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FOOD

Main theme addressed		In this lesson, you will learn about food.
Key Goals		Here is an outline of what you will learn today: 1. Different types of food 2. Idioms containing food vocabulary

1. Different types of food

Food is what we eat when we are hungry or when we are feeling peckish. It's something we enjoy (Yummy!), but also something we might really find disgusting (Yuk!).

There is a wide variety of food. In fact, it is very common to speak about different food categories. One of the standard ways to categorize food is to establish a number of food groups, such as vegetables, fruit, cereals, meat, fish and dairy products.

In this lesson, you will learn new vocabulary by looking at some of these categories. For each category, you will first read a brief definition and then study a series of examples (words and pictures). There will be exercises after the study phase.

So, are you ready for some of the major categories of food? Hope you are hungry, too! Well then, let's tuck in!

a) Vegetables

Vegetables are **parts of plants** that we commonly use as food. The word is usually used to include leaves (lettuce), stems (asparagus), roots (carrots), flowers (broccoli), bulbs (garlic) and some seeds (peas and beans). While its meaning also comprises a number of **botanical fruits** such as cucumbers and pumpkins, it typically **excludes** fruit that has a **sweet pulp** as well as **citrus** fruits.

Let's have a look at some typical examples:

lettuce		**cabbage**	
asparagus		**cauliflower**	
carrot		**potato**	
broccoli		**onion**	

garlic		**pepper**	
leek		**pumpkin**	
mushroom		**cucumber**	
spinach		**fennel**	
aubergine		**courgette**	

radish		**shallot**	

b) Fruit

A fruit is a product of **plant growth** and it typically has a **sweet pulp** and **seeds**.

Examples:

apple		**raspberry**	
orange		**redcurrant**	
lemon		**blackcurrant**	

grapefruit		**gooseberry**	
peach		**melon**	
strawberry		**watermelon**	
apricot		**grapes**	
plum		**banana**	

cherry		**pineapple**	
blackberry		**coconut**	
date		**walnut**	
fig		**persimmon**	

c) Cereals and legumes

Cereals (printed in blue) are **grains** used for food. They constitute a very important source of **fibre** and **carbohydrates** and are thus an essential part of a healthy diet, providing **nutrients and energy** for the growth and development of our bodies. Typical cereal products include bread and pasta. There are also common terms for various processed grains.

Legumes (printed in green), on the other hand, are **fruits of plants** that have their **seeds** in a **pod**. They are especially rich in **protein**.

Examples:

wheat		**rice**	
oats		**buckwheat**	
barley		**couscous**	
millet		**malt**	

corn		quinoa	
pea		lentil	
bean		kidney bean	
chick pea		soya bean	

d) Meat

Meat is **animal flesh** used as food. The category term typically refers to the edible parts of mammalian animals. It sometimes also includes poultry, but usually excludes fish.

Just like legumes, meat is a **high-protein** food and thus an essential part of the human diet. However, an increasing number of people chooses not to eat meat. These people are vegetarians (or vegans if they also exclude any other animal product from their diet).

Examples:

pork		**turkey**	
beef		**chicken**	
veal		**duck**	
venison		**goose**	

lamb		**quail**	

e) Fish and seafood

Many species of **saltwater** and **freshwater fish** (both printed in blue) are consumed around the world. They constitute a valuable source of **protein** and other **nutrients**. While the term **seafood** may really cover any form of **sea life** regarded as food, the term is often used exclusively to refer to **shellfish** and **molluscs** (both printed in green).

Examples:

sea bass		**cod**	
salmon		**trout**	

lobster		**cuttlefish**	
octopus		**mussel**	
prawn		**squid**	
crab		**clam**	
scallop			

d) Dairy products

Dairy products are a type of food produced from or containing **milk** of **animal origin**.

Examples:

butter		**soft cheese**	
cream		**cottage cheese**	
whipped cream		**blue cheese**	
whole milk		**skimmed milk**	

Exercise:

Which category do these food items belong to?

1. oats, wheat, and buckwheat: _____

2. trout, sea bass, and cod: _____

3. beef, turkey, and veal: _____

4. cream, butter, and cottage cheese: _____

5. lentils, chickpeas, and millet: _____

6. cucumber, pepper, and aubergine: _____

7. mussel, crab, and lobster: _____

8. plum, redcurrant, and raspberry: _____

9. shallot, mushroom, and fennel: _____

10. peach, cherry, and gooseberry: _____

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Exercise:

Cross out the item which does NOT belong to the given category?

1. **vegetables**: radish / courgette / trout / cauliflower

2. **fruit**: quail / persimmon / date / fig

3. **cereals**: quinoa / millet / oats / clam

4. **legumes**: lentil / kidney bean / prawn / soya bean

5. **meat**: chickpea / beef / venison / lamb

6. **fish**: trout / pumpkin / salmon / lobster

7. **seafood**: cuttlefish / squid / scallop / shallot

8. **dairy products**: whipped cream / buckwheat / blue cheese / butter

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2. Idioms containing food vocabulary

Food words are also used in idiomatic language. Have a look at the following idioms and at the explanation given for each expression:

big cheese	a very important person (VIP) in a company, typically with a lot of influence
bread and butter	the activity or job that helps a person to earn money
cool as a cucumber	very relaxed
to cry over spilled milk	be upset about something that has happened and cannot be changed
full of beans	with a lot of (silly) energy
a hard nut to crack	difficult to understand (often of a person)
hot potato	a controversial or difficult subject
to be nuts about	to like very much
to spill the beans	to reveal the truth
cup of tea	to express something you like, something you are good at or something you enjoy doing.
piece of cake	something that is simple and easy to accomplish

peach fuzz	oft, fine hair, an immature or early growth of beard
to be souped up	to be drunk
bad egg	a mean or dishonest person, someone whose behavior is reprehensible or irresponsible
to sell like hot cakes	to sell quickly
to put all the eggs in one basket	to depend for your success on a single person or plan of action
to bring home the bacon	to have a career which satisfies one's financial needs to the extent that it can support oneself and one's family
to butter somebody up	to flatter or otherwise ingratiate oneself with someone
to spice things up	to add excitement or interest to it
the apple of somebody's eye	a thing or person which someone loves above all others, someone's favorite person or thing, a person or thing that he is proud of.
to egg somebody on	to encourage someone to do something, especially something socially unacceptable, something criminal or something dangerous
a bun in the oven	to be pregnant

take things with a pinch of salt	to not completely believe something that you are told

Exercise:

Choose the right food item to complete the sentence containing the idiomatic expression – the category in brackets gives you a clue:

1. He was very nervous before his presentation. However, when he started to talk to his audience he seemed as cool as a _____(vegetable).

2. I must say that choosing the right menu for the wedding has become very difficult now. I had not expected this hot _____(vegetable).

3. Incredible! They told me I would only interview the secretary, but in the end I got to talk to the big _____ (dairy product) himself.

4. I'm _____ (fruit in the plural)about Italian pop music these days.

5. We took the kids to the circus. What a treat for them. They were full of _____ (legume in the plural) after the show.

6. I love photography, but really cannot make a living of being a photographer. So, for the time being, accounting is my bread and _____. (dairy product)

7. I have decided to go abroad for some time. Next week, I'm going to spill the _____ (legume in the plural) about my travel plans.

8. Do you know what is happening to Peter? He really is a hard _____ (fruit) to crack at times, especially when something is bothering him like this.

9. You are right, we made a mistake. But come on, there's really no point in crying over spilled _____ (dairy product).

Learn More:

https://agendaweb.org/vocabulary/food-exercises.html

https://www.esolcourses.com/topics/food-and-drink.html

https://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/food.php