

Discovery sheet 1

Comfort food

What makes a bowl a source of comfort and nurture?
When it's a hand carved wooden porringer.

This bowl really reminds me of my mum's a cold kitchen in the 1970's, before central heating and a certain porridge advert which showed children with a warm glow on their way to school. I loved porridge with a thin crust of sugar on the top. It keeps the energy from flagging for a while - Vicky Nelson, AM&G Learning Officer March 2020

This bowl clearly shows that it was carved in one piece from a tree with a knot in the bottom. That small hole must really catch the food. How frustrating that would be when you were hungry. Perhaps someone tried to mop it up with a lump of bread or even their finger.



The bowl is adult hand sized and would hold a good portion. Officially, 15cm wide and 12cm tall. If you cup your hands together to make a bowl, that's just the size of our porringer. This one has a line just above the base as decoration. It shows the rough marks of being hand carved and was probably made in the 1700's.

But this is not a bowl, it's a *porringer*. Why? Because it has a flat handle (some have two).

The Europeans took this design with them to the Americas and highly practical they are. Some porringers would have a lid to keep the stew warm for a while and others sometimes had initials carved into them. I would recommend the naming of all food bowls to stop any sibling scoffing my portion.

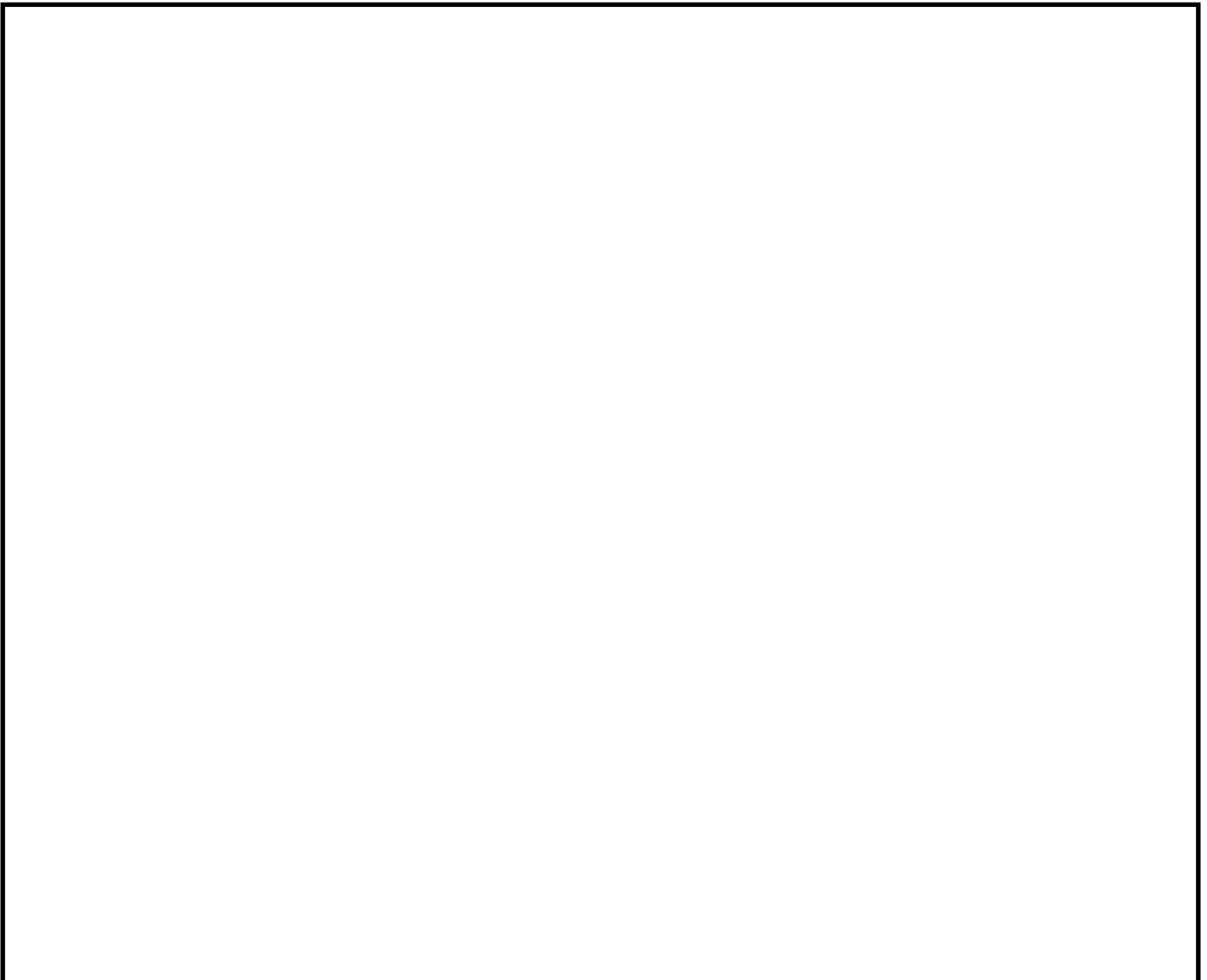
You may be given one when you were born and be able to use this useful item throughout your life.

If you were wealthy your porringer could be made of silver or pewter with delicate designs. Our porringer is a bit charred as if someone tried to keep it warm by the fire and it got a bit singed.

This is a great item for food which is soft and sloppy so you can easily pour or scoop food. A known recipe for such bowls is *Hasty Pudding*, made from cornmeal and milk it would be filling and nutritious. Perhaps you might sweeten it with honey or syrup.

What's your comfort food?

Draw or write it below.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or written response to the question above.