

The Fizzy History of Coca-Cola: A Lesson for Sarah

Materials You'll Need for Today's Lesson:

- Computer with internet access (for research, with adult permission/supervision)
 - Your history notebook or plain paper
 - Pencils, pens, or colored pencils/crayons
 - Optional: A can or bottle of Coca-Cola (to look at the logo and bottle shape!)
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Hi Sarah! Get ready to dive into the bubbly and fascinating story of one of the world's most famous drinks: Coca-Cola! Did you know it was originally invented by a pharmacist trying to make a health tonic?

Let's Get Started!

We're going on a historical adventure to uncover how Coca-Cola went from a small idea in an Atlanta pharmacy to a global sensation recognized almost everywhere on Earth.

Part 1: The Inventor and the Secret Formula (Late 1800s)

Our story begins in Atlanta, Georgia, in **1886**. A pharmacist named **Dr. John Stith Pemberton** was experimenting with different ingredients. He wanted to create a new syrup that could be mixed with soda water to make a refreshing drink. He aimed for something that would be a 'nerve tonic' - something to help people feel better and more energetic.

His concoction included (originally) extracts from coca leaves and kola nuts. These two ingredients inspired the name "Coca-Cola"! Dr. Pemberton's bookkeeper, **Frank M. Robinson**, not only suggested the name but also penned the famous flowing Coca-Cola script logo that is still used today.

Fun Fact: The very first Coca-Cola was sold for just 5 cents a glass at Jacob's Pharmacy in Atlanta.

Part 2: The Businessman Who Saw the Sparkle (Late 1800s - Early 1900s)

Dr. Pemberton, perhaps not realizing the immense potential of his creation, sold parts of his business. Eventually, a very smart and ambitious businessman named **Asa G. Candler** bought all the rights to Coca-Cola in **1891** for about \$2,300. While that was a good amount of money back then, it's nothing compared to what Coca-Cola is worth today!

Candler was a marketing visionary for his time! He used some clever tactics to make Coca-Cola popular:

- He gave out coupons for free samples of Coca-Cola.
- He put the Coca-Cola logo on all sorts of items like calendars, clocks, and decorative urns, which were given to pharmacies.
- He used catchy slogans in newspapers and on signs.

Thanks to Candler's efforts, Coca-Cola started to become known well beyond Atlanta, spreading across the United States.

Part 3: The Iconic Bottle and Going Global (Early to Mid-1900s)

As Coca-Cola became more popular, other companies tried to make similar-looking drinks to confuse customers. To protect their brand, Coca-Cola wanted a bottle so distinctive that you could recognize it even if you felt it in the dark, or even if it was broken into pieces on the ground!

In **1915**, they held a contest, and the Root Glass Company designed the iconic contour bottle. This unique shape became just as famous as the drink itself.

During World War II, the head of Coca-Cola, Robert Woodruff, made a bold promise: every American serviceman should be able to get a Coke for 5 cents, no matter where they were in the world. This led to bottling plants being set up near battlefronts. This not only supported the morale of the troops but also introduced Coca-Cola to many new countries and cultures. After the war, this global presence helped Coca-Cola become an international superstar drink.

Part 4: Fun Facts & Modern Coke

- Coca-Cola was one of the first companies to feature Santa Claus in its winter advertising in a big way, helping to cement the image of Santa as a jolly, kind man in a red suit.
- The exact formula for Coca-Cola syrup, known by the code name "Merchandise 7X," is one of the most closely guarded trade secrets in the world. It's said to be kept in a secure vault in Atlanta.
- Today, Coca-Cola is sold in over 200 countries and territories around the world, and its logo is one of the most recognized symbols globally.

Activities for You, Sarah!

Activity 1: Coca-Cola Historical Timeline

Grab your notebook and a pen! Let's create a timeline of the key events in Coca-Cola's history. Write down these dates and fill in what important event happened:

- **1886:** _____ (Invented by? What was its original purpose?)
- **1891:** _____ (Who bought Coca-Cola and what did he do for it?)
- **1915:** _____ (What special thing was designed for Coca-Cola?)
- **WWII Era (1940s):** _____ (How did this period help Coca-Cola grow?)

Feel free to add any other interesting dates or facts you learned!

Activity 2: Design a Vintage Ad!

Imagine it's the early 1900s. Coca-Cola is still growing. Your job is to design an advertisement for a newspaper or magazine. Think about what people liked back then. What slogan would you use? What would your ad look like? Use your paper and colored pencils to draw your vintage Coca-Cola ad. Or, if you prefer, you can invent your own brand-new soda and design an ad for it!

Activity 3: Research Challenge (Optional - with adult help!)

Using a safe internet search engine, try to find answers to these questions:

1. What were some of the very first slogans used by Coca-Cola?
2. Can you find a picture of what the earliest Coca-Cola bottles looked like, before the contour bottle?

Let's Think About It! (Discussion Time)

Think about these questions and maybe discuss them with a grown-up:

1. What do you think was the most clever idea that helped Coca-Cola become so famous? Why?
2. Why is it important for a company like Coca-Cola to have a unique logo and bottle shape?
3. What was the most surprising or interesting thing you learned about the history of Coca-Cola today?

Fantastic job exploring the fizzy and fascinating history of Coca-Cola, Sarah! You've learned a lot about how a simple drink became a global icon!