

History of the Candy Cane

It's hard to imagine a Christmas without the red and white hooked stick of candy we know as the candy cane, but how did they become a symbol of Christmas?

It is not known for certain who invented the candy cane however, according to folklore, it was a German choirmaster in 1670. Plain white candy sticks were actually very common during this time. The distinctive hook shape was a result of the choirmaster's efforts to make them look like a shepherd's staff. He handed these 'hooked' candy sticks out to children who attended worship services and nativity plays at church. It is said they were to help the children sit still during long waits while also reminding them of the shepherds who visited baby Jesus. These candy 'canes' were very popular in Germany and the idea spread to other countries in Europe. Over time, the handing out of these treats became a Christmas tradition.

This is but one story. Maybe candy canes were designed with a hook to make them easier to hang from Christmas trees. Or perhaps it represents the letter 'J' for Jesus. Others believe the white represents the purity of Jesus. While these are fun stories, it is possible that none are quite true.

How do you think candy canes became a Christmas tradition?

1. In which country does the author suggest the candy cane was invented? _____
2. What two reasons were given for the choirmaster giving the candy sticks a 'hook'?

candy canes	tradition
hook	shepherd symbol
white	treat sweet
red	Christmas

I	K	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D
K	Y	W	H	I	T	E	X	I	H
J	T	R	A	D	I	T	I	O	N
J	H	D	P	T	R	E	A	T	O
P	S	Y	M	B	O	L	S	R	U
Q	S	W	E	E	T	B	M	A	T
C	A	N	D	Y	C	A	N	E	S
K	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S
E	T	Q	O	O	D	S	L	P	V
W	R	E	D	N	T	H	O	O	K

