

Topic: Food and Cooking

Let's get started...

Before you begin discussing today's topic, take a few moments to talk about what you ate for dinner last night. Everyone needs a small piece of paper to write on. Write down what you ate for dinner on the paper and put it in the center of the table. After everyone has placed his/her paper in the center, each person must choose a different paper from the center and read it to the group. Try to guess who ate whatever is written on each piece of paper.

New words and Idioms:

Extended family, healthy diet, light meals, heavy meals, typical, traditional, strange, cuisine, deep-fried, junk food, fast food, sweet, salty, eat out, dessert, vegetarian, snack, casual, dressy, dish, rules, left-overs, doggie bag, potluck, "cream of the crop", "cool as a cucumber", "use your noodle", "in a nutshell", "a piece of cake", etc

Background:

Food and meals are very important in many cultures. In the United States, friends and extended family often eat meals together on special occasions. Many large meals are done as potlucks so that the host or hostess does not have to provide and prepare all of the food.



In pairs for 5 minutes, ask and answer this question:

If you could only eat three meals (the same three meals everyday) for the rest of your life, what would they be?

Share your partner's answers with the group.

Discussion Questions:

Do you think you have a healthy diet? Why or why not?

How often do you need to eat? What happens if you do not eat often enough or eat too much?

Do you prefer light meals or heavy meals? Why?

Describe a typical meal from your country. (Tell how to prepare it.)

Describe a traditional meal from your country. When do people eat this meal?

Eastside Literacy Talk Time Winter 2006

In your opinion, which countries have the best cuisine? Which countries have the worst? Why?

Do you think about color when you are preparing a meal? If yes, what colors are important to include in a meal?

Who cooks most of the meals for your family? Do you usually eat meals at home, or do you often go out to eat?

Do you enjoy cooking? If so, what do you cook most often?

How long does it usually take you to prepare a meal?

What are some typical meals that people in your culture eat for breakfast, lunch, and dinner?

What food do you miss most from your native country? Can you buy that food here? If yes, where can you buy it?

Have you changed your cooking style since you've been here? What is different? What is the same?

Are groceries more expensive in the U.S. or in your native country?

Many people prepare a weekly or monthly budget to decide how much money to spend on food. Do you follow a budget? Is it easy or difficult to follow?

Do you like deep-fried foods, food from other countries, American food, fast food, junk food, sweet foods, salty foods? What are your favorite foods?

Is dessert a common part of meals in your country?

What is your favorite dessert? How often do you eat it? How do you prepare it?

Fast food restaurants are very popular in the United States. Are they popular in your native country? How often do you eat at fast food restaurants in the U.S.? How often did you eat fast food in your country? What is your favorite fast food restaurant?

Is it more expensive to eat out in the U.S. or in your native country?

Are there rules for using fingers, knives, forks, spoons, chopsticks and napkins at a restaurant? At home? What are the rules?

In your culture, do people have to sit at a special place at the table? If yes, where?

In your country, do people eat one dish (food) at a time or is all the food put on the table at the same time? If people do eat one dish at a time, what do people eat first, second, third, etc.?