

03

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In this lesson

- Listen to fast colloquial speech.
- Focus on describing habits.
- Talk about food and eating patterns.



Speak for yourself

1 Read this questionnaire. Tick (✓) the option which best describes you.

1 How important is food to you?

- Food is one of life's great pleasures.
- I enjoy good food, but it's not a priority for me.
- I eat to live.

2 How fussy are you about your food?

- I'll eat anything.
- There are certain foods I prefer to avoid.
- I'm a very picky eater.

3 How do you feel about cooking?

- I never cook if I can help it.
- I don't mind cooking but I'm not wild about it either.
- I adore cooking and entertaining.

4 How often do you eat out?

- As often as possible.
- From time to time.
- Once in a blue moon.

5 What is your attitude to food additives?

- I only eat organically-produced foods.
- I try to avoid foods with flavourings and preservatives.
- It never occurs to me to read food labels.

6 How important are meal times to you?

- I like to linger over my meals.
- I tend not to spend a long time over eating.
- I generally grab something quickly on the go.

7 How often do you nibble between meals?

- Hardly ever.
- Quite often.
- Constantly.

8 How health-conscious are you?

- I tend to eat quite a lot of unhealthy food.
- I try not to eat food that isn't good for me.
- I've no idea what constitutes a healthy diet.

2 In pairs, guess how your partner answered. Discuss your answers.



Did you notice...?

Well, there's, like, my mum, my brother, and me and, like, we almost never eat together.

Like here is an example of a filler. Fillers are words or phrases that are often used in fast speech to give the speaker thinking time.

Listening

Fast, colloquial speech

- 1 Listen to two people talking about issues connected with eating. Note down the problems each person mentions.
- 2 Listen to a sixteen-year-old schoolgirl talking about eating habits in her family.
 - Which of the problems mentioned above does her story illustrate?
 - Do you sympathize with her? Why / why not?
- 3 Listen to the same girl describing an incident involving her brother.
 - What is the main point of the story?
 - Which fillers can you hear?
- 4 Turn to the Tapescript on p.110, listen again, and underline the fillers.
- 5 Listen again without the Tapescript. Can you understand the story better?
- 6 **What do you think?** In pairs, ask and answer the questions.
 - 1 Do you think children these days have a less healthy diet than in the past?
 - 2 In your country, do people generally sit down together and eat as a family? Is this an important part of family life? Why / why not?
 - 3 Whose responsibility is it to give advice on healthy eating?

Vocabulary

Adjectives to describe food

- 1 In pairs, decide which adjectives in the box have a negative meaning. Check in a dictionary.

greasy	stodgy	plain	tasty	rich
sickly	tough	overcooked	light	raw
juicy	bland	tender	overripe	fresh



- 2 Find adjectives from 1 which mean ...

heavy and fattening
lacking in flavour
difficult to chew
too sweet

containing a lot of butter, cream, eggs, etc.
not cooked at all
cooked in too much fat or oil
prepared in a simple way / not rich

Pronunciation

Look at a copy of the phonemic chart of sounds in English.

- 1 Do you know which sounds are represented by the symbols?
- 2 Which words are represented by the symbols below?

1 /fʊ:d/	7 /'tʃɒklət/
2 /ɪt/	8 /blænd/
3 /kɒk/	9 /rɪtʃ/
4 /'hʌŋɡri/	10 /'dʒu:si/
5 /'θɜ:sti/	11 /dɪ'zɜ:t/
6 /rɔ:/	12 /fɪʃ/

Pronunciation

/ə/ is the most common sound in British English. It never occurs in a stressed syllable.


1 Mark the /ə/ sounds in these words.

butter	seldom
important	entertain
pronunciation	potato
adore	together
margarine	occasionally
interesting	banana

2  Listen and check.

3 Listen again and repeat.



3  **Against the clock!** In pairs, you have **three minutes** to decide which adjectives from **1** can be used to describe ...

- fruit • meat • cakes • vegetables • fish
- salad • bread • chips • biscuits • cheese

4 These adjectives all mean that something is 'past its sell-by date'. Which foods can they describe?

stale rotten off mouldy

5 In pairs, describe a meal you have had in a restaurant or at someone's house. Use a range of adjectives to comment on each course.

Food idioms







1 In pairs, choose the correct explanation for the idioms in **bold**.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 It's not my cup of tea .
a It's not the kind of thing I like.
b It's someone else's responsibility. | 6 That's a half-baked idea.
a It's a ridiculous idea.
b It's not been thought through very carefully. |
| 2 That will give him food for thought .
a That will make him think more clearly.
b That will give him a lot to think about. | 7 Buttering me up will get you nowhere.
a You won't get what you want by telling me lies.
b You won't get what you want by flattery. |
| 3 You'll find that windsurfing is a piece of cake .
a You'll enjoy it.
b You'll find it easy. | 8 She's out to lunch most of the time.
a She concentrates hard.
b She's slightly mad. |
| 4 She's the breadwinner in the family.
a She earns the main salary.
b She works the hardest. | 9 He's got a sweet tooth .
a He likes sweet food.
b He always talks nicely to people. |
| 5 I've got a lot on my plate at the moment.
a I'm very busy.
b I'm enjoying life. | 10 He gets paid peanuts .
a His salary is low.
b He gets a lot of extra benefits. |

2 Do the idioms have an equivalent in your language?

English in use

Describing habits

-  We'll eat watching the telly together.
-  My husband generally tends to come in quite late.
-  I go through phases of skipping lunch.
-  I tend not to eat out during the week.
-  He never gets to eat anything but snacks.
-  We almost never eat together.



- Focus on form** In pairs, decide how / when the forms on p.12 describing habits are used.
- Use the different forms to talk about your habits relating to ...
 - physical exercise
 - television
 - travel to work / school
 - daily routines

Adverbs and adverbial phrases of frequency

never	rarely	sometimes	usually	always
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- Against the clock!** In pairs, you have **three minutes** to position these adverbs and adverbial phrases on the frequency scale above.

once in a blue moon as a rule every so often rarely, if ever	every now and again from time to time hardly ever occasionally	once in a while nine times out of ten seldom generally
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- Where do they go in a sentence?
- In groups of three, describe what you do / don't do on Sundays.



Speak out

- In groups of three, describe your eating habits. Talk about ...
 - the types of food you eat or don't eat.
 - mealtimes: where, what time, how long, and who with.
 - eating out and cooking.
- Ask questions after each person has finished speaking. Take it in turns to monitor, and tick (✓) every time a point from the *Remember* box is used correctly.
- Think about your own country and others you have visited. Decide which has ...
 - the healthiest diet.
 - the tastiest food.
 - the most sensible mealtimes and eating habits.

Remember

- Use *will / tend to / go through phases of + ing*, and the present simple to describe habits.
- Use a range of adverbs and adverbial phrases of frequency.
- Use different adjectives to describe food.
- Concentrate on the correct pronunciation of words with the /ə/ sound.

Follow-up

- Imagine you have applied to join a fitness club and you have been asked to describe your lifestyle on an application form. Write about your habits in one paragraph.
- Visit a local bar or restaurant with another class member. Make notes on the food, service and atmosphere, in preparation for giving a spoken review in class.
- Study the rules for the position of adverbs in a grammar book. Make notes on anything new you learn.
- Design a survey to find out about food and eating in different parts of the world.