



On the Corner of Chocolate Avenue: How Milton Hershey Brought Milk Chocolate to America

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About the Book

In the 1860s, chocolate was a treat enjoyed only by the rich. Milton began his career as a confectioner making caramels, but he became determined to produce milk chocolate and make it affordable for everyone. In 1900, after years of experimentation, Milton successfully created America's first chocolate bar! His perseverance was rewarded, and he became a very wealthy man. But Milton never forgot his humble roots, leaving a lasting legacy that continues to provide children in need with a free education.

Discussion Questions

- Who ate chocolate in the 1860s?
- Why and how did Milton lose his job as a printer's apprentice?
- How did candy make Milton feel? What did he decide to do to earn a living?
- What happened to his first three businesses in Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York? Why did they fail? What ingredient created the greatest challenge?
- What candy did his first successful business sell? What did Milton learn about business that helped him succeed?
- How did the Chicago World's Fair change Milton's life?
- Which European country first invented milk chocolate? How and when did Milton invent milk chocolate in America?
- How did Milton make chocolate affordable enough for everyone to enjoy?
- How did the Hershey kiss get its name?
- Milton became very wealthy, but never forgot what it was like to be poor. What did he do to help the families of the people who worked for him?

Classroom Activities

Company Creation. Milton founded two companies, the Lancaster Caramel Company and the Hershey Chocolate Company. Ask the students to think about what kind of company they might choose to build. What would they sell? Why? What would it be named? Have the students write a "business plan" with a goal and mission statement. They can also design a company sign and logo. Perhaps, someday in the future, some of the students will pursue their own dream!

Sweet Talk. Ask the students about their favorite sweet treats. Have them create a survey with 4-6 choices of sweets, and then have them ask their classmates which is their favorite treat. Students should record the results of their survey. Then discuss

different methods for representing their data, such as using a pie chart or bar graph. Instruct the students to choose a format to represent their data. Compare results to determine which treats are class favorites!

Invention Convention. Milton purchased the German chocolate-making machines so he could make his own chocolate. Ask the students to imagine a machine that could help them solve a problem or accomplish a goal. Encourage them to have fun with this assignment. Could they invent a robot that cleans their room and makes their bed? Or how about a machine that sharpens pencils, completes homework, and organizes their backpack? Students must draw a design of their invention, name it, and write a description of what it does and how it works. Have the students share their creations with their classmates by holding an Invention Convention in the classroom.

Your Legacy. Milton established the Milton Hershey School and donated millions of dollars so that children in need could get a free education. Ask the students to think about what they could do for others that might outlast their lifetime. What legacy would they like to leave behind? Have them write about their thoughts, dreams, and the lasting legacy they hope to leave behind.

