

One of the joys of life is eating well. There are so many varieties of food and so many delicious ways to prepare it that most people look forward to meals eagerly. Whether one is having a fancy six-course dinner in an elegant restaurant, a quick bite in a café, or a festive meal prepared at home for a holiday, eating can be a delight. In this lesson you will learn words that refer to eating and food.

WORD LIST

bland
culinary
delectable
devour
edible
epicure
morsel
pungent
quaff
ravenous

DEFINITIONS

After you have studied the definitions and example for each vocabulary word, write the word on the line to the right.

1. **bland** (bländ) *adjective* a. Mild; soothing; not irritating: *a bland diet.*
b. Dull; lacking in interest: *a bland personality.* (From the Latin word *blandus*, meaning "soothing")

Related Words **blandly** *adverb*; **blandness** *noun*

Example Joaquin's chili is so *bland* that I have to add pepper to make it tasty.

2. **culinary** (kŭl'ə-nēr'ē, kyoo'lə-nēr'ē) *adjective* Pertaining to cooking or the kitchen. (From the Latin word *culina*, meaning "kitchen")

Example Boris is improving his *culinary* skills by fixing breakfast for his family each morning.

3. **delectable** (dĭ-lĕk'tə-bəl) *adjective* Greatly pleasing, especially to the sense of taste; delicious; delightful. (From the Latin word *delectare*, meaning "to delight")

Example Philbricks enjoyed the *delectable* food in the Virgin Islands.

4. **devour** (dĭ-vour') *trans. verb* a. To eat up greedily; swallow; engulf.
b. To consume enthusiastically: *to devour books.* (From the Latin word *devorare*, meaning "to swallow up")

Example Hungry animals *devour* their food.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. **edible** (ĕd'ə-bəl) *adjective* Suitable for eating; capable of being eaten. (From the Latin word *edere*, meaning "to eat") 5. _____

Example A cashew nut is *edible*; a wing nut is not.

6. **epicure** (ĕp'ī-kyōōr') *noun* A person with refined tastes in food and drink; a gourmet. (From *Epicurus*, the name of an early Greek philosopher) 6. _____

Related Word *epicurean adjective*

Example Eloise is a notable *epicure* with a particular fondness for pheasant and wild rice.

7. **morsel** (mōr'səl) *noun* a. A bite or small amount of food. b. A small piece; a tidbit. (From the Latin word *morsum*, meaning "a piece bitten off") 7. _____

Example Brian's mother always has a few choice *morsels* for us to nibble on after school.

8. **pungent** (pŭn'jənt) *adjective* Sharp; strong; penetrating; producing a sharp sensation, usually of taste or smell. (From the Latin word *pungere*, meaning "to sting") 8. _____

Related Words *pungency noun; pungently adverb*

Example Garlic, cayenne pepper, and coriander are *pungent* spices.

9. **quaff** (kwŏf, kwăf, kwôf) *trans. verb* To drink heartily and deeply of. 9. _____

Example The thirsty girls *quaffed* the water happily after their three-mile run.

10. **ravenous** (răv'ə-nəs) *adjective* Extremely hungry. (From the Old French word *raviner*, meaning "to take by force") 10. _____

Related Word *ravenously adverb*

Example Dr. von der Vogelweide tells me that teenagers are often *ravenous* because they are growing so fast.

EXERCISE 1 MATCHING WORDS AND DEFINITIONS

Match the definition in Column B with the word in Column A. Write the letter of the correct definition on the answer line.

Column A

- 1. epicure
- 2. devour
- 3. pungent
- 4. edible
- 5. culinary
- 6. delectable
- 7. ravenous
- 8. quaff
- 9. morsel
- 10. bland

Column B

- a. delicious; greatly pleasing
- b. mild
- c. to drink heartily and deeply of
- d. one with refined taste in food and drink
- e. a small piece or a bite of food
- f. suitable for eating
- g. to eat up greedily
- h. sharp; biting
- i. pertaining to cooking
- j. extremely hungry

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

EXERCISE 2 USING WORDS CORRECTLY

Decide whether the italicized vocabulary word has been used correctly in the sentence. On the answer line, write *Correct* for correct use and *Incorrect* for incorrect use.

- 1. The mustard Johanna ate was so *bland* that she had to drink two glasses of water to cool her mouth.
- 2. Red pepper is a *pungent* spice.
- 3. The *ravenous* two-year-old whined all during dinner and only picked at her food.
- 4. The *epicure* preferred to eat meals cooked by her own chef because she knew that they would be delicious.
- 5. The slops in the farmer's pail must look *delectable* to the pigs.
- 6. Baking, broiling, and frying are three *culinary* techniques.
- 7. At dinner the guests *quaffed* their salads with gusto.
- 8. We ate every *morsel* that Vera prepared.
- 9. Rob admitted that his peanut butter, mustard, and sardine sandwich was barely *edible*.
- 10. Showing off her best table manners, Monique *devoured* her cucumber soup.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

EXERCISE 3 CHOOSING THE BEST DEFINITION

For each italicized vocabulary word in the following sentences, write the letter of the best definition on the answer line.

- 1. The name of Caspar Milquetoast, a character in a comic strip, was derived from a *bland* dish of toast served in warm milk.
 - a. sweet
 - b. tasty
 - c. healthful
 - d. mild

- 1. _____

2. The *pungent* taste of coriander overwhelmed Maria's roast. 2. _____
 a. hot b. biting c. fragrant d. mild
3. Three *ravenous* teenagers drank two quarts of milk and ate seven tuna salad sandwiches and six peaches for lunch. 3. _____
 a. overweight b. hungry c. ravaging d. thirsty
4. Leilani's grandmother makes a Thanksgiving feast that would satisfy the most demanding *epicure*. 4. _____
 a. gourmet b. chef c. critic d. guest
5. In the Old English poem *Beowulf*, the monster Grendel *devours* many warriors before being killed. 5. _____
 a. prepares b. hunts for c. eats greedily d. frightens
6. In the wilderness one should be able to recognize *edible* plants. 6. _____
 a. easy to eat b. healthful c. fit to eat d. tasty
7. The thirsty gardener *quaffed* an entire glass of orange juice before sitting down to lunch. 7. _____
 a. sipped b. drank heartily c. poured d. choked on
8. The hikers agreed that after three days in the wild even their freeze-dried turnips were *delectable*. 8. _____
 a. delicious b. wholesome c. tempting d. nutritious
9. Victor is studying to be a chef at the Pacific School of *Culinary Arts*. 9. _____
 a. pertaining to restaurants c. concerning uniforms
 b. concerning cooking d. pertaining to dining rooms
10. Eating Swiss fondue involves dipping a *morsel* of bread into a pot of melted cheese. 10. _____
 a. large chunk b. crumb c. small bite d. loaf

EXERCISE 4 USING DIFFERENT FORMS OF WORDS

Decide which form of the vocabulary word in parentheses best completes the sentence. The form given may be correct. Write your answer on the answer line.

1. Tonight the restaurant is offering a _____ chicken dish. (*delectable*) 1. _____
2. The _____ of the mustard made Nguyen sneeze when he opened the jar. (*pungent*) 2. _____
3. Hilary surprised her brother by saying _____, "I'll go to whatever movie you want to see." (*bland*) 3. _____
4. Not one _____ of food was left after our Fourth of July picnic. (*morsel*) 4. _____
5. Roger eats _____ after his diets and gains back in a week the weight he has lost. (*ravenous*) 5. _____
6. With poached salmon as the main dish, Aunt Ruth's tailgate picnic before the big football game was an _____ delight. (*epicure*) 6. _____
7. After ice-skating on the pond for two hours, the children sat before the fire and _____ cider. (*quaff*) 7. _____
8. St. George, the patron saint of England, is said to have slain a dragon that was about to _____ a princess. (*devour*) 8. _____

9. The _____ knowledge of Brillat-Savarin can be found in his book *The Physiology of Taste*. (*culinary*) 9. _____
10. The _____ of cream cheese contrasts nicely with smoked salmon. (*bland*) 10. _____

READING COMPREHENSION

Each numbered sentence in the following passage contains an italicized vocabulary word or related form. After you read the passage, you will complete an exercise.

THE FIESTA DEL MAIS: A RESTAURANT DEDICATED TO CORN

While most people have eaten corn on the cob and know that corn is fed to livestock, few realize the importance of corn in our lives. (1) Many products, both *edible* and not, are prepared from corn. Corn syrup is used in candy, condensed milk, and soft drinks. Corn oil is used in mayonnaise, salad dressing, and soap. Glue and detergent often contain corn derivatives.

There are also many different ways to prepare corn for eating. (2) In Central America, where the plant originated, traditional cooks and chefs create many *culinary* delights from corn. In fact, in La Garita, Costa Rica, there is a restaurant entirely devoted to foods made from corn. The "Fiesta del Mais," which translates as "Corn Party," is a large, informal place where patrons order and pick their food up at a

counter. (3) In this simple setting, the cooks create *delectable* dishes. (4) Visitors are advised to come *ravenous*, for many delights await them. (5) It would be a missed opportunity if anyone *devoured* fewer than three or four dishes!

(6) Should you wish to *quaff* a refreshing beverage, you can choose among three sweet drinks made from corn. "Pinolillo," made from a powder also containing peanuts, has a yellow, creamy color. The white "atol de mais" is soupy in texture. "Bihaua," the yellow color of corn, is served with sugar and cinnamon.

For solid food, you might try the two types of corn on the cob, or "elote." (7) One is boiled in water and, although healthy, it is perhaps a little *bland*. (8) For those who prefer a more *pungent* taste, try the "elote" roasted over coals. Its blackened kernels burst

with flavor.

Traditional corn tamales are served in their husks. For a sweet flavor, they come with sugar and raisins. Or they can be served with vegetables and meat for a main course. Another item on the menu is "arroz de mais," rice served with corn and chicken. (9) But a favorite dish, refined enough to impress any *epicure*, is fried tortilla with "natilla," a soured cream a bit less solid than yogurt.

(10) Perhaps by now, you feel you couldn't eat another *morsel*, yet it would be a shame to miss dessert. "Masamora," a soft, custard-like substance, is eaten with a spoon. Then there are corn cupcakes, called "bollitos," served with raisins. By the time you finish your meal, you have gotten an education about the many way to cook corn, as well as a tasty and filling meal.

READING COMPREHENSION EXERCISE

Each of the following statements corresponds to a numbered sentence in the passage. Each statement contains a blank and is followed by four answer choices. Decide which choice fits best in the blank. The word or phrase that you choose must express roughly the same meaning as the italicized word in the passage. Write the letter of your choice on the answer line.

1. Many products, both _____ and not, are prepared from corn. 1. _____
- a. suitable for eating c. suitable for freezing
- b. suitable for heating d. suitable for housekeeping

2. In Central America, traditional cooks and chefs create many _____ delights from corn.
 - a. expensive
 - b. delicious
 - c. cooking
 - d. new
3. In this simple setting, the cooks create _____ dishes.
 - a. complicated
 - b. beautiful
 - c. unusual
 - d. delicious
4. Visitors are advised to come _____, for many delights await them.
 - a. quickly
 - b. hungry
 - c. happy
 - d. in groups
5. It would be a missed opportunity if anyone _____ fewer than three or four dishes!
 - a. smelled
 - b. cooked
 - c. tasted
 - d. ate
6. Should you wish to _____ a refreshing beverage, you can choose among three sweet drinks made from corn.
 - a. order
 - b. sample
 - c. enjoy
 - d. drink
7. One is boiled in water and, although healthy, it is perhaps a little _____.
 - a. hot
 - b. wet
 - c. mild
 - d. rich
8. For those who prefer a more _____ taste, try the "elote" roasted over coals.
 - a. strong
 - b. sweet
 - c. barbecued
 - d. cooked
9. But a favorite dish, refined enough to impress any _____, is fried tortilla served with "natilla."
 - a. food expert
 - b. expert tour guide
 - c. expert chef
 - d. local expert
10. Perhaps by now, you feel you couldn't eat another _____.
 - a. meal
 - b. piece
 - c. corn cob
 - d. dish

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Imagine creating your own restaurant. You can serve whatever you like. Write a report describing to your friends what and how you intend to serve them in your new restaurant. Use at least five of the words from this lesson and underline each one.

VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT

Epicure, a word in this lesson on eating and food, comes from the name Epicurus, a Greek philosopher who lived from 342 to 270 B.C. Epicurus taught moderation in all things, believing that excess brings pain and unhappiness. According to his philosophy, pleasure was the highest good, pleasure being freedom of the body from pain and of the soul from anxiety. After Epicurus died, his philosophy was interpreted in different ways. Some people, forgetting his teachings about moderation, thought it meant that they should base their lives on the principle of indulging themselves in sensuous pleasures. The English word *epicure* is loosely related to pleasure, but only in the sense of appreciating fine food and drink. It has, however, lost any connection with Epicurus' philosophy of life.

Activity In your dictionary look up the following words and write their meanings and their Greek roots. Then write an explanation of the connection between the root and the meaning.

1. stentorian
2. Pyrrhic victory
3. laconic
4. draconian

The Test for Lessons 1, 2, and 3 is on page T2.