

1. Food inventions

This week's lesson is about the invention of certain foods which are currently popular in Britain and the USA. Please note, with the exception of sandwiches, these are all types of 'junk food'. You could warm up with a discussion of healthy versus unhealthy snacks, and ask to which category each of the foods on Worksheet A belong.

Level

Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A2–B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Give your students a copy of Worksheet A and ask them to look at the pictures down the left-hand side. Make sure your students understand what each of the items are. You may like to point out the difference between the American and British English names for many of these snacks: in the USA, candy floss is 'cotton candy'; ice lollies are 'ice pops' or 'Popsicles'[®]; potato crisps are 'potato chips' and of course 'cookie' is the American word for biscuit. In the USA, a 'biscuit' is what British people call a scone!

2. Give your students three minutes to read the descriptions on the right and match them to a picture.

3. After three minutes, stop your students and go through the answers in open class.

4. Give each student a copy of Worksheet B and allow them two or three minutes to discuss the questions in Exercise 2 in pairs. Collect some feedback around the class and then ask them to turn over Worksheet A or hand it back to you temporarily.

5. Staying in their pairs, ask your students to decide (without looking at Worksheet A) which sentences in Exercise 3 are true and which are false.

6. When all students have finished, give them one minute to check their answers against Worksheet A. Then check answers in open class. The pair with the most correct answers are the winners.

Follow up

You could have a lot of fun with this subject. You could divide your class into groups and get them to research one additional food invention, gathering as much information as they can find, which they then have to present as a poster to put up on the classroom walls. Or you could have them invent a new food item of their own and bring it to the next class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. f
2. d
3. g
4. e (Several other people started making ice cream cones around the same time in various countries, but the cone certainly became *popular* after the 1904 World's Fair, and this is the usual story of its invention.)
5. c (It was first called the 'Epsicle' – a mixture of *Epperson* and *icicle* – and later became the 'Popsicle'.)
6. a (John Montagu was the fourth Earl of Sandwich – that's why a sandwich is called a 'sandwich' and not a 'montagu'!)
7. h (These days, gelatin is used rather than marshmallow root to make marshmallows soft and squishy.)
8. b

Exercise 2

(Students' own answers.)

Exercise 3

1. F 2. T 3. T 4. F 5. F 6. F 7. T 8. T
9. F 10. T 11. F 12. F 13. T 14. F 15. T

2. Related websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

<http://facts.randomhistory.com/interesting-facts-about-junk-food.html>

Facts about junk food and how some of it was invented, with a list of references. Challenging for Pre-intermediate level.

<http://www.esquire.com/the-side/weird-food-inventions-062310#slide-1>

From *Esquire* magazine online, a collection of patent applications for strange food inventions, some of which have been produced and sold to consumers. Accessible to Pre-intermediate level.

<http://recipes.howstuffworks.com/curious-food-inventions.htm>

From TLC (The Learning Channel), some cutting-edge technological developments related to food production. Challenging for Pre-intermediate level.