

## HANDOUT 2.3 D - THE SECRET OF THE FIRST-GRADE CANDY CONE

Every year in late summer, one can see the eager and proud faces of first-graders standing in front of their primary schools in Germany, happily holding their large *Schultüten*, or candy cones. Filled to the brim with sweets and little gifts and colorfully decorated with ribbons and crepe paper, these candy cones make the new students' hearts beat faster and sweeten their step from kindergarten to primary school. But where did this charming custom of first-grade candy cones come from anyway?

The tradition dates back to 1810, when the first candy cones made the children's eyes sparkle in Thuringia and Saxony. According to the legend, at the teacher's home there stands a tree which is decorated with a candy cone for every child. Once the tree has matured, it is time to begin school and the candy cones are handed out to the children. In those days, the godparents gave the children the cone-shaped, colorful packages, which were filled only with sweets. In eastern Germany, the *kindergarteners* even had a candy cone party, at which the soon-to-be first-graders were promenaded before the families before being allowed to remove a candy cone from a beautifully decorated tree. Nowadays, candy cones can be bought in all shapes and sizes, decorated in a wide variety of patterns, and are filled with school materials, small trinkets, toys, and sweets.

On a typical first day of school in Germany, parents take their first-graders to the school, where they are welcomed by the teacher and meet their new classmates. After a small welcoming party with songs, poems, and theater, which most of the time are performed by the older children, the first-graders spend about two hours in the classroom, where they get to know each other and receive information from the teacher.

Once the first exciting day of school is over, the children are allowed to go home, where they finally unpack their candy cones and celebrate the start of school life with their families. And only a few years later, when they are about to finish primary school and look back at the photos from that special day, they will realize that they were hardly much bigger than their beloved candy cones, though they felt so grown up at the time.

*Written by Denise Kotulla. Translation: German Embassy*

[http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/04\\_\\_W\\_\\_t\\_\\_G/01/05\\_\\_Schultueten/Schultueten\\_\\_S.html](http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/04__W__t__G/01/05__Schultueten/Schultueten__S.html)

## How to make a **SCHULTÜTE**

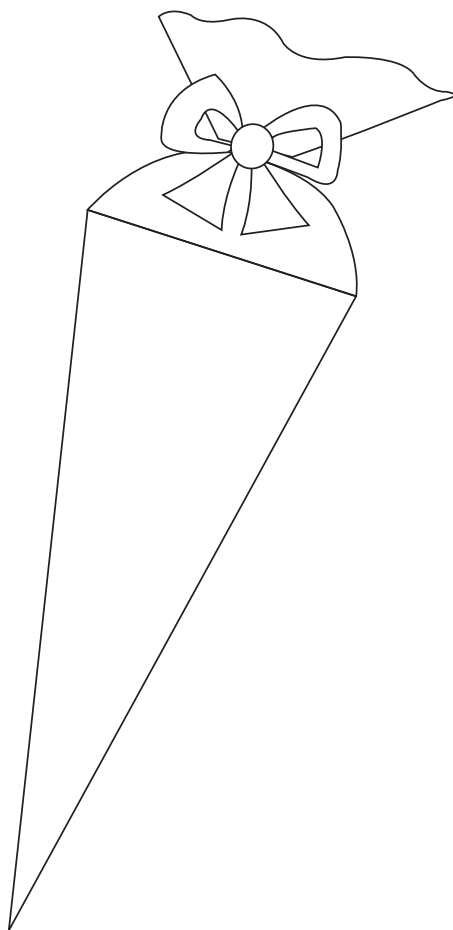
Draw an arc connecting 2 opposite corners of a 28 inch square piece of craft or wrapping paper. Cut along the arc, and recycle the cutaway.

The piece remaining has a curved edge and two straight edges. If not using wrapping paper with pre-printed designs, decorate with stickers or draw designs based on a theme (fairy tales, sports, school, etc.)

Roll the piece into a cone with the curved edge forming the top rim, and the corner forming the tip. Tape the tip in place and staple the top rim in place along the seam.

Place a large piece of tissue paper in the cone with the four corners extending out the top about 4 inches.

Fill the cone with a few school supplies and tie the tissue paper shut with a piece of ribbon.



Adapted from TOP Fellow Linda Cotter [http://www.germany.info/contentblob/1990974/Daten/209981/Schultue\\_Lesson\\_Plan\\_PDF.pdf](http://www.germany.info/contentblob/1990974/Daten/209981/Schultue_Lesson_Plan_PDF.pdf)