

Introduction

This support pack accompanies the video magazine article: **Food**.

To read or listen to the article online, go to:

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/magazine/food>



This support pack contains the following materials:

- a pre-watching vocabulary activity;
- the article;
- a comprehension task

Before you read / listen

Match the words and phrases in the table to their definitions.

1. baked beans	2. craving	3. dessert	4. tiff	5. the blues
6. perk someone up	7. metabolism	8. cognitive	9. nutrients	10. fatigue

Definitions:

- Extreme tiredness
- Relating to thinking or mental activity
- Bits in food that your body needs
- Beans with tomato sauce, spices and sugar sold in cans
- Feeling tired and sad
- A small argument with a very close friend or partner
- A strong, uncontrollable want
- A sweet dish at the end of a meal
- Give someone energy
- How your body turns food into energy

Article: Food

Do we live to eat or eat to live? That is the question.

I remember as a child growing up in Britain having fish and chips or baked beans on toast at least twice a week on my lap while watching my favourite cartoon. Of course I enjoyed my food but it wasn't something I often talked about. Now, I'm not blaming my culture for my lack of interest in food at an early age. Perhaps my silence was due to the fact that I didn't know anything about food. How many children know that prawns only turn pink when they are cooked and that tuna does not come from a can? Now after having lived in Southern Europe, Asia and Australia I find myself talking about food all the time. The world has seduced my taste buds and opened my mouth.

Food that's plain and simple is often the best but not always so. For many of us food is a need. For others, food is a friend. Yet to some others food is an enemy. Cravings grip us at all the wrong times while we struggle to follow a strict diet that turned all our favourite desserts into mortal sins. There are others who regard food as an investment. To them, food has some kind of special powers that can control their lives, for better or for worse. If that's the case, it's time to change and make food work for us.

Let's start by using food the way you would use a pencil or a pair of scissors. We begin using food as a tool. Like tools, some food works well for some tasks and some is specially designed to accomplish others.

Let's say you're feeling down. You had a tough day or a tiff with a best friend that drove you round the bend. You decide to treat yourself to a bar of chocolate –nothing like chocolate to perk you up. Unfortunately you're setting yourself up for a higher dose of the blues. That's because chocolate bars have a hefty amount of fat and sugar – which takes a long time to digest and can draw energy away from

your brain – and caffeine which will temporarily boost your mood and alertness but send you crashing back down as soon as its effect starts to wear off.

Does this mean snacking is a bad idea when you're feeling down? Not at all. You just have to do it wisely. In place of a chocolate bar, have a slice of toast with chunky marmalade. Then instead of fat and caffeine you've just given yourself a dose of vitamin C that has been shown to fight depression. In addition, marmalade is loaded with the type of sugar that spurs the release of mood-lifting chemicals in the brain.

In fact you can manage your mood and boost your brainpower, metabolism, even your sex life, by eating the right food. Whatever your goals, you can custom-design a diet to help you meet them. Here's how taking control of your food can help you take control of your life.

The next time you have an important meeting that requires mental processing, try some brain processing food that looks like this: tuna salad on whole wheat bread, green salad with tomatoes, a handful of nuts, bananas, a glass of skimmed milk. Tuna, bananas, nuts and whole wheat bread are high in vitamin B6, which has been scientifically proven to help preserve cognitive skills. Protein-rich food contains a nutrient called Tyrosine, which studies have shown, are linked to clear thinking and alertness. Greens such as broccoli and spinach naturally contain loads of vitamins and iron. Lack of these nutrients can lead to fatigue and difficulty in concentrating.

Having said all that, let's not be too stressed about what we eat. Many scientists these days believe that indulging in life's little pleasures may actually help improve your health because of the psychological lift it gives you. There is a lot of truth in the old saying that 'a little of what you fancy does you good'.

Comprehension task

Multiple choice

Read the following sentence beginnings and select the right endings.

1. The writer...
 - a. ...knew a lot about food when he was a child.
 - b. ...believes travelling has helped him to understand food more.
 - c. ...talked about food all the time when he was a child.

2. In his childhood the writer used to eat fish and chips or baked beans on toast...
 - a. ...regularly with his family at the table.
 - b. ...and watch television at the same time.
 - c. ...less than twice a week.

3. The writer believes that chocolate...
 - a. ...gives energy to the brain.
 - b. ...makes you more intelligent.
 - c. ...takes energy away from the brain.

4. The writer believes snacking...
 - a. ...makes you depressed.
 - b. ...is better than eating a full meal.
 - c. ...is not always bad for you.

5. The writer believes managing your own food can...
 - a. ...help you to control other people.
 - b. ...control your life.
 - c. ...help you achieve your goals.

6. Tyrosine is...
 - a. ...found in rich food.
 - b. ...found in food with a lot of protein.
 - c. ...a kind of nut.

7. The writer says that caffeine...
 - a. ...can help you to become more alert throughout the day.
 - b. ...makes you immediately depressed.
 - c. ...is a short term measure to make you feel good.

8. The writer mentions that scientists believe that...
 - a. ...we should always be concerned about what we eat.
 - b. ...eating the wrong food can cause stress.
 - c. ...the pleasure we get from eating food may help you to feel better.

Answers

Before you watch: 1 - d, 2 - g, 3 - h, 4 - f, 5 - e, 6 - i, 7 - j, 8 - b, 9 - c, 10 - a
Comprehension Task: 1 - b, 2 - b, 3 - c, 4 - c, 5 - c, 6 - b, 7 - c, 8 - c