

Language for ...

eating out

Age: Adult



Level: Upper intermediate

Time: 45–60 minutes

Language focus: restaurant language, diets and food preferences

Skills: reading, speaking

Materials: worksheet exercises, internet access preferable

Aims: to provide students with language for ordering food, especially for specific diets

What are red words?

Ninety per cent of the time, speakers of English use just 7,500 words in speech and writing. These words appear in the Macmillan Dictionary in red, and are graded with stars. One-star words are frequent, two-star words are more frequent and three-star words are the most frequent. 'Language for' lessons are based on red words and encourage students to improve their English through communicative tasks using collocation and commonly used phrases.

- 1 As preparation for the lesson, ask students to read the Macmillan Dictionary Buzzword article on *flexitarian* (<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/buzzword/entries/flexitarian.html>), and find words which describe different kinds of diet. What two words combine to create the word *flexitarian*?



Teaching Tip: Students could be invited to note their findings in a word cloud platform (e.g. <https://answergarden.ch/>), which could be displayed as the class begins – (different diets = e.g. *vegetarian*, *vegan*, *pescetarian*, *fruitarian*, *rawist*, *freegan*; *flexitarian* = *flexible* + *vegetarian*).

- 2 Following on from the preparation for the lesson, the warmer picks up on four common ways of classifying diet. Ask students to complete it in pairs (if necessary using the Macmillan Dictionary

to check any unfamiliar food words). Check the answers as a class.

[In passing, you could mention that someone who eats meat is technically a *carnivore*, but in everyday speech we'd usually describe them as a 'meat-eater', though *carnivore* is sometimes used in a humorous way for a person who enjoys a meat-rich diet. You could also note that *veggie* is an informal abbreviation of *vegetarian*, and not to be confused with *veg*, which is always short for *vegetables*.] If time permits, you could ask one or two students to choose the sandwich they would order and explain why. Is it because they like/dislike (any or all of) the ingredients? Are they vegetarian/vegan? Do they eat fish?

- 3 Exercise 2a simulates a typical waiter-customer conversation in a modern cafe. Give time for students to read it and note down their answers. Check as a class. [If necessary explain that *gluten-free* means 'not containing gluten.' Gluten is a substance found in wheat, and so the term usually relates to bread, cakes, pasta or anything made with flour. Some people are *allergic* to gluten, hence the need for *gluten-free* products.]
- 4 Tell students to complete exercise 2b, reminding them to look at the replies following the question gaps in the text. Check answers, and if time permits, re-read the text as a class inviting four students to play the roles.



Teaching Tip: As they read, tell students to listen/look out for use of the verb *have* and definite article *the* when choosing food from a menu. In restaurants, people often say *I'm having the ...* when talking to the people eating with them or *I'll have the ...*, *please* when talking to the waiter. When ordering drinks, however, they normally say *I'll have a/an ...*

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- 5** Ask students to complete exercise 2c and compare their answers with a partner. Explain that the nouns they need to find are not necessarily in the order in which they appear in the conversation text. Check the answers as a class.
- 6** Exercise 3a highlights some typical questions asked either by customers or staff in restaurants. Ask students to complete it as quickly as they can and check the answers as a class. Then move straight on to exercise 3b which lists typical responses, again telling them to think about whether these are said by a customer or waiter, and encouraging them to first complete any matches they immediately see so that they can be eliminated. Check the answers as a class.
- 7** Exercise 3c is a vocabulary exercise looking at words for some typical sauces and accompaniments which often pop up in restaurants. If students have a special diet or preferences, they might want to ask about them, e.g. *What's in the mayonnaise? Does the stuffing contain nuts?* Tell students to work in pairs to complete the exercise and think back to meals they've eaten – have they come across these words when eating out? Check the answers as a class.
- 8** Divide students into pairs for exercise 4. Tell them to spend a few minutes noting down ideas and then take it in turns to play the role of the customer. Remind them to look at the conversation text, and the questions and responses in earlier exercise material, to help them.
- 9** As a wind-up discussion, set up a brief class survey – how many vegetarians, vegans, meat-eaters, pescetarians or 'flexitarians' are there in the class? Ask students to divide into the respective groups and discuss why they have this particular diet. Each group then presents the motivation for their diet to the rest of the class – which diet has the most advantages?

Answer key:

- 1** The BBQ Garden: meat-eater
The Med Garden: vegan
The Seaside Garden: pescetarian
The Kitchen Garden: vegetarian

2a Jen is a vegetarian.

2b 1. e 2. f 3. b
4. a 5. c 6. d

2c 1. allergy
2. side (order/dish)
3. option
4. sauce
5. garnish
6. special

3a 1. C 2. C 3. W 4. W 5. C
6. C 7. W 8. W 9. C

3b a. 7 b. 8 c. 6 d. 5 e. 2
f. 9 g. 1 h. 3 i. 4

3c 1. a 2. a 3. b
4. b 5. a 6. b

4, 5 students' own answers

 **Teaching Tip:** As an extension activity, ask students to look again at the *incorrect* options in each case – do they know the words that match these definitions? (1b = white sauce, 2b = stock, 3a = ketchup, 4a = chutney, 5b = dip, 6a = salsa). Many more words from this domain can be found at the relevant thesaurus page in the Macmillan Dictionary:

<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus-category/british/savoury-sauces-and-vinegars>

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1 Warmer

Read the sandwich menu and match the sandwiches to the diets.

vegetarian meat-eater vegan pescetarian

All served on our signature home-made bread with a side of luscious green salad:

The BBQ Garden: bacon, avocado, feta cheese, sun-dried tomatoes

~

The Med Garden: roasted red pepper hummus, cucumber, fresh spinach leaves

~

The Seaside Garden: tuna, garlic mayo, cucumber, red onion

~

The Kitchen Garden: goat's cheese, sunblush tomatoes, basil leaves, balsamic dressing

2 Reading

a Jen, Karen and Mike are three friends doing some sightseeing in Edinburgh. They go to a cafe for lunch. Read the conversation below, ignoring the gaps for now. Which one of them is a vegetarian?



Karen: Hi there. (1) _____ ?

Waiter: Right, yes - if you'd just like to follow me? Is this one by the window OK for you?

Mike: That's great. Thanks.

Waiter: Menus are there on the table, and there's a specials board behind the counter. (2) _____ ?

Mike: I'll have a beer, thanks.

Waiter: (3) _____ ?

Mike: Err, small, please.

Jen: A regular coffee for me, thanks.

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- Karen: And I'll just have water, if that's ok. Could we have a jug of tap water for the table?
- Waiter: No problem.
- [the waiter goes away]
- Karen: Well, this seems nice, and the prices aren't too bad.
- Mike: Yeah, I love the sound of the 'black and blue' burger - '100% beef with blue cheese sauce and tomatoes' - I think I'll go for that ...
- Jen: I can't see anything here that doesn't have meat or fish in it.
- Karen: Really? They must have some kind of vegetarian option, surely. I like the sound of the sandwich on the specials board - 'wholewheat bagel with smoked salmon, cream cheese and herbs'. I love smoked salmon. I'm having that, I think.
- [the waiter returns]
- Waiter: Ready to order?
- Jen: My friends are, but I'm not sure. (4) _____?
- Waiter: We have a special of goat's cheese and red pepper tart today. I'd really recommend it; it's one of my favourites.
- Jen: Lovely! I'll have that, thanks. (5) _____?
- Waiter: Just a small salad garnish.
- Jen: Oh right, that's fine.
- Mike: The 'black and blue' burger for me, please.
- Waiter: Would you like a side order of chips?
- Mike: Oh go on then, great! We can share them.
- Karen: And I'll have the smoked-salmon bagel.
- Waiter: No problem.
- Jen: Can I just ask - (6) _____? We have a friend who has a wheat allergy, so just in case we come back.
- Waiter: No, sorry - we have a couple of vegan options, but nothing gluten-free I'm afraid. You could try the cafe in Charlotte Street - they do fantastic gluten-free brownies.
- Jen: Haha, thanks - we'll remember that!

b Complete the conversation with the missing questions a-f below.

- Do you have anything for vegetarians?
- Large or small?
- Does it come with a salad?
- Do you do any gluten-free dishes?
- Do you have a table for three?
- Can I get you some drinks?

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c Find nouns in the conversation to match the definitions below. The first letter is given for you.

- 1 a medical condition in which you become ill as a reaction to something you eat or touch
a _____
- 2 an amount of food served at the same time as a main dish but on a separate plate
s _____
- 3 something that you can choose in a particular situation
o _____
- 4 a liquid food that you put on other foods to give them a particular flavour
s _____
- 5 a small amount of different food used to make a dish look more attractive
g _____
- 6 a dish that is not usually served at a restaurant but is available on a particular day
s _____

3 Language in use

a Read the questions and decide if they are asked by a customer (C) or a waiter (W).

- 1 Is this dish suitable for vegans?
- 2 Can you do a half portion?
- 3 Would you like to see our dessert menu?
- 4 Can I get you any sauces?
- 5 Could we have the bill now, please?
- 6 Does this dish contain nuts?
- 7 Is everything all right with your meal?
- 8 Are you ready to order?
- 9 What does this come with?

b Match the answers a-i with the questions in exercise 3a.

- a Yes, everything's fine, thanks.
- b Not yet – could you give us a few more minutes?
- c I don't think so, but I'll check with the chef.
- d Certainly, I'll get that for you.
- e No, I'm afraid not, but we do have a children's menu.
- f Roast potatoes and seasonal vegetables.
- g Sorry, no, the sauce is made with cream.
- h No, I'm OK, thanks. Could I just have a coffee?
- i Yes, please – could we have some tomato ketchup?

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c The six nouns below are sometimes used in restaurants. Do you know what they are? Choose the correct definition, a or b.

1 dressing

- a. a sauce for salads made from oil, vinegar, salt, pepper and herbs
- b. a sauce made from milk, flour and butter

2 gravy

- a. a sauce made from the juices of cooked meat mixed with flour
- b. a liquid made by boiling meat, bones, or vegetables

3 mayonnaise

- a. a thick, red sauce made from tomatoes
- b. a thick white sauce made from egg yolks and oil

4 stuffing

- a. a cold food made from fruit, spices and vinegar, eaten with meat or cheese
- b. food that has been cut into small pieces and sometimes placed inside meat or vegetables

5 relish

- a. a cold sauce that you put on food such as burgers
- b. a thick cold sauce for dipping pieces of food into before eating them

6 coulis

- a. a sauce made from tomatoes, onions, chilli peppers, and spices
- b. a smooth sauce made from crushed fruit or vegetables

4 Communicate

You go to a restaurant in London with a friend who doesn't speak much English. Read the notes in brackets and speak to the waiter.



(You'd like a table for you and your friend.)

You: _____ ?

Waiter: Err, yes - this one over here?

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(You are happy with the table.)

You: _____ .

Waiter: Can I get you some drinks?

(You want an orange juice, your friend just wants water for the table.)

You: _____ .
_____ ?

Waiter: No problem.

(the waiter leaves and returns after a few minutes)

Waiter: Are you ready to order?

(Not yet, you need more time.)

You: _____ ?

(the waiter goes away and returns a few minutes later)

Waiter: So, what can I get you?

(You'd like to order roast chicken with stuffing, but you have a nut allergy. Ask about the stuffing.)

You: _____ .
_____ ?

Waiter: No, no nuts. Just bread crumbs, herbs and spices.

(You order the chicken. Your friend is a vegetarian. Ask what is available.)

You: _____ .
_____ ?

Waiter: There's a special today of Greek salad with feta cheese, or a mushroom omelette?

(You order the omelette for your friend.)

You: _____ .

(the waiter returns when you start eating)

Waiter: is everything all right with your meal?

(You are happy with the meals, but your friend would like some ketchup.)

You: _____ .
_____ ?

Waiter: Of course, I'll bring it over.

(the waiter returns when you have finished)

Waiter: Would you like to see the dessert menu?

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(You are both very full, but you would like coffees.)

You: _____ .
_____ ?

(It's 15 minutes later, you would like to pay.)

You: _____ ?

Waiter: No problem, I'll just get that for you.

5 Discussion

- How would you describe your diet? (e.g. vegetarian, meat-eater, vegan ...)
- Explain your reasons for having this diet.
- Is being a vegetarian 'healthier' than being a meat-eater?

Red Words

bill ***	contain ***	dessert *	dish *	meal ***
menu **	option ***	order ***	portion **	sauce **