

Meat Safe

1 INTRODUCE



What is this object called?

A Meat Safe.

Who does this object keep the meat safe from? Flies and animals which may like to eat it.

What object today does the same job? Think: Where do we keep our meat today?

Refrigerator or freezer



2 INVESTIGATE



Let the children examine the meat safe, both inside and out. Look for shelves, the handle, how it stayed locked etc.

4 HOW DOES IT WORK?



Tell the students that in the past meat safes were placed in a shady area.

How does it work?

The holes on the safe allow air to move through it. This movement of air helps keep the meat cool.

Who used it? Generally Mum and the older girls as they did all of the cooking.

3 DESIGN/MATERIALS



What is this object made out of? Metal

Look at the holes on the outside. How many sides have these holes?

Four

Would it be hung up or placed on the ground?

This one probably sat on the ground but some were hung up on shady verandahs or under shady trees.



5 LEARN MORE...SAY...

Meat safes were used in Australia before electric fridges were invented. They were used not only to keep meat safe but also many other items of food including fruit and vegetables.

To keep the food inside safe and cool they were often hung up or placed on shady verandahs or in the shade of a big tree. If they were placed up high, they caught cooling breezes. On the ground, ants were the only animals that could penetrate them and even ants were no match for the meat safe when each leg was placed in a small bowl of water. The ants would crawl into the water and drown and so could not move up the leg of the safe.

Sometimes people placed a wet cloth over the top and sides of the meat safe. When the wind blew through the wet cloth, the dampness would cool the breeze and help keep the food inside cooler.



6 COMPARE IT TO TECHNOLOGIES TODAY

How is the meat safe different to a refrigerator?

Different fuel – electricity vs. natural cooling

Not as cold

Not as big

More portable



7 THINK

What does this item tell us about the past? That there was no electricity or refrigerators in the past. That it was difficult to keep food fresh. That food had to be eaten fresh as it couldn't be stored for as long. That you couldn't store a lot of food like we do today.

How would your life be different if you had to use a meat safe instead of a refrigerator? What could you still eat? What could you not eat? (ice-cream)