

Failed Scones: Problem Handouts



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Failed Scones

Part 1

You enjoy starting each day with a warm mug of coffee, listening to contemporary rhythm and blues music at BrewMaestro, a local coffee house and reading room. BrewMaestro is a quaint place that seats 40 people; most mornings you are one of a dozen regular customers. You are on a first name basis with most "regulars," as well as the BrewMaestro manager and staff.

You begin this morning with a Brewski, the blend of the day with a shot of espresso! Ah, the warmth of the mug between your hands, the coffee smell, the music, daylight peeking through the storefront windows; you are relaxed. As the caffeine takes hold, you begin planning your day, organizing your thoughts. You are making progress when all of a sudden your train of thought is interrupted by a voice, "Excuse me. But can I ask you a quick question?" You look up and recognize the voice and person—a morning "regular." You respond, "sure." The woman first reminds you that her teenage daughter is developing dessert recipes and is test-baking the items in hopes of marketing them to local coffee houses (you remember previous conversations about her daughter's desire to be a baking entrepreneur). She continues her conversation, telling you that her daughter is test-baking what looks to be a wonderful scone recipe found in a very old recipe book. The daughter prepared and refrigerated the dough the previous night and baked the scones this morning. Only the scones flopped. They were heavy, compact, and tough. The woman's next comment and questions to you are, "Since you know about foods, can you tell me what my daughter might be doing wrong? Or, perhaps a better question is, why did the scones flop?"

You are confident in your skills and are competent in food principles. You could make the conversation short and be back to your "business" if only you respond with, "That's a good question. I can't imagine why they flopped." But no, you're too nice, the caffeine has not fully engaged your brain, and/or your food and nutrition curiosity is getting the best of you. No matter... you cannot leave the temptation alone. You begin asking her...

Questions

List questions you would ask the woman in order to make a recommendation or recommendations for flawless scones. Explain why you would ask each question; reference explanations when appropriate.

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Part 2

The morning "regular" at the BrewMaestro listens intently to your questions. After all, she is relying on you to solve her daughter's baking dilemma. You begin asking her?

- Did your daughter properly follow the recipe? Were any ingredient substitutions made? Were ingredients properly measured?
- Do you know all the ingredients in the recipe?
- How much flour did she use?
- Did she use sugar? How much?
- Did she sift together the dry ingredients?
- Did she use eggs?
- What kind of shortening was used—liquid or solid?
- Did she use cold fat?
- How much fluid was added to the dough? What was the temperature of the fluid?
- Did she use both baking soda and baking powder? How did she use it?
- Was acid present in the recipe?
- How old was the leavening agent? In what kind of environment was it stored?
- How were all the ingredients mixed? How long were the ingredients mixed—until it looked like cornmeal?
- Why did she refrigerate the dough?
- Was the dough used cold?
- Was the dough rolled out evenly and about how thick was it?
- Did your daughter cut the dough straight or did she twist the cutter?
- How did your daughter position the scones on the pan? Were the scones placed with their sides nearly touching?
- Were scraps rolled over and over again?
- At what temperature did she bake the scones? For how long?

The Woman responds to your numerous questions. First, she hands you the following recipe to review.

Oven Scones

Ingredients:

Scone Flour*	½ pound
Butter	2 ounces
Bicarbonate of soda	½ teaspoon



Baking powder	1 ½ teaspoon
Salt	¼ teaspoon
Sweet milk	as needed
Castor sugar	¼ cup
Blueberries	? cup

Instructions: Sieve the dry ingredients and rub in butter, then add enough milk to make a soft dough. Turn on to a floured board, knead lightly, and add drained blueberries. Roll out. Cut in rounds. Place on a greased tray and bake in quick oven (400 to 425 degrees) for 10 to 15 minutes. An egg may be added if liked and the scones brushed with egg for afternoon tea scones.

*Scone Flour

White flour	4 pounds
Cream of tartar	2 ounces
Bicarbonate of soda	1 ounce

Sieve these together, keep in biscuit tin or covered jar. The longer it is kept, the lighter it gets.

Here is the mother's account of her daughter's scone-making practice: Her daughter followed the recipe as indicated. She even made scone flour the week before and stored it in an airtight plastic container. The baking soda had been in their kitchen cupboard next to the refrigerator for about one month; the double-acting baking powder a little longer than that.

First, the daughter sifted the dry ingredients together. Next, she cut in softened butter until orzo-size chunks appeared. She then blended in an egg and enough 2% milk (approximately 1/3 c.) blending until the dough looked soft. The dough was placed on a floured countertop and kneaded lightly. Drained blueberries were added with very little kneading so as to not crush the berries. The dough was soft but not too sticky. The dough was refrigerated overnight because her daughter began the process late and did not want to finish baking the product that night. Because she is a high school student, she needs some flexibility, time-wise, in her entrepreneur adventure. She can devote more time to her baked creations when school closes for the summer.



The next morning, the daughter removed the dough from the refrigerator and let it sit at room temperature for about one hour. The dough was placed on a floured counter top and rolled out to about a 3/4-inch thickness. A biscuit cutter was used to cut the scones. The mother was not sure if her daughter had twisted the cutter or not. Any scraps were re-rolled only once; the dough was finger-pressed together and then re-rolled and cut. The scones were placed one-inch apart on a greased (Pam sprayed) cookie sheet and were brushed with egg. The scones were baked in an oven set between 400 and 425 degrees Fahrenheit for approximately 13 minutes until lightly browned.

After finding out the daughter's preparation methods for scones, you begin to match the woman's description with the recipe she gave you to look at. To help you determine possible reasons for the flopped scones, you begin reviewing why each ingredient is included in the recipe. You also review why each preparation method is included in the recipe.

Questions

1. Explain why each ingredient is included in the recipe. Also, explain why each preparation method (i.e., instruction) is included in the recipe. Be sure to cite all resources you use to support your explanations. A minimum of one credible reference, other than your text, class notes, and personal source must be used.
2. What are possible reasons for the scones flopping? Provide a minimum of six reasons. Defend your responses; cite references when appropriate. Again, a minimum of one credible reference, other than your text, class notes, and personal source must be used.
3. What would be your recommendations for flawless scones; rank and list three recommendations? Recommending the daughter use another recipe is not an option. Be sure to prioritize your options as to what you recommend she try first, second, and third. Provide an explanation, in layman's terms, for each recommendation. Explain why you ranked your recommendations in the order given.