

# Facts and Trivia: Are you Breaducated?

These interesting bread bites can be the basis for an educational discussion around the dinner table:

- The belief that bread is fattening is a myth. A single slice of bread contains about 1 gram of fat and 80 calories, most of which comes from complex carbohydrates, the body's preferred source of fuel.
  - In 2005, the USDA and Health and Human Services released the 6th edition of the "Dietary Guidelines for Americans." The new guidelines emphasize balance, moderation and variety in food choices, with special emphasis on whole-grain products, low fat dairy, vegetables and fruits.
  - It takes a combine nine seconds to harvest enough wheat to make about 70 loaves of bread.
  - One bushel of wheat can make 67 one-pound loaves of white bread.
  - Bread is probably the one food eaten by people of every race, culture and religion.
  - Napoleon gave one type bread its name when he demanded a loaf of dark rye bread for his horse during the Prussian campaign. "Pain pour Nicole," he ordered, which meant "Bread for Nicole," his horse. To Germanic ears, the request sounded like "pumpernickel," which is the term we use today for this traditional loaf.
  - According to the *Great Food Almanac*, the average American student will have consumed approximately 1,500 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches upon graduation from high school.
  - The longest loaf of bread on record in the United States was baked in 1987 and was 718.4 meters (2,357 feet, 10 inches).
  - The fastest "bun" in the West goes to a team of bakers from Wheat Montana Farms and Bakery who reclaimed the Guinness World Record in 1995. They harvested and milled wheat from the field and then mixed, scaled, shaped and baked a loaf in exactly eight minutes, 13 seconds.
- According to a survey conducted by the NPD Group, the average American eats 193 sandwiches a year, with ham sandwiches as the all time favorite.
  - A family of four can live 10 years off the bread produced by one acre of wheat.
  - The average American consumes 53 pounds of bread each year.
  - If a sandwich is eaten for breakfast, lunch and dinner, it would take 178 days to eat the amount of bread produced from one bushel of wheat.
  - There are more than 1,000 varieties of bread on the market — enough to please any palate.
  - Grains fill you up (not out). Gram for gram, carbohydrates contain less than half the calories found in fat.
  - Scandinavian traditions hold that if a boy and girl eat from the same loaf, they are bound to fall in love.
  - In Russia, bread is a symbol of welcome.
  - Superstition says it is bad luck to turn a loaf of bread upside down or cut an unbaked loaf.
  - Legend has it that whoever eats the last piece of bread has to kiss the cook.
  - White bread has twice the amount of folic acid as whole grain bread.
  - The number of neural tube birth defects have decreased by 23% since folic acid fortification.
  - MyPyramid recommends getting half your grains from whole grain sources.
  - Whole grains are more than fiber; they contain germ, endosperm and bran (fiber) portion of the grain — whole grain.

## Eat more bread to help prevent birth defects and heart disease.

It doesn't get easier than this. By eating a sandwich or a couple of pieces of toast every day, you can help protect your unborn child from birth defects and protect yourself from heart disease. All breads are now enriched with folic acid, which helps prevent birth defects caused by a lack of folate (a B vitamin) in women's diets. Folic acid is a B vitamin that is essential for human metabolism by assisting in the development of red blood cells. Folic acid (400 mcg daily) helps prevent neural tube defects such as spine bifida, when the spinal cord is not fully formed around the nerves of the spinal column, and anencephaly (a fatal defect in which part of the brain fails to develop).

Approximately 2,000 babies are born each year in the United States with spinal cord and related defects. If all women of childbearing age were to consume 400 mcg of folic acid per day before becoming pregnant and during the first trimester of pregnancy, the incidence of spina bifida and anencephaly could be reduced by up to 70 percent, according to the March of Dimes.

In addition, folic acid may help to protect against heart disease because it may reduce homocysteine levels in the blood. (High levels of this amino acid may contribute to heart disease.)

The current Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for folic acid is 400 mcg for adult men and women. One slice of enriched bread gives you 37 mcg.

The March of Dimes recommends that all women of childbearing age consume 400 mcg of folic acid daily from fortified foods and/or supplements. In addition, these women should eat a healthy diet rich in natural sources of folate, such as orange juice and green leafy vegetables.

WHEAT FOODS COUNCIL  
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# Bread

A great choice,  
any way you slice it!