

## Activity 3: Eating habits (CEFR B2)

**Level:**

CEFR B2

**Time:**

45 minutes

**Resources:**

✓ Handout

**Aims:**

- ✓ To develop skills and knowledge in speaking and listening at Level 1
- ✓ To explore vocabulary connected to L1 topics
- ✓ to develop students' ability to generalise about the eating habits in their country and compare them with other countries and cultures
- ✓ To practise generalizing, comparing people, places and things

**Exam task focus:** Component 1 Task 2

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**Procedure:**

Eating habits

1. Begin the lesson by asking students (SS) when they have their main meal – in the middle of the day or in the evening? Explain that in the UK in the past, the majority of people used to have their main meal in the middle of the day but that has changed and the main meal now is in the evening. Compare with their situation. Tell them that the focus of the lesson is on eating habits around the world.
2. Share handout via chatbox and tell SS to work individually to tick the most appropriate response for them in activity 1a. Then put them into Break out room (BOR) groups of 3/4 and tell them they are going to compare their responses, in Activity 1b. Before they do, focus their attention on the language box and language used to make generalisations. Drill and focus on the form. Tell students to find differences and similarities. Close the BORs and return to main room to conduct whole class feedback and chip in with your own examples and what generally happens in the UK.
3. Ask SS what they know about food and eating habits in China, in Activity 2a – elicit and board. Tell them they are going to listen to a personal story of eating out in China. Pre-teach: *to eat out, dumplings, table manners* and *hospitable*.
4. Set the gist task in Activity 2b: which of the topics are mentioned in the story.

*Read the text in a conversational manner.*

I lived and worked in China 20 years ago. The people in China are extremely hospitable and often invited me to eat out with them. But there was one occasion I particularly remember for a number of reasons. Firstly, because it was my first meal out in China. Secondly, because it was very early in the morning. That was unusual for me. If I go out for a meal, it's very unlikely to be at 7 in the morning. In China, eating Dim Sum – a meal early in the morning is a

popular tradition. Finally, I remember that there were a lot of people there. There's usually only a small number of us when I go out for a meal at home.

A lot of the food was absolutely delicious but there were certain things about the meal that surprised me. I wasn't used to eating savoury dishes such as chicken soup, dumplings and noodles so early in the morning. I also found it strange that there were big dishes of food in the middle of the table and everyone was using chopsticks to help themselves from the big bowls. That's not what my family and I do when we go out for meals. We are served food onto our individual plates. I also noticed that some of the people were talking with food in their mouths. My parents used to get cross with me if I did that. Finally, I noticed that people were getting up in the middle of the meal, disappearing and coming back. We were never allowed to leave the table until everyone had finished eating. It was fascinating to see the differences between eating out in China and in the UK.

5. Tell SS to check in small groups in BORs. Close the BORs and return to main room to then conduct whole class feedback.

Answers:

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| • Who was at the meal       | N |
| • Examples of food eaten    | Y |
| • Details of the restaurant | N |
| • How the food is served    | Y |
| • Where the food is eaten   | N |
| • Table manners             | Y |

6. Ask SS to try to do Activity 2c without a second listening and to check their responses in BORs. Close the BORs and return to main room to then conduct whole class feedback.

Answers:

- 1 People often go out for big group meals early in the morning. **China**
- 2 People generally go out for meals in smallish groups between 2 and 6. **The UK**
- 3 We tend to have big bowls of food in the middle of the table and everyone helps themselves from these bowls. **China**
- 4 We're more likely to be served food on individual plates rather than share our food. **The UK**
- 5 It is considered acceptable to get up and walk around in the middle of a meal. **China**
- 6 It is considered rude to talk with your mouth full of food. **The UK**

7. Ask SS which of the statements most resemble their own situation. Ask SS to raise hands and select to elicit.
8. Tell SS to look at the examples of table manners in Activity 3a and consider whether they are acceptable or not in their households / countries. Put them into new BOR groups of 3/4 and tell them to discuss them. Encourage them to use 'it is considered rude / acceptable ... to discuss them. They should also give examples of eating habits that are considered rude in their culture, activity 3b. Open BORs.
9. Close the BORs and return to main room to then conduct whole class feedback focusing on why it is important to know about what is considered rude and acceptable in different cultures in activity 3c. Explain that if they are invited to eat with British people, they should know what table manners are acceptable.

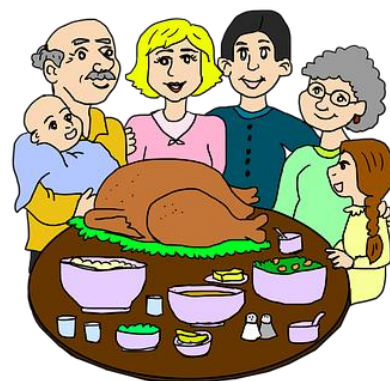
10. Focus SS attention on the exam box at the bottom of the handout to explain how the lesson has helped to prepare them for Task 2 of the Trinity Level 1 Skills for Life Speaking exam and the Level 1 exam in general.

## Handout: Eating habits

### Activity 1: Daily eating habits

**a Tick the most appropriate response for you and your family.**

1 <i>Our main meal is</i> a lunch b dinner	2 <i>We generally eat our main meal</i> a all at the same time b at different times
3 <i>We eat our main meal</i> a at a table b on the floor c with trays on our lap in front of the TV	4 <i>We</i> a never eat take always b occasionally have take always c sometimes have take always
5 <i>We</i> a all eat the same food b have different food depending on age and eating preferences e.g. vegan, don't like spicy food	6 <i>We</i> a eat with our fingers b use chopsticks to eat c use cutlery (knives, forks and spoons) to eat



**b Compare your answers with your classmates to find differences and similarities. Use the language in the box to make generalisations about your family's eating habits and in general where you come from.**

For example:

In the UK, people **tend to have** their main meal in the evening.

In the UK, **the majority of people** use cutlery to eat.

In my family, we **hardly ever** eat take always.

In the UK, **it is considered rude** to eat with your fingers.

#### Language Box: Making generalisations

We / People in X tend to + *bare infinitive*

We / People generally + *bare infinitive*

We / People rarely / often / sometimes / hardly ever + *bare infinitive*

(In X,) the majority of people + *bare infinitive*

It is considered rude / acceptable to + *bare infinitive*

## Activity 2: A meal out

You are going to listen to somebody from the UK talking about a memorable meal out in China.

**a Before you listen: What do you already know about food and eating habits in China?**

**b Tick the topics that are mentioned?**

- Who was at the meal
- Examples of food eaten
- Details of the restaurant
- How the food is served
- Where the food is eaten
- Table manners

**c Read the statements. Do they refer to the UK or China?**

- 1 People often go out for big group meals early in the morning. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 People generally go out for meals in smallish groups between 2 and 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 We tend to have big bowls of food in the middle of the table and everyone helps themselves from these bowls. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 We're more likely to be served food on individual plates rather than share our food.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 It is considered acceptable to get up and walk around in the middle of a meal.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 People hardly ever talk with their mouths full; it is considered to be rude.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**d Compare what happens in your country with China and the UK.**



image from [www.pixaby.com](http://www.pixaby.com)

**Activity 3: Acceptable or not?**

**a Look at the eating habits. Which ones are acceptable in your home / culture?**

looking at your  
phone at the  
dinner table

blowing on your  
food to cool it  
down

yawning in the  
middle of a  
meal

starting to eat  
before everyone  
is ready

**b Are there other eating habits which are considered rude in your country?**

**c Why is it important to know about eating habits in different countries?**

**Exam Hint**

In task 2 of the Level 1 Skills for Life exam, you will listen to the examiner telling you about an experience in their past. You will need to demonstrate that you are listening by commenting and asking questions. You will also need to demonstrate that you can understand and use specific communicative functions such as *generalising* and *comparing people, places and things*. You have practised doing this in this lesson.