Tb. molasses

**Directions**
Add molasses to milk. It will drip very, very slowly from the spoon. Stir carefully. Enjoy! (And don’t forget to lick the spoon!)

A nice change from chocolate or “plain.”
**Rolo Pretzel Turtles**, Submitted by Arena Blake of *The Nerd’s Wife*

This is a recipe I made with my niece, River, back in February. Her family was moving to Denver, and it was our last time together before they left. I wanted to make something that was fun for her (she was only 15 months old at the time) and yummy. This is such a fun memory for me to have now that she’s so far away. It was such a new and exciting experience for her! It was fun to watch her choose between eating the Rolos and putting them on top of the pretzels. And many M&Ms didn’t make it to the end!

Kids will enjoy unwrapping the candies and lining them up on the pan. So easy and such a great result!

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### Rolo Pretzel Turtles

**Ingredients**

- 1 bag of mini pretzels (salted)
- 1 bag of individually wrapped Rolo chocolate candies
- 1 bag of M&Ms or pecan halves

**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Lay the pretzels out in a single layer on a flat baking sheet.
3. Unwrap the Rolo candies and place one Rolo on top of each pretzel, forming a little top hat with the pretzel as the bottom.
4. Bake for three to five minutes, until the Rolo candies have just started to melt.
5. Push a pecan half or M&M into the top of each Rolo, squishing it down until it looks like a turtle.
6. Cool and serve.

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**Broiled Tomatoes**, Submitted by Regina Higgins of *Teaching the World on a Shoestring*

**Ingredients**

- 2 fresh, ripe tomatoes
- 3 Tbs. olive oil
- ½ tsp. dried basil
- 1 kitchen brush for oil

**Directions**

1. Cut tomatoes in half lengthwise.
2. Pour olive oil in a small bowl and add basil.
3. Kids can “paint” the oil and basil mixture on the open faces of the tomatoes.
4. Put under broiler for 3-5 minutes. (Watch carefully so the tomatoes don’t burn!)
5. Enjoy with sandwiches for lunch.
**French Dip with Fruits and Veggies**

*Submitted by Michelle Breum of Beginning Reading Help*

Phonics are the rules to reading. It tells a reader how to move from left to right. A reader brings in complex thinking and makes adjustments to make reading make sense and sound right. Learn and share the rules to reading.

**Ingredients**

- thin sliced deli roast beef (I like Sara Lee low sodium.)
- au jus (Powdered or concentrated liquid or use beef broth as alternative.)
- your favorite buns (I like hard rolls.)
- sauce pan, cutting board, knife for adult, knife for children, tongs, and a ladle
- carrots and celery with ranch or blue cheese
- your favorite fresh or canned fruit

**Directions**

Prepare and heat au jus in a saucepan on the stove.
Cut up vegetables and fruit. Remove sauce pan from stove and place on table with hot pad underneath. Place cut roll on a plate. Place one sandwich portion of roast beef in hot au jus. Use tongs to remove heated roast beef and place on bun. Ladle out a small bowl of au jus. Repeat process for each sandwich. Reheat au jus on stove as needed.

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**Ghosts on Broomsticks**

*Submitted by Erin of The Sisters’ Cafe*

Submitted by Erin’s sister on their website and discovered via Betty Crocker Celebrations Cookbook.

**Ingredients**

- 1 (.75 oz) any flavor chewy fruit snack in 3-foot roll, unwrapped
- 14 pretzel sticks (2-3 in long)
- 2/3 cup white chocolate chips, melted
- Miniature semisweet chocolate chips (52 chips)

**Directions**

Line cookie sheet with waxed paper or parchment paper. Unroll fruit snack roll. With scissors, cut 3/4" long fringe on one long side of snack roll. Cute fringed roll into 2" pieces.

To make each "broomstick," wrap piece of fringe around one end of pretzel; press to seal. Place "broomsticks" on waxed paper.

Drop rounded 1/2 teaspoonfuls (I used at least double) of melted white chocolate chips crosswise onto pretzels; shape to resemble "ghosts" seated on "broomsticks".

Press 3 mini chocolate chips into each ghost for eyes and mouth. Let stand at room temperature for about 45 min or in freezer for about 5 min or until set. Peel candies from waxed paper.
Peanut Butter Cookies

**Ingredients**

- 1 cup peanut butter, smooth or chunky
- 1 cup sugar, plus more for rolling
- 1 egg

**Directions**

Heat oven to 375 degrees (F). Stir together the peanut butter, sugar, and egg in a large mixing bowl.

Roll dough into 1-inch balls. Put some sugar on a plate and roll balls in it to coat. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets.

Press each ball down with a fork to make a crisscross design. Bake for 10 minutes or until cookies just start to brown on the edges. Remove from the oven and let cool on wire racks.

Fruit Salad

**Ingredients**

- watermelon
- cantaloupe (rockmelon)
- melon
- strawberries
- blueberries
- pineapple
- grapes

**Directions**

Cut each fruit in bite-size pieces, mix, and enjoy!

“Anything can happen, child,
ANYTHING can be.”
~Shel Silverstein, Where the Sidewalk Ends
Beware of foods with names like "hash."
You can't know what's put in it.
And still don't trust a succotash
If you see the cook begin it.
Have fear of soups if they contain
Mysterious cooked greens.
Also have most great disdain
Of salads called "Five Beans."
A casserole can hide so much.
It's quite a frightening thing.
If there's one food you should not touch,
It's Chicken ala King.
Everybody knows that gruel
Is not a food to munch.
All this is why, when you're in school,
Be sure to bring your lunch.
**Easy Tea Cake**

**Ingredients**
- 1 tablespoon of butter
- 1/2 cup of sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 cup SR flour (or 1 cup Plain flour and one and 1/2 teaspoons baking powder)
- Extra butter, sugar and cinnamon

**Method**
With a fork, mix together butter and sugar. Add egg. Add milk. Add flour. Cook in a 180°C (350°F) oven for about 25 min. Test by inserting a knife in the middle of the cake. If the knife comes out clean it’s ready.

**Topping**
After removing the cake from the oven, smear a little butter over the top. Then sprinkle a few teaspoons of cinnamon sugar over the top.

I often cook this cake with my children because it’s so easy.

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**Kelly's Cookies**

**Ingredients**
- 90 grams butter
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 cups SR Flour (or Plain flour and baking powder)

**Method**

**Hint**: Decorate them how you like, or add white or milk choc chips.

**Warning**: Don’t overcook – the cookies should be still soft when you take them from the oven. Cook until only just coloured. Allow to cool for 10 min before serving.

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**Emergency Dinner**

**Ingredients**
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 BBQ chicken
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 4 cups of milk
- 2 teaspoons chicken stock powder
- 4 tablespoons plain flour
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Parsley (optional)

**Method**
Cook diced onion in butter until translucent. Break up BBQ chicken into strips and add to onion. Add corn and peas and stir for 3 minutes. In a bowl, add curry powder, flour, salt and chicken stock powder and mix with a little water to make a paste. Pour milk over chicken mixture and allow to boil. Add paste and stir until thick. Sprinkle parsley on top. Serve with rice, pasta or noodles.

How easy is that? All you need to do it pick up a BBQ chicken and the rest you should have in the pantry and freezer. This meal freezes well so make a big batch and stick it in the freezer for a rainy day. (serves 8-10)
**Kelly's Fried Rice**

Another easy whip-up dinner my children love.

**Ingredients**
- Rice
- Frozen Peas and Corn
- Onion
- Diced Bacon or Ham
- Crushed Garlic
- Crushed Coriander
- Chilli (optional)

**Method**
Cook rice. Fry bacon, onion and herbs for a few minutes. Add frozen peas and corn and cook for a few minutes. Add cooked rice and stir through.

**Hawaiian Ham Steaks**

This is an easy, child-friendly dinner.

**Ingredients**
- Ham Steaks
- Pineapple
- Cheese

**Method**
Fry the ham steaks on each side until golden. Place a pineapple slice followed by a cheese slice on top. Cook until cheese has melted. Serve with vegetables and mashed potato or chips.

**Kelly's Magic Quiche Recipe**

**Ingredients**
- 6 eggs
- puff pastry sheet
- 200 grams diced bacon
- 1 onion
- 1/2 cup grated cheese
- 3/4 cup dairy on hand (cream is the best but I have used yogurt, sour cream, evaporated milk, and milk)
- Veges on hand (I have used baby spinach and semi-dried tomatoes; frozen peas, corn and carrots; zucchini and fresh tomato; anything really)
- 100 grams feta cheese salt and pepper to taste

**Method**
Blind bake pastry according to the packet. Fry off bacon and onion for a few minutes and then place on the pastry base. Crumble feta cheese over bacon and onion. Add vegetables on top of feta cheese. In a bowl crack eggs and lightly beat. Add dairy product, cheese, salt and pepper. Pour egg mixture over everything else. Bake in a 170°C (325°F) oven for 40-50 minutes.

I’m not a big quiche fan but I love this recipe. It is so versatile. No matter what combination I have used, it's always a success. That’s the magic.

**Coconut Bread**

**Ingredients**
- 1 Cup SR Flour (or Plain Flour and baking powder)
- 1 Cup Coconut
- 1/2 Cup Sugar
- 3/4 Cup Milk

**Method**
Mix all ingredients. Cook for about 40 min in 170° degrees C (325°F) oven.
Marianne’s Hummus

Ingredients
1 can chickpeas, drained
Juice of one lemon
A good lug or two of olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1 heaped tsp tahini paste
1 heaped tsp miso paste (not the soup sachets, the paste that comes in a container)
¼ - ½ tsp ground cumin
pinch of salt

Method
Whiz everything together.
Serve with crackers, cucumber and carrot sticks.
NB: the miso paste is optional
but it tastes so much better with it.

Welsh Soup (Cawl), submitted by Carole Poustie of Toast for Tea

“... we call them dumb animals, and so they are, for they cannot tell us how they feel, but they do not suffer less because they have no words.” ~ Black Beauty, by Anna Sewell

Ingredients
1 carrot
2 potatoes
3 leeks (carefully washed to remove the grit!)
1 parsnip
1 turnip
1 zucchini
1 head of broccoli
10 brussel sprouts
3 lamb shanks (Frenched is best) or Osso Bucco or Ox tail
½ cup soup mix (lentils, split peas & barley mix)
1 litre Campbells chicken or beef stock (or 2 stock cubes)
Add water to desired level

Method
Simmer lamb shanks and soup mix until meat easily comes away from bones. Remove meat from pot and discard bones, gristle, etc and cut meat into small pieces. Skim fat from pot.
Replace meat and add chopped vegetables and stock, then simmer until soft. Add salt and pepper to taste. (Nice with a slurp of Worcestershire sauce into the bowl.)
Nadia's No-Ice Cream Berry Shake, submitted by Eva Mitnick of Eva's Book Addiction

Here is a kid-friendly recipe, named after my younger daughter (who invented it one day when we were out of ice cream for shakes).

**Nadia's No-Ice Cream Berry Shake**

serves 2  
**Ingredients**  
1 1/2 cups milk  
1/2 cup whipping cream  
1/2 - 3/4 cup frozen berries (depending on how thick you want your shake)  
2 tbl powdered or superfine sugar  
1 tsp vanilla (optional)

**Method**  
Blend until thick and frothy. Pour into two glasses and enjoy!

Carrot Slice, submitted by Susan of The Book Chook

This recipe is quick to mix, and yummy enough to have without icing if you prefer less sweetness.

“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.”
- Emilie Buchwald

**Carrot Slice**

**Ingredients**

440g can baby carrots  
3/4 cup Self Raising flour (or make a total of 1 and 1/2 cups Plain, add baking powder)  
1/2 cup Plain flour  
1/2 tsp bicarb soda  
1 tsp mixed spice  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
1/2 cup sultanas  
1/4 cup oil  
2 eggs, beaten

**Method**

Grease a 7x11 inch slice tin. Drain carrots and mash. Put flours, soda, spice, sugar, fruit and carrots into bowl with combined oil and eggs, and mix. Bake in a moderate oven for 25 minutes. Ice when cold.

**Icing**

60g butter  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
2 tbs milk  
1 1/2 cups icing sugar (confectioner’s sugar in USA)

Combine butter and sugar over low heat until sugar dissolves. Don't boil. Stir in milk and gradually add icing sugar.
Many thanks to all our contributors for the recipes. We hope you’ll try something new from the Book Chook Cook Book, and involve your kids in cooking too. It’s a great way to sneak a little learning into family life, it’s almost screen-free - unless you count staring at the oven waiting for things to finish baking - and best of all it’s fun!

Susan, from The Book Chook, and Tif, from Tif Talks Books.