



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

B2 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 3 · 3A

Street food stories

Theme · Food for Thought

Unit 3 · 3A

Street food stories

Theme: Food for Thought



Learning objectives

- Tell a vivid food story using past simple, past continuous and past perfect (simple & continuous).
- Use so / such ...that for dramatic effect.
- Describe dishes, textures, flavours and cooking methods with B2 precision.
- Pronounce common irregular past forms correctly and use sentence rhythm to bring narratives to life.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up · taste map of your childhood

On a paper napkin (or in your notebook), draw three quick circles. In each one, write ONE childhood dish you remember vividly — and one smell, sound or person attached to it. Then show your napkin to a partner and tell the story behind each circle in 30 seconds.

1. **emoji:** ■ · **label:** A smell that takes you straight back

2. **emoji:** ■ · **label:** A person whose kitchen you can still see

3. **emoji:** ■ · **label:** A dish you'd queue an hour for again

followUp: Whose napkin made you the hungriest? Whose memory was the most unexpected?

Lead-in: guess the street food

Six short, easy clues about famous street foods. In pairs, read them out loud and guess. The clues use simple past and past continuous — nothing tricky.

1. **clue:** It is round and yellow. People sell it on the beach in Rio, hot from a big pan. Inside there is cheese, or chicken, or shrimp. You eat it with your hands. · **answer:** Pastel (or acarajé, if it has shrimp)

2. **clue:** I was walking in São Paulo when I smelled it. Grilled meat on a small wooden stick, with salt and sometimes cheese. Very cheap, very popular after a football match. · **answer:** Espetinho / churrasquinho

3. **clue:** It is small, round and crispy. It was frying in hot oil when I arrived. Italians eat it in the street in Naples — flat, with tomato and cheese on top. · **answer:** Pizza (Neapolitan)

4. **clue:** She was cooking it on a hot flat pan in Mexico City. A soft corn bread, folded, with meat, onion and a green sauce. You eat two or three, standing up. · **answer:** Tacos

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



5. **clue:** It is long, sweet and fried. People eat it in the streets of Mexico and Spain. It is crunchy outside, soft inside, and you can dip it in hot chocolate or sugar. · **answer:** Churros

6. **clue:** It is a long bread with a sausage inside. You can put ketchup, mustard or mayonnaise on top. People sell it in the street everywhere — at the beach, at concerts, at football games. · **answer:** Hot dog

followUp: Which of these have you tried? Which one would you like to try? Do you have a favourite street food in your city?

Reading: the night the kitchen caught fire

I had been cooking in my grandmother's kitchen since I was six years old, but the night the kitchen caught fire was the night I actually learned to cook.

It was October in Naples, the air heavy with rain that hadn't quite arrived. My grandmother was frying zeppole — little balls of dough that puff up in hot oil and disappear, one by one, into the mouths of cousins. She had been frying them for almost an hour when the phone rang. She turned, distracted, and the oil — which had been getting hotter and hotter the whole time — finally spat, jumped, and caught.

The flames were so tall they kissed the bottom of the cupboard. My grandmother didn't scream. She simply picked up the metal lid of the pan, slid it across the flames, and held it down with both hands while she counted, calmly, to thirty. By the time she lifted it, the fire was gone. The zeppole, blackened and miraculous, were still in the oil.

"You cook with attention," she said, finally turning off the stove. "That's the whole recipe. Everything else is just shopping." She handed me the slotted spoon. "Now finish the batch. They're waiting."

I had been thinking of cooking as a series of instructions. That night I started thinking of it as a conversation — one where, if you stop listening for even a second, something burns.

1. How long had the writer been cooking in her grandmother's kitchen before this night?

- (A) Six months
- (B) Since she was six years old
- (C) For about an hour

2. What had been happening to the oil while the grandmother was frying?

- (A) It had been cooling down.
- (B) It had been getting hotter and hotter.
- (C) It had been jumping out of the pan.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



3. How did the grandmother put out the fire?
- (A) She screamed for help.
 - (B) She poured water on it.
 - (C) She covered the pan with its lid and waited calmly.
4. What does the grandmother mean by "Everything else is just shopping"?
- (A) Ingredients matter more than technique.
 - (B) Attention matters more than ingredients.
 - (C) Cooking should be done quickly.
5. By the end of the story, the writer sees cooking as...
- (A) a set of instructions to follow exactly.
 - (B) a conversation that needs constant attention.
 - (C) something dangerous she'd rather avoid.

Vocabulary in context

Find these in the text and match them to the closest meaning.

spat — (of hot oil) jumped/splashed violently — past of 'spit'

blackened — burned dark on the outside

miraculous — amazingly survived / unexpectedly fine

slotted spoon — a kitchen spoon with holes for lifting food out of oil

batch — a quantity of food cooked together

puff up — swell and become light and airy

Vocabulary: food, flavour & cooking

piquant — sharply tasty, slightly sour (like lime)

umami — salty/savoury depth (opposite of sweet)

opulent — heavy with fat, cream or flavour

insipid — boring, lacking flavour

charred — tasting of wood smoke

crisp — pleasantly crunchy on the outside

succulent — soft, easy to cut (esp. meat)

lead — heavy and filling, hard to digest

grill (BrE) / broil (AmE) — cook with direct heat from above

deep-fry — cook submerged in hot oil

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



stir-fry — cook quickly in a hot wok, stirring constantly

simmer — cook gently just below boiling

roast — cook in an oven with dry heat

marinate — soak in flavoured liquid before cooking

season — add salt, pepper, herbs or spices

drizzle — pour a tiny stream over food (e.g. olive oil)

practice

Complete each sentence with ONE word/phrase from above (correct form).

1. The lamb was so ____ you could cut it with a spoon.

2. I love the ____ crunch of perfectly fried calamari.

3. Honestly, the soup was a bit ____ — it needed salt and herbs.

4. You should ____ the chicken in lemon and garlic overnight.

5. Quickly ____ the vegetables on high heat — don't let them go soft.

6. Just ____ a little olive oil over the salad at the end.

7. Cheese, anchovies, soy sauce — all classic ____ flavours.

8. Don't boil the stew. ____ it gently for two hours.

Practice 2 — collocations & rewrite

Rewrite each sentence replacing the underlined phrase with ONE word from this lesson's vocabulary. Keep the meaning identical.

1. The curry had a sharp, sour <u>tangy bite</u> that woke up my whole mouth.

2. The soup tasted <u>completely flat and flavourless</u>, so I added more herbs.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



3. The steak had been <u>cooked with direct smoky flame</u> until the edges were black.

4. The lamb was so <u>tender and juicy</u> it fell off the bone.

5. Please <u>pour a thin stream of</u> olive oil over the salad before serving.

Practice 3 — discursive writing

prompt: Think of a meal or dish from your childhood that still shapes how you cook or eat today. Write a reflective paragraph about that memory and what it taught you about food.

Use at least FOUR of the target words from this unit.

Vary sentence length; include one relative clause.

Aim for a reflective, cohesive C1 register.

sample: There is a dish that still defines, for me, what good food should taste like: my grandmother's fish stew, which she cooked every Sunday without ever consulting a recipe. The broth was rich and faintly piquant, sharpened with lime, while the fish itself stayed succulent no matter how long it simmered. I remember watching her season it instinctively, tasting constantly, never insipid, never leaden. What she taught me, without ever saying it directly, was that attention matters more than precision. Years later, when I marinate meat overnight or drizzle oil over a finished plate, I am really just repeating her gestures, trying to recreate that same charred, comforting warmth of a Sunday kitchen I can no longer visit.



Grammar focus: narrative tenses + so / such ...that

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. Past simple — the main events — Use the past simple for completed actions that move the story forward, one after another. • She turned, the oil spat, the flames jumped. This is the 'spine' of every narrative.

2. Past continuous — the background — Use the past continuous (was/were + -ing) for actions in progress when something else happened. It's the 'scenery' around the action. • She WAS FRYING zeppole when the phone RANG. • It WAS RAINING. People WERE QUEUING under umbrellas.

3. Past perfect — earlier than the past — Use the past perfect (had + past participle) for actions COMPLETED before another past moment. It jumps back in time. • By the time she answered, the oil HAD ALREADY BECOME dangerous. • He HAD JUST PULLED it out of the oven when the alarm went off.

4. Past perfect continuous — long earlier action — Use had been + -ing for an action that HAD BEEN GOING ON for some time before another past moment. Emphasises duration. • She HAD BEEN FRYING zeppole for almost an hour when the phone rang. • He HAD BEEN QUEUING since seven. Often used to explain why something then happened (tired arms, hot oil, sore feet).

5. so / such ...that — dramatic results — Use SO + adjective/adverb + that... • The flames were SO tall THAT they kissed the cupboard. • She moved SO calmly THAT no one panicked. Use SUCH + (a/an) + (adjective) + noun + that... • It was SUCH a hot pan THAT the lid stuck. • There were SUCH long queues THAT we gave up. In spoken English, 'that' is often dropped: 'It was so hot, my eyes watered.'

Exercise A — past simple vs. past continuous

Put the verbs into the correct past tense (simple or continuous).

1. While I (wait) ____ for my noodles, the chef suddenly (drop) ____ the wok.

2. It (rain) ____ heavily when we finally (find) ____ the market.

3. She (chop) ____ onions when she (cut) ____ her finger.

4. He (eat) ____ his third dumpling when his phone (ring) ____.

5. I (try) ____ the chilli, and it (be) ____ unbelievably hot.

Exercise B — past perfect (simple) and past perfect continuous

Choose the better form: had + past participle OR had been + -ing.

1. By the time we arrived, they (sell out) ____ of the famous beef noodles.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



2. He was exhausted because he (queue) ____ for over two hours.

3. She finally tasted it — she (wait) ____ all year for this dish.

4. I knew the cook well; I (eat) ____ there every Friday for a year.

5. When I opened the lid, I realised someone (already / take) ____ the last one.

6. Her hands smelt of garlic — she (peel) ____ it all morning.

Exercise C — so / such ...that

Join each pair into ONE dramatic sentence using so or such ...that.

1. The soup was very hot. I burned my tongue.

2. It was a long queue. We almost gave up.

3. The chef cooked very quickly. We couldn't see his hands.

4. There was a delicious smell. We had to follow it.

5. The portions were huge. We couldn't finish them.

6. It was a memorable meal. We still talk about it.

Exercise D — gap-fill narrative

Read the story and put the verbs into the correct narrative tense. Use past simple, past continuous, past perfect (simple or continuous), or so/such ...that where needed.

It (1) ____ a warm Friday evening in Lisbon and the streets of Bairro Alto (2) ____ with the smell of grilled sardines. Marco and I (3) ____ around for nearly an hour, looking for the tiny tasca his cousin had recommended, when we finally (4) ____ it — a blue door with a handwritten menu taped to the window.

We (5) ____ inside and the owner, an old woman with flour on her apron, (6) ____ us straight to the kitchen. She (7) ____ bacalhau for the whole neighbourhood that afternoon, she explained, so the pans (8) ____ still hot. She handed us two plates and said, 'Eat standing up. It (9) ____ better that way.'

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



The cod (10) ____ so salty and rich that we (11) ____ two glasses of vinho verde just to keep up. By the time we (12) ____, the kitchen (13) ____ empty and the old woman (14) ____ the floor, humming a fado she (15) ____ since she was twelve. We paid, thanked her, and stepped back into the night with oil on our fingers and a story we (16) ____ tell for years.

was

were filled

had been walking

found

stepped / walked

led / took

had been cooking / had cooked

were

tastes

was

drank / needed

left / finished

was

was mopping / mopped

had known / had been singing

would / knew we'd

Listening: the night I tried durian

Two friends, Priya and Sam, are at a café. Priya is telling Sam the story of a memorable food experience in Singapore. Listen once for the big picture, then again for detail.

Before you listen

What do you know about durian? Why is it so famous (or infamous)?

Predict: do you think she ended up loving it or hating it?

First listen — gist

1. What food is Priya describing?

2. Where and when did the experience happen?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



3. What is her overall feeling about it now?

Second listen — detail

1. How long had Priya been wanting to try durian?

2. Who took her to try it?

3. How does she describe the smell?

4. How does she describe the taste?

5. What 'so ...that' detail does she give about the smell?

6. What does she say she had been doing all afternoon before they got there?

Sam: OK, you've been promising me a food story all week. Spill.

Priya: Right. So, Singapore, last spring. I had been wanting to try durian for, honestly, about ten years — since a friend told me about it at university.

Sam: The stinky fruit?

Priya: The stinky fruit. My cousin Ravi lives there, and he'd been promising for ages he'd take me. So one night we go to this hawker centre near Geylang.

Sam: And...?

Priya: Sam. I smelled it before I saw it. It was so strong that my eyes were watering before I'd even taken a bite.

Sam: Watering how?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Priya: Like — imagine gym socks left in a warm taxi. Sweet and sharp and a little horrible. People were eating it like it was nothing.

Sam: So you ran?

Priya: I almost did. I'd been walking around the markets all afternoon, I was starving, and now this. Ravi was laughing at my face. He just said, 'Hold your nose, take one bite, and then we'll talk.'

Sam: And?

Priya: I took the bite. And — Sam — it was unbelievable. Creamy. Sweet, like custard. Rich, almost savoury at the same time. Nothing like the smell.

Sam: So you became a durian fan?

Priya: I had three more bites and stopped. It was such an intense flavour that I couldn't manage more. And the smell stayed on my fingers for two days.

Sam: Would you do it again?

Priya: Honestly? I think once was enough. But I'm so glad I did it. That's the whole point of a food story — you remember it forever.

Speaking: story dice — build a food memory

In pairs, choose ONE word from EACH of the three boxes below. Those three words must appear in your story — naturally. Tell a 90-second food memory using past simple, past continuous AND at least one past perfect / past perfect continuous. Use one 'so/such ...that'. Listener: at the end, repeat the three words back. If both partners agree they were used well, you each earn a ■.

1. **label:** WHERE · **emoji:** ■

2. **label:** WHAT · **emoji:** ■■

3. **label:** TWIST · **emoji:** ■

challenge: ■ Extra ■ if you naturally use one of: 'I had been ...-ing for ages when...', 'It was so ... that...', 'By the time I...'. ■

Writing mini-task — a tiny food memoir (90–110 words)

Write a 90–110 word food memoir about a real or invented memorable meal. You MUST include: (a) at least one past continuous, (b) at least one past perfect simple OR continuous, (c) one 'so/such ...that' construction, (d) at least three vocabulary items from today (flavour or cooking method).

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Wrap-up · the one-bite review

You're a food critic with 15 seconds to file your review. In ONE sentence each, complete the cards below about today's class — the way you would about a meal.

1. **emoji:** ■ · **label:** First bite · **prompt:** The moment in class that grabbed you — finish: 'It was so ... that...'

2. **emoji:** ■■ · **label:** Strong flavour · **prompt:** A new word or grammar point that stood out — and an example sentence.

3. **emoji:** ■ · **label:** I'll order again · **prompt:** One thing you want to practise this week (use 'I should/had better...').

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Workbook — home practice



Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Street food stories - Workbook

Extra practice for home study · with answer keys

1. Vocabulary - taste & texture

Choose the option that best fits each sentence.

1. The lamb was so soft it almost melted - really ____.
(A) insipid
(B) succulent
(C) leaden
2. These chips have lost their crunch. They're not ____ anymore.
(A) crisp
(B) opulent
(C) charred
3. After a whole plate of cheese fondue, I felt completely ____.
(A) piquant
(B) succulent
(C) leaden
4. Lemons, vinegar and limes all have a ____ flavour.
(A) piquant
(B) opulent
(C) charred
5. Soy sauce, parmesan and miso are typical ____ flavours.
(A) insipid
(B) umami
(C) charred

2. Vocabulary - cooking methods (gap-fill)

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box.

BOX: marinate · simmer · roast · stir-fry · drizzle · season

1. ____ the chicken in yoghurt and spices for at least three hours.
2. Let the sauce ____ gently for forty minutes - never boil it.
3. We always ____ a whole chicken on Sundays.
4. Heat the wok until smoking, then ____ the vegetables for 90 seconds.
5. Just ____ a little olive oil over the burrata at the end.
6. Always taste before you serve - and ____ generously.

3. Vocabulary - discursive writing

Some argue that street food is a more 'authentic' cultural experience than fine dining. To what extent do you agree?

Checklist:

- ☐ Use at least 4 taste/texture or cooking vocabulary items
- ☐ Maintain a formal, discursive register

- [] Use cohesive devices to link your arguments
- [] Check for varied C1-level grammatical structures

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. On the left side, there are short vertical blue lines that serve as margins, creating a series of narrow columns. The paper is otherwise empty of any text or markings.

4. Grammar - past simple vs. past continuous

Choose the better tense for each gap.

1. While I ____ the soup, the doorbell rang.
(A) stirred
(B) was stirring
(C) had stirred
2. It ____ heavily when we finally found the restaurant.
(A) rained
(B) was raining
(C) had rained
3. He ____ his coffee and left without saying goodbye.
(A) finished
(B) was finishing
(C) had finished
4. She cut her finger while she ____ onions.
(A) chopped
(B) was chopping
(C) had chopped
5. We ____ in a tiny café when the lights suddenly ____ off.
(A) sat / went
(B) were sitting / went
(C) had sat / had gone

5. Grammar - past perfect simple vs. past perfect continuous

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Put the verb in CAPITALS into *had + past participle* OR *had been + -ing*.

1. He was exhausted; he (QUEUE) for two hours.
2. By the time we arrived, they (SELL OUT) of dumplings.
3. Her fingers smelled of garlic - she (CHOP) it all morning.
4. I (NEVER / EAT) anything so spicy before that night.
5. She finally tasted the dish she (DREAM OF) all year.
6. When I opened the pot, I realised someone (ALREADY / TAKE) the last piece.

6. Grammar - so / such ...that

Join each pair into ONE sentence using *so* or *such ...that*.

1. The chilli was very spicy. My eyes watered.
2. It was a long queue. We almost gave up.
3. The chef cooked very fast. I couldn't see her hands.
4. There was a wonderful smell. We had to stop and eat.
5. The portions were huge. We took half home.
6. It was a memorable meal. We still talk about it.

7. Grammar - find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. I had been ate three plates before I felt full.
2. While I was finishing my plate when he arrived.
3. It was so a hot soup that I burned my tongue.
4. By the time we got there, they were selling out.
5. She had been chop onions for an hour when the knife slipped.

8. Reading - true / false / not given

Read the short text, then mark each statement *T* (true), *F* (false) or *NG* (not given).

On the corner of Rue Mouffetard in Paris, an old man called Henri had been selling crêpes from the same tiny stall since 1972. He didn't talk much. He didn't smile much either. But the queue was always there, sometimes three streets long, and tourists who'd been waiting for an hour would still leave saying it had been worth every minute. Henri's secret, he once told a journalist, was that he never changed the recipe and he never rushed. "A crêpe is a conversation between butter, sugar and time," he said. "If you rush, you've already lost." He retired last spring. His granddaughter, who'd been training quietly beside him for six years, opened the same stall on the same corner the following Monday. The queue, people say, is still three streets long.

1. Henri had been selling crêpes from the same spot for over 50 years. [T / F / NG]
2. Henri was famous for being friendly with customers. [T / F / NG]
3. Tourists complained about the long waiting time. [T / F / NG]
4. Henri said the secret was using more expensive ingredients. [T / F / NG]
5. His granddaughter had been working with him for several years before he retired. [T / F / NG]
6. Henri's granddaughter studied cooking at a famous Paris school. [T / F / NG]

9. Writing - guided task

Write 70-90 words about a meal you'll never forget. Include: (a) ONE past continuous, (b) ONE past perfect or past perfect continuous, (c) ONE so/such ...that, (d) TWO vocabulary items from this lesson.

Checklist:

- [] 70-90 words
- [] ONE past continuous (was/were + -ing)
- [] ONE past perfect simple OR continuous
- [] ONE so/such ...that
- [] TWO vocabulary items from Lesson 3A

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. On the left side, there are several short, dark vertical marks, possibly from a binder or staple. The paper appears to be part of a notebook or a set of loose-leaf papers.

10. Audio: Listening - gist & detail

Play the kitchen scene once for gist, then again for detail. (Aunt Mei is teaching her nephew Leo to cook.)

Audio: Aunt Mei & Leo · a cooking lesson

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

11. Audio: Listening - gap-fill (dictation)

Listen again and write the missing word in each line.

Audio: Aunt Mei & Leo - key lines

Transcript with gaps:

A: Leo, are you going to help me in the kitchen at all today?

B: Oh, Aunt Mei, I'm so sorry! I didn't realise. What can I do?

A: Well, I've been chopping garlic since seven this morning. Any help would be appreciated.

B: I know, the last time you 'helped' you burned the rice. Let's try something simpler.

A: How about you taste this sauce for me? What do you think?

B: Hmm, it's rich. Smoky. But a little bland at the end?

A: Exactly! I was so excited about the new chillies that I forgot the balance. Good catch.

B: And how's the fish coming along?

A: The fish is marinating, and once we drizzle the sauce over it, we cannot wait for dinner.

B: Sounds delicious! I was so hungry on my way here. I'd been walking for an hour when I saw this old woman selling amazing-smelling bread.

A: Oh, I know that stall! Right, let's get this perfectly balanced now. It will be such a memorable meal that your grandchildren will hear about it.

1. I've been ____ garlic since seven.
2. The last time you 'helped' you ____ the rice.
3. It's rich. Smoky. But a little ____ at the end?
4. I was so excited about the new chillies that I forgot the ____.
5. I'd been walking for an hour when I ____ this old woman.
6. It will be ____ a memorable meal that your grandchildren will hear about it.
7. The fish is ____, and once we drizzle the sauce over it, we cannot wait.

12. ■ Challenge - sentence transformation

Rewrite the second sentence so it means the same as the first, using 3-6 words including the KEYWORD.

1. 1. The soup was very hot, so my tongue burned. → The soup was ____ my tongue burned. (KEYWORD: SO)
2. 2. It was a long queue and we left. → It was ____ we left. (KEYWORD: SUCH)
3. 3. He waited two hours before he got a table. → He ____ for two hours before he got a table. (KEYWORD: BEEN)
4. 4. The chef finished before we arrived. → The chef ____ before we arrived. (KEYWORD: HAD)
5. 5. While I was eating, the lights went out. → I ____ when the lights went out. (KEYWORD: EATING)

13. ■ Challenge - irregular pasts

Write the past simple AND past participle of each verb.

1. 1. eat
2. 2. spit
3. 3. bite
4. 4. catch
5. 5. break
6. 6. feed
7. 7. drink

8. 8. burn

14. ■ Challenge - odd one out

Three of the four share a meaning. Pick the ODD ONE OUT.

1. 1. Soft texture:

- (A) tender
- (B) creamy
- (C) crispy
- (D) melt-in-the-mouth

2. 2. Cooking methods:

- (A) simmer
- (B) roast
- (C) stir-fry
- (D) marinate

3. 3. Strong / intense flavour:

- (A) rich
- (B) smoky
- (C) tangy
- (D) bland

4. 4. Past forms of regular verbs:

- (A) walked
- (B) talked
- (C) cooked
- (D) ate

15. ■ Challenge - extended writing

Write a 130-160 word food story titled "The meal that changed me". Use AT LEAST: 2 different past tenses (continuous and perfect/perfect continuous), 1 so/such ...that, and 4 vocabulary items from Lesson 3A.

Checklist:

- ☐ 130-160 words
- ☐ At least 2 different past tenses (continuous + perfect/perfect continuous)
- ☐ At least one so/such ...that construction
- ☐ At least 4 vocabulary items from Lesson 3A
- ☐ A clear, personal story arc

16. Self-check

Tick the things you can now do confidently.

- ☐ I can tell a short story using past simple AND past continuous correctly.
- ☐ I can use past perfect simple to jump back in time.
- ☐ I can use past perfect continuous to show duration before another past moment.
- ☐ I can use so/such ...that for dramatic effect.
- ☐ I can describe flavours and textures with at least 6 new adjectives.
- ☐ I can name and use at least 5 cooking methods.
- ☐ I can pronounce common irregular past forms correctly.

Street food stories — Workbook

Extra practice for home study · with answer keys

1. Vocabulary — taste & texture

Choose the option that best fits each sentence.

1. The lamb was so soft it almost melted — really ____.
(A) insipid
(B) succulent
(C) leaden
2. These chips have lost their crunch. They're not ____ anymore.
(A) crisp
(B) opulent
(C) charred
3. After a whole plate of cheese fondue, I felt completely ____.
(A) piquant
(B) succulent
(C) leaden
4. Lemons, vinegar and limes all have a ____ flavour.
(A) piquant
(B) opulent
(C) charred
5. Soy sauce, parmesan and miso are typical ____ flavours.
(A) insipid
(B) umami
(C) charred

2. Vocabulary — cooking methods (gap-fill)

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box.

BOX: marinate · simmer · roast · stir-fry · drizzle · season

1. ____ the chicken in yoghurt and spices for at least three hours.
2. Let the sauce ____ gently for forty minutes — never boil it.
3. We always ____ a whole chicken on Sundays.
4. Heat the wok until smoking, then ____ the vegetables for 90 seconds.
5. Just ____ a little olive oil over the burrata at the end.
6. Always taste before you serve — and ____ generously.

3. Vocabulary — discursive writing

Some argue that street food is a more 'authentic' cultural experience than fine dining. To what extent do you agree?

Checklist:

- Use at least 4 taste/texture or cooking vocabulary items
- Maintain a formal, discursive register

- Use cohesive devices to link your arguments
- Check for varied C1-level grammatical structures

[illegible]

4. Grammar — past simple vs. past continuous

Choose the better tense for each gap.

1. While I ____ the soup, the doorbell rang.
(A) stirred
(B) was stirring
(C) had stirred
2. It ____ heavily when we finally found the restaurant.
(A) rained
(B) was raining
(C) had rained
3. He ____ his coffee and left without saying goodbye.
(A) finished
(B) was finishing
(C) had finished
4. She cut her finger while she ____ onions.
(A) chopped
(B) was chopping
(C) had chopped
5. We ____ in a tiny café when the lights suddenly ____ off.
(A) sat / went
(B) were sitting / went
(C) had sat / had gone

5. Grammar — past perfect simple vs. past perfect continuous

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Put the verb in CAPITALS into *had + past participle* OR *had been + -ing*.

1. He was exhausted; he (QUEUE) for two hours.
2. By the time we arrived, they (SELL OUT) of dumplings.
3. Her fingers smelled of garlic — she (CHOP) it all morning.
4. I (NEVER / EAT) anything so spicy before that night.
5. She finally tasted the dish she (DREAM OF) all year.
6. When I opened the pot, I realised someone (ALREADY / TAKE) the last piece.

6. Grammar — so / such ...that

Join each pair into ONE sentence using *so* or *such ...that*.

1. The chilli was very spicy. My eyes watered.
2. It was a long queue. We almost gave up.
3. The chef cooked very fast. I couldn't see her hands.
4. There was a wonderful smell. We had to stop and eat.
5. The portions were huge. We took half home.
6. It was a memorable meal. We still talk about it.

7. Grammar — find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. I had been ate three plates before I felt full.
2. While I was finishing my plate when he arrived.
3. It was so a hot soup that I burned my tongue.
4. By the time we got there, they were selling out.
5. She had been chop onions for an hour when the knife slipped.

8. Reading — true / false / not given

Read the short text, then mark each statement *T* (true), *F* (false) or *NG* (not given).

On the corner of Rue Mouffetard in Paris, an old man called Henri had been selling crêpes from the same tiny stall since 1972. He didn't talk much. He didn't smile much either. But the queue was always there, sometimes three streets long, and tourists who'd been waiting for an hour would still leave saying it had been worth every minute. Henri's secret, he once told a journalist, was that he never changed the recipe and he never rushed. "A crêpe is a conversation between butter, sugar and time," he said. "If you rush, you've already lost." He retired last spring. His granddaughter, who'd been training quietly beside him for six years, opened the same stall on the same corner the following Monday. The queue, people say, is still three streets long.

1. Henri had been selling crêpes from the same spot for over 50 years. [T / F / NG]
2. Henri was famous for being friendly with customers. [T / F / NG]
3. Tourists complained about the long waiting time. [T / F / NG]
4. Henri said the secret was using more expensive ingredients. [T / F / NG]
5. His granddaughter had been working with him for several years before he retired. [T / F / NG]
6. Henri's granddaughter studied cooking at a famous Paris school. [T / F / NG]

9. Writing — guided task

Write 70–90 words about a meal you'll never forget. Include: (a) ONE past continuous, (b) ONE past perfect or past perfect continuous, (c) ONE so/such ...that, (d) TWO vocabulary items from this lesson.

Checklist:

- 70–90 words
- ONE past continuous (was/were + -ing)
- ONE past perfect simple OR continuous
- ONE so/such ...that
- TWO vocabulary items from Lesson 3A

[illegible]

10. ■ Listening — gist & detail

Play the kitchen scene once for gist, then again for detail. (Aunt Mei is teaching her nephew Leo to cook.)

■ **Audio:** Aunt Mei & Leo · a cooking lesson

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

11. ■ Listening — gap-fill (dictation)

Listen again and write the missing word in each line.

■ **Audio:** Aunt Mei & Leo — key lines

Transcript with gaps:

A: Leo, are you going to help me in the kitchen at all today?

B: Oh, Aunt Mei, I'm so sorry! I didn't realise. What can I do?

A: Well, I've been chopping garlic since seven this morning. Any help would be appreciated.

B: I know, the last time you 'helped' you burned the rice. Let's try something simpler.

A: How about you taste this sauce for me? What do you think?

B: Hmm, it's rich. Smoky. But a little bland at the end?

A: Exactly! I was so excited about the new chillies that I forgot the balance. Good catch.

B: And how's the fish coming along?

A: The fish is marinating, and once we drizzle the sauce over it, we cannot wait for dinner.

B: Sounds delicious! I was so hungry on my way here. I'd been walking for an hour when I saw this old woman selling amazing-smelling bread.

A: Oh, I know that stall! Right, let's get this perfectly balanced now. It will be such a memorable meal that your grandchildren will hear about it.

1. I've been ____ garlic since seven.
2. The last time you 'helped' you ____ the rice.
3. It's rich. Smoky. But a little ____ at the end?
4. I was so excited about the new chillies that I forgot the ____.
5. I'd been walking for an hour when I ____ this old woman.
6. It will be ____ a memorable meal that your grandchildren will hear about it.
7. The fish is ____, and once we drizzle the sauce over it, we cannot wait.

12. ■ Challenge — sentence transformation

Rewrite the second sentence so it means the same as the first, using 3–6 words including the KEYWORD.

1. 1. The soup was very hot, so my tongue burned. → The soup was ____ my tongue burned. (KEYWORD: SO)
2. 2. It was a long queue and we left. → It was ____ we left. (KEYWORD: SUCH)
3. 3. He waited two hours before he got a table. → He ____ for two hours before he got a table. (KEYWORD: BEEN)
4. 4. The chef finished before we arrived. → The chef ____ before we arrived. (KEYWORD: HAD)
5. 5. While I was eating, the lights went out. → I ____ when the lights went out. (KEYWORD: EATING)

13. ■ Challenge — irregular pasts

Write the past simple AND past participle of each verb.

1. 1. eat
2. 2. spit
3. 3. bite
4. 4. catch
5. 5. break
6. 6. feed
7. 7. drink

8. 8. burn

14. ■ Challenge — odd one out

Three of the four share a meaning. Pick the ODD ONE OUT.

1. 1. Soft texture:

- (A) tender
- (B) creamy
- (C) crispy
- (D) melt-in-the-mouth

2. 2. Cooking methods:

- (A) simmer
- (B) roast
- (C) stir-fry
- (D) marinate

3. 3. Strong / intense flavour:

- (A) rich
- (B) smoky
- (C) tangy
- (D) bland

4. 4. Past forms of regular verbs:

- (A) walked
- (B) talked
- (C) cooked
- (D) ate

15. ■ Challenge — extended writing

Write a 130–160 word food story titled "The meal that changed me". Use AT LEAST: 2 different past tenses (continuous and perfect/perfect continuous), 1 so/such ...that, and 4 vocabulary items from Lesson 3A.

Checklist:

- 130–160 words
- At least 2 different past tenses (continuous + perfect/perfect continuous)
- At least one so/such ...that construction
- At least 4 vocabulary items from Lesson 3A
- A clear, personal story arc

16. Self-check

Tick the things you can now do confidently.

- I can tell a short story using past simple AND past continuous correctly.
- I can use past perfect simple to jump back in time.
- I can use past perfect continuous to show duration before another past moment.
- I can use so/such ...that for dramatic effect.
- I can describe flavours and textures with at least 6 new adjectives.
- I can name and use at least 5 cooking methods.
- I can pronounce common irregular past forms correctly.



Answer key — Class Book

Reading: the night the kitchen caught fire

1. (B) Since she was six years old
2. (B) It had been getting hotter and hotter.
3. (C) She covered the pan with its lid and waited calmly.
4. (B) Attention matters more than ingredients.
5. (B) a conversation that needs constant attention.

Vocabulary: food, flavour & cooking

1. succulent
 2. crisp
 3. insipid
 4. marinate
 5. stir-fry
 6. drizzle
 7. umami
 8. simmer
1. The curry was wonderfully piquant.
 2. The soup was insipid, so I added more herbs.
 3. The steak was charred until the edges were black.
 4. The lamb was so succulent it fell off the bone.
 5. Please drizzle olive oil over the salad before serving.

Grammar focus: narrative tenses + so / such ...that

1. was waiting / dropped
 2. was raining / found
 3. was chopping / cut
 4. was eating / rang
 5. tried / was
1. had sold out
 2. had been queuing
 3. had been waiting
 4. had been eating
 5. had already taken
 6. had been peeling
1. The soup was so hot (that) I burned my tongue.
 2. It was such a long queue (that) we almost gave up.
 3. The chef cooked so quickly (that) we couldn't see his hands.
 4. There was such a delicious smell (that) we had to follow it.
 5. The portions were so huge (that) we couldn't finish them.
 6. It was such a memorable meal (that) we still talk about it.

Listening: the night I tried durian

1. Durian — the famously stinky tropical fruit.
 2. On a hot night in Singapore, at a hawker centre near Geylang.
 3. Mixed — she loved the taste once she got past the smell, but she's not sure she'd repeat the experience.
1. About ten years — since a friend had told her about it at university.
 2. Her cousin Ravi, who lives in Singapore.
 3. Like gym socks left in a warm taxi — sweet, sharp and slightly horrible.
 4. Sweet, creamy, almost like custard — rich and a bit savoury, nothing like the smell.
 5. It was so strong that her eyes watered before she'd even taken a bite.
 6. She'd been walking around the markets and was already starving.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Answer key — Workbook

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Street food stories - Workbook — Answer Key

1. Vocabulary - taste & texture

1. **(B)** succulent
2. **(A)** crisp
3. **(C)** leaden
4. **(A)** piquant
5. **(B)** umami

2. Vocabulary - cooking methods (gap-fill)

1. **marinate**
2. **simmer**
3. **roast**
4. **stir-fry**
5. **drizzle**
6. **season**

3. Vocabulary - discursive writing

Sample answer

Street food offers a window into the soul of a culture that fine dining often fails to provide. There is something profoundly authentic about watching a vendor stir-fry fresh ingredients in a well-seasoned wok right before your eyes. The flavours are often bold and uncompromising, from the succulent texture of slow-cooked meats to the intense umami punch of traditional sauces. While a high-end restaurant might offer an opulent atmosphere, it can feel detached from the daily reality of the locals. In contrast, street food is a democratic experience, where the quality of the food—perhaps a perfectly charred skewer or a piquant curry—speaks for itself. To truly understand a place, one must be willing to eat where the locals eat, experiencing the vibrant, unpolished reality of their culinary heritage.

4. Grammar - past simple vs. past continuous

1. **(B)** was stirring
2. **(B)** was raining
3. **(A)** finished
4. **(B)** was chopping
5. **(B)** were sitting / went

5. Grammar - past perfect simple vs. past perfect continuous

1. *had been queuing*
2. *had sold out*
3. *had been chopping*
4. *had never eaten*
5. *had been dreaming of*
6. *had already taken*

6. Grammar - so / such ...that

- 1. The chilli was so spicy (that) my eyes watered.*
- 2. It was such a long queue (that) we almost gave up.*
- 3. The chef cooked so fast (that) I couldn't see her hands.*
- 4. There was such a wonderful smell (that) we had to stop and eat.*
- 5. The portions were so huge (that) we took half home.*
- 6. It was such a memorable meal (that) we still talk about it.*

7. Grammar - find and fix the mistake

- 1. I had eaten three plates before I felt full.*
- 2. I was finishing my plate when he arrived.*
- 3. It was such a hot soup (that) I burned my tongue. (or: It was so hot that I burned my tongue.)*
- 4. By the time we got there, they had sold out.*
- 5. She had been chopping onions for an hour when the knife slipped.*

8. Reading - true / false / not given

- 1. T**
- 2. F**
- 3. F**
- 4. F**
- 5. T**
- 6. NG**

9. Writing - guided task

Sample answer

I was twenty-two and travelling alone in Vietnam when it happened. I had been walking around Hoi An since sunrise, lost and hungry. On a tiny plastic stool at the market, a woman handed me a steaming bowl of cao lầu - chewy noodles, smoky pork, crispy fried croutons and fresh herbs piled on top. It was such a perfect bowl of food that I sat there for forty minutes, not moving, eating slowly. I still think about it. I had never tasted anything so alive.

10. Audio: Listening - gist & detail

- 1. Since seven - for some time, before he was even early.*
- 2. It's rich and smoky, but a little bland at the end.*
- 3. A bit more salt and a squeeze of lime.*
- 4. At the market by the river, from an old woman with very bright red chillies.*
- 5. Walking around the market.*
- 6. She was so excited about the new chillies that she forgot the balance of seasoning.*

11. Audio: Listening - gap-fill (dictation)

1. *chopping*
2. *burned*
3. *bland*
4. *balance*
5. *saw*
6. *such*
7. *marinating*

12. ■ Challenge - sentence transformation

1. *so hot that*
2. *such a long queue (that)*
3. *had been waiting*
4. *had finished*
5. *was eating*

13. ■ Challenge - irregular pasts

1. *ate / eaten*
2. *spat / spat*
3. *bit / bitten*
4. *caught / caught*
5. *broke / broken*
6. *fed / fed*
7. *drank / drunk*
8. *burnt (or burned) / burnt (or burned)*

14. ■ Challenge - odd one out

1. **(C)** *crispy*
2. **(D)** *marinate*
3. **(D)** *bland*
4. **(D)** *ate*

15. ■ Challenge - extended writing

Sample answer

I was twenty-four and lonely in Bangkok when I found the noodle stall. I had been wandering since lunchtime, eating nothing, watching everyone else eat. Down a tiny side street, an old man was stir-frying noodles over a fire so hot the flames jumped higher than his shoulders. There was no menu. He just looked at me, nodded, and started cooking. I sat on a plastic stool while he worked. He had been seasoning the wok for years - you could see it in his wrist. When he handed me the plate, the noodles were so smoky and tender that I almost cried. Garlic, chilli, soy - sharp, savoury, alive. I ate slowly. He watched. We didn't say one word. I've eaten in expensive restaurants since. None of them were such a perfect meal that I would walk three thousand miles back for it. That one was.

16. Self-check

Self-assessment — no fixed answers.

Street food stories — Workbook — Answer Key

1. Vocabulary — taste & texture

1. **(B)** *succulent*
2. **(A)** *crisp*
3. **(C)** *leaden*
4. **(A)** *piquant*
5. **(B)** *umami*

2. Vocabulary — cooking methods (gap-fill)

1. *marinate*
2. *simmer*
3. *roast*
4. *stir-fry*
5. *drizzle*
6. *season*

3. Vocabulary — discursive writing

Sample answer

Street food offers a window into the soul of a culture that fine dining often fails to provide. There is something profoundly authentic about watching a vendor stir-fry fresh ingredients in a well-seasoned wok right before your eyes. The flavours are often bold and uncompromising, from the succulent texture of slow-cooked meats to the intense umami punch of traditional sauces. While a high-end restaurant might offer an opulent atmosphere, it can feel detached from the daily reality of the locals. In contrast, street food is a democratic experience, where the quality of the food—perhaps a perfectly charred skewer or a piquant curry—speaks for itself. To truly understand a place, one must be willing to eat where the locals eat, experiencing the vibrant, unpolished reality of their culinary heritage.

4. Grammar — past simple vs. past continuous

1. **(B)** *was stirring*
2. **(B)** *was raining*
3. **(A)** *finished*
4. **(B)** *was chopping*
5. **(B)** *were sitting / went*

5. Grammar — past perfect simple vs. past perfect continuous

1. *had been queuing*
2. *had sold out*
3. *had been chopping*
4. *had never eaten*
5. *had been dreaming of*
6. *had already taken*

6. Grammar — so / such ...that

- 1. The chilli was so spicy (that) my eyes watered.*
- 2. It was such a long queue (that) we almost gave up.*
- 3. The chef cooked so fast (that) I couldn't see her hands.*
- 4. There was such a wonderful smell (that) we had to stop and eat.*
- 5. The portions were so huge (that) we took half home.*
- 6. It was such a memorable meal (that) we still talk about it.*

7. Grammar — find and fix the mistake

- 1. I had eaten three plates before I felt full.*
- 2. I was finishing my plate when he arrived.*
- 3. It was such a hot soup (that) I burned my tongue. (or: It was so hot that I burned my tongue.)*
- 4. By the time we got there, they had sold out.*
- 5. She had been chopping onions for an hour when the knife slipped.*

8. Reading — true / false / not given

- 1. T**
- 2. F**
- 3. F**
- 4. F**
- 5. T**
- 6. NG**

9. Writing — guided task

Sample answer

I was twenty-two and travelling alone in Vietnam when it happened. I had been walking around Hoi An since sunrise, lost and hungry. On a tiny plastic stool at the market, a woman handed me a steaming bowl of **cao lầu** — chewy noodles, smoky pork, crispy fried croutons and fresh herbs piled on top. It was such a perfect bowl of food that I sat there for forty minutes, not moving, eating slowly. I still think about it. I had never tasted anything so alive.

10. ■ Listening — gist & detail

- 1. Since seven — for some time, before he was even early.*
- 2. It's rich and smoky, but a little bland at the end.*
- 3. A bit more salt and a squeeze of lime.*
- 4. At the market by the river, from an old woman with very bright red chillies.*
- 5. Walking around the market.*
- 6. She was so excited about the new chillies that she forgot the balance of seasoning.*

11. ■ Listening — gap-fill (dictation)

1. *chopping*
2. *burned*
3. *bland*
4. *balance*
5. *saw*
6. *such*
7. *marinating*

12. ■ Challenge — sentence transformation

1. *so hot that*
2. *such a long queue (that)*
3. *had been waiting*
4. *had finished*
5. *was eating*

13. ■ Challenge — irregular pasts

1. *ate / eaten*
2. *spat / spat*
3. *bit / bitten*
4. *caught / caught*
5. *broke / broken*
6. *fed / fed*
7. *drank / drunk*
8. *burnt (or burned) / burnt (or burned)*

14. ■ Challenge — odd one out

1. **(C)** *crispy*
2. **(D)** *marinate*
3. **(D)** *bland*
4. **(D)** *ate*

15. ■ Challenge — extended writing

Sample answer

I was twenty-four and lonely in Bangkok when I found the noodle stall. I had been wandering since lunchtime, eating nothing, watching everyone else eat. Down a tiny side street, an old man was stir-frying noodles over a fire so hot the flames jumped higher than his shoulders. There was no menu. He just looked at me, nodded, and started cooking. I sat on a plastic stool while he worked. He had been seasoning the wok for years — you could see it in his wrist. When he handed me the plate, the noodles were so smoky and tender that I almost cried. Garlic, chilli, soy — sharp, savoury, alive. I ate slowly. He watched. We didn't say one word. I've eaten in expensive restaurants since. None of them were such a perfect meal that I would walk three thousand miles back for it. That one was.

16. Self-check

Self-assessment — no fixed answers.