

Language for ...

recipes

Age: Adult

Level: Upper-intermediate

Time: 45–60 minutes

Language focus: cooking vocabulary, especially verbs

Skills: reading, speaking, writing

Materials: worksheet exercises, internet access preferable

Aims: to provide students with language for using and sharing recipes



Likely keywords – nouns: *butter, chocolate, flour, cocoa, eggs, caster sugar, baking powder*; verbs: *add, bake, break, cool, chop, cut, fill, fold, heat, line, melt, mix, place, pour, sift, stir*

As a bit of fun, you could ask if two students with different recipes would be willing to make the brownies and bring them to the next lesson for comparison in a 'taste test'.

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 find an English recipe for chocolate brownies and write down the ingredients. Ask them to also read the recipe instructions and note down any verbs they see in the imperative form, checking the meanings of any words they don't know in the Macmillan Dictionary: www.macmillandictionary.com.



Teaching tip: Students could be invited to share their findings from above (ingredients and imperatives) in a word cloud (e.g. <https://answergarden.ch/>) which could be displayed and briefly discussed as the class begins – do all recipes have similar ingredients? Which things are the same in the recipes and which are different?

- 2 Start the lesson by asking students what the last thing they cooked at home was. Ask them to read the statement in exercise 1 and if necessary explain that English speakers often use the term *fast food* to describe food you buy in restaurants which serve you very quickly to eat in the restaurant or take away. Elicit opinions. Do they prefer home-made food or convenience food? Why?
- 3 Explain that the lesson will focus on some common vocabulary, especially verbs, found in recipes and descriptions of cooking. Ask the students to complete exercise 2a in pairs, reading each paragraph carefully to work out the logical order. Hopefully their lesson preparation will help them but tell them not to worry if they don't understand some of the words. They should be able to work out the correct order without knowing every bit of vocabulary. Check the answers as a class.
- 4 Complete exercise 2b as a class activity. Students may not be familiar with scones (= small round cakes eaten with butter), but if they know *sauce, salad* and *omelette*, they should be able to work out the answer by a process of elimination.
- 5 Exercise 2c focuses on some key cooking vocabulary from the recipe. Ask students to complete it individually, looking back at

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the recipe text for contextual clues. You may need to explain that a *sieve* is something you pour a substance through to remove solid or large pieces. Check the answers.

- 6 Exercise 3a continues the theme of looking at the many verbs associated with cooking and commonly found in recipes. Tell students to work in pairs to complete the exercise, and allow them to use a dictionary if necessary. Remind them that they are looking for the odd one out and that they should think carefully about the meaning of the verbs. Check the answers as a class, encouraging the students to explain their choice, e.g. *in question 6, chill is the only one not associated with using heat; in question 2, peel is removing the skin from fruit and vegetables whereas the others all describe the action of mixing ingredients very quickly.*

 **Teaching tip:** A range of vocabulary related to cooking can be found in the Macmillan Dictionary Thesaurus feature at: www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus-category/british/prepare-food-for-cooking-or-eating.

One idea for a light-hearted extension activity is a drawing-style word game. Write cooking verbs on slips of paper and supply to pairs of students. Student A reads the word and draws the action. Student B has to guess the verb.

- 7 Exercise 3b sets some of the verbs in context by simulating a conversation about cooking. Ask students to complete it individually and then check the answers as a class. Point out some other useful vocabulary featured, i.e. collocations *slice thinly*, *grated cheese* and *mixed herbs* and verbs *dice* (to cut food into small square pieces), *simmer* (to cook

something slowly at near boiling temperature) and *drain* (to let water/liquid flow away).

- 8 Explain that we often use the past participle of cooking verbs (e.g. *fried*, *boiled*) as adjectives when describing food but that they can only occur with particular types of food. Complete Exercise 3c as a class activity, telling students to think about the cooking methods the adjectives describe and what's logical in relation to the foods. Can students form any more adjectives from other cooking verbs mentioned in the worksheet? Which foods do these adjectives commonly occur with? (E.g. *whipped* [*cream*], *baked* [*potato*], *chilled* [*drinks*], *diced* [*onion*].)
- 9 Tell students to spend a few minutes noting down ideas for exercise 4. Remind them to look at the recipe, the conversation text and vocabulary in earlier exercise material to help them. If they elect to do task b, tell them to find a partner and take it in turns to do the explaining. Suggest that the listener imagines they want to try cooking the dish and makes notes. Task c may be appropriate for more adventurous/creative students and requires a little more planning, possibly outside of the lesson. You might like to suggest that students later upload completed recipes or videos to a class blog/webpage so that they can be shared with the whole class after the lesson.
- 10 As a wind-up discussion, ask students what they think the new word *cookprint* means (= the environmental impact of cooking meals). Do students ever consider their *cookprint* when cooking meals? (Possible areas of discussion might include the environmental impact associated with packaging; sourcing of foods, i.e. local or international; energy required to store, prepare and cook food; and disposal of waste.)

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 **Teaching tip:** Further reading on 'cookprint' can be found at: <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/buzzword/entries/cookprint.html>

KEY

1 students' own answers

2a order is: 6, 5, 2, 1, 3, 4

2b c (cheese scones)

2c 1 g

2 b

3 f

4 j

5 i

6 c

7 d

8 h

9 a

10 e

3a 1 spread

2 peel

3 mash

4 simmer

5 fry

6 chill

3b 1 fry

2 peel

3 slice

4 chop

5 stir

6 boil

7 pour

8 sprinkle

9 bake

3c 1 cheese

2 flour

3 lettuce

4 cake

5 jam

6 cream

7 steak

8 milk

4, 5 students' own answers

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1 Warmer

Read the following statement. Do you agree? Why/Why not?

'Home-made food is much better than fast food.'



2 Reading

a Put the parts of the recipe in the correct order, 1-6.



Bake in the oven for 10-15 minutes or until golden brown and cooked through. _____

Sprinkle flour onto a work surface and **roll out** the dough to about 2cm thick. Use a medium cutter to cut the **dough** into rounds and place them on the baking tray. Brush the tops of the rounds with milk and sprinkle with a little cheese before putting in the oven. _____

In a large bowl, **sift** together the flour, salt, pepper and baking powder. Sift again to remove any lumps and make sure the **ingredients** are thoroughly combined. _____

Heat the oven to 220C/Gas Mark 7 and lightly **grease** a baking tray. _____ 1 _____

Grate the cheese and cut the butter into cubes. Add the butter to the bowl containing the dry ingredients. **Rub in** the butter with your fingertips until the mixture looks like fine breadcrumbs. Sprinkle the grated cheese into the **mixture** and mix well. _____

Make a hole in the centre of the breadcrumb and cheese mixture. Pour in the milk and **stir** to give a soft dough. _____

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b Read the recipe again. What does it make? Choose the correct answer.

- a cheese salad
- b cheese sauce
- c cheese scones
- d cheese omelette

c Match the definitions (1-10) with the words in bold in the recipe (a-j).

- 1 to cover food with small amounts of another food
 - 2 to move food around in a bowl using a spoon
 - 3 a substance made of other foods that have been combined
 - 4 to break cheese or other food into small thin pieces by rubbing it against a kitchen tool with holes
 - 5 a mix of flour, water, fat, etc that is baked to make foods such as bread or pastry
 - 6 to mix butter or fat into flour using your fingers
 - 7 to make a substance flat by pushing something heavy across it
 - 8 to rub a small amount of oil or fat on the inside of a container before using it to cook food in the oven
 - 9 the foods or liquids that you use when making something to eat
 - 10 to pour a dry substance through a sieve to remove the large pieces
- a ingredients
 - b stir
 - c rub in
 - d roll out
 - e sift
 - f mixture
 - g sprinkle
 - h grease
 - i dough
 - j grate

3 Language in use

a These verbs are often seen in recipes. Circle the verb which doesn't belong in each group. Use the Macmillan Dictionary to help you.

- 1 break / snap / spread / cut
- 2 peel / beat / whisk / whip
- 3 drizzle / pour / mash / sprinkle
- 4 simmer / combine / stir / mix
- 5 dice / chop / fry / slice
- 6 bake / heat / boil / chill

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- b** Jack is explaining how to cook a dish. Read the conversation and complete it with the verbs in the box. There is one word you don't need.



bake boil chop fry mix peel pour slice sprinkle stir

Karl: This is so good, Jack. Can I have the recipe?

Jack: I don't really have one. It's just something I made up, but I can explain it to you if you like! It's so easy.

Karl: OK, great.

Jack: OK then. Well, first you dice a couple of onions and (1) _____ them in olive oil until they're soft. I sometimes add a bit of garlic too. Meanwhile, (2) _____ a couple of carrots and (3) _____ them thinly. Wash about 250 grams of mushrooms, no need to peel these, and (4) _____ them into quarters. You can also add chopped courgette, or pepper. Whatever you like, really.

Karl: Ah, OK. I love aubergines.

Jack: Oh yes, they would work well. So, add the prepared vegetables to the onions, cook for a few minutes, and then add a can of tomatoes and some mixed herbs. Then cover the pan, turn down the heat and leave the mixture to simmer for about half an hour. You might need to (5) _____ it now and then so it doesn't stick to the pan and burn.

Karl: And what about the pasta?

Jack: OK, add the pasta to a pan of hot water and (6) _____ for about ten minutes. Drain and put the pasta into a baking dish, then (7) _____ the vegetable sauce over the top. (8) _____ the whole thing with grated cheese and then (9) _____ in the oven at 180c for about half an hour. And that's it, simple.

Karl: OK, that doesn't sound too difficult. Great - I'll give it a try!

- c** The adjectives on the left describe different ways of cooking. Circle the food that does not regularly combine with them.

- | | | |
|------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. steamed | + | [vegetables / fish / cheese] |
| 2. boiled | + | [rice / flour / potatoes] |
| 3. mashed | + | [lettuce / potatoes / carrots] |
| 4. roasted | + | [meat / vegetables / cake] |
| 5. grilled | + | [tomatoes / fish / jam] |
| 6. melted | + | [chocolate / cream / cheese] |
| 7. grated | + | [cheese / steak / carrot] |
| 8. fried | + | [milk / onions / egg] |

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4 Communicate

Choose some food that you enjoy making and complete one of the following tasks. Use the example language in the box below to help you.

- a Your friend has asked you to email them a recipe. Write the recipe out in full, including a list of the ingredients and all the steps needed to make the dish.
- b Find a partner and explain to them how to make your favourite dish. Give clear and simple instructions that your partner will be able to follow.
- c Find a partner and imagine that you are taking part in a TV cooking show. Present and record a short video explaining how to make a particular dish.

<i>Chop and fry an onion.</i>	<i>Bake for 40 minutes.</i>
<i>Melt the chocolate in a bowl.</i>	<i>Turn the oven to 180c.</i>
<i>Stir in the dry ingredients.</i>	<i>Sprinkle the top with grated cheese.</i>
<i>Whip the cream and add the eggs.</i>	<i>Roll out the pastry on a floured surface.</i>

5 Discuss your 'cookprint'

- What aspects of cooking might have an impact on the environment?
- Do you ever think about the environmental impact of what you cook?

Red Words

add***	bake*	boil*	chop**	fry*	melt**
mix***	mixture***	peel*	pour***	slice**	sti***