

History of Pizza Printable Reading Comprehension

Name _____

Pizza

The story of modern pizza as we know began in Naples, Italy, in the late 1800s. Baker Raffaele Esposito is usually given credit for baking the first pizzas with tomato sauce, cheese, and toppings. According to legend, pizza was popularized when Esposito was asked to make a pizza for Italian King Umberto I and Queen Margherita when the royal pair visited Naples in 1889. Esposito allegedly baked three different pizzas. The Queen's favorite was the one in which Esposito had designed in honor of Italy's red, white, and green flag. It had basil, mozzarella cheese, and tomato sauce. Esposito named it Pizza Margherita in her honor.

Pizza, however, failed to immediately take hold in Italy. As Italian immigrants came to the United States, however, pizza came with them. In 1905, the first United States pizzeria was established in New York City. The pizzeria, called Lombardi's, still operates today. Soon, other pizzerias in New York City and beyond appeared. By World War II, pizza was one of America's most popular foods. In the 1950s, the Totino family, of Minnesota, was thought to have produced the first frozen pizzas.

In 1958, Frank and Dan Carney borrowed \$600 from their parents and opened a pizzeria in Wichita, Kansas. They called their restaurant Pizza Hut because they didn't have space for additional letters on their first sign. Pizza Hut became very popular and soon the brothers opened new restaurants and hence, the first pizza franchise was born. Today, there are more than 10,000 Pizza Hut restaurants. Similarly, Domino's was established by two brothers who borrowed \$900 to purchase a pizzeria called Dominick's in Ypsilanti, Michigan. In 1984, John Schnatter founded Papa John's in Indiana.

Today, Americans spend over 33 billion dollars each year on pizza. In 2016, there are over 77,000 restaurants in America that serve pizza.

1. Why is Raffaele Esposito important in the history of Pizza?

- A. He brought pizza to America
- B. He is credited for baking the first modern pizzas
- C. He helped to establish the first pizza franchise
- D. He is said to have known the King and Queen of Italy

2. What is implied in the first paragraph?

- A. Modern-day pizza was likely born in Naples, Italy
- B. Pizza Margherita is modeled after the Italian flag
- C. Raffaele Esposito is credited with making pizzas for the King and Queen of Italy
- D. Esposito's story may or may not be true

3. When did pizza become one of America's most popular foods?

- A. 1905
- B. 1958
- C. by World War II
- D. 1951

4. After Esposito created Pizza Margherita...

- A. pizza became instantly popular in Italy.
- B. pizza became instantly popular in the United States.
- C. the first pizzeria was established in Naples.
- D. the first pizzeria was established in New York City.

5. What did Pizza Hut and Domino's have in common?

- A. They were both founded by wealthy brothers
- B. They were both founded in Kansas
- C. They were both founded by brothers who needed to borrow money
- D. Pizza Hut and Domino's both had different original names

6. What does "allegedly" mean in the following sentence?

Esposito allegedly baked three different pizzas.

- A. Certainly
- B. According to legend
- C. Doubtfully
- D. Accurately

7. What is the purpose of the final paragraph?

- A. To complete the story about pizza
- B. To illustrate how far the pizza industry has come from its humble beginnings
- C. To illustrate how successful Domino's and Pizza Hut are today
- D. To illustrate how pizza has become so popular throughout the world