

EPISODE 72

LEVEL B2



READING COMPREHENSION

CHOCOLATE



Chocolate. There are few foods that people feel as passionate about - a passion that **surpasses** (= goes beyond, as in degree or quality; exceeds) the love for the "sweetness" of most candies or desserts: after all, few people **crave** (= have an intense desire for) caramel, whipped cream, or bubble gum. Chocolate is, well, different. For the true chocoholic, just thinking about chocolate can **evoke** (=call to mind by naming, citing, or suggesting) a pleasurable response. You may want to **grab** (= a bar or make a nice cup of hot cocoa before you begin this lesson.

Let us take a closer look at the sweet **lure** (=the quality or power that something or someone has that makes them attractive) of chocolate. Let's look into fascinating - and often misreported - history of chocolate. Let's learn a bit of the science of chocolate. Chocolate is a psychoactive food. It is made from the seeds of the tropical cacao tree. The cacao tree was named by the 17th century Swedish naturalist, Linnaeus. The Greek term theobroma means literally "food of the gods". (Chocolate has also been called the food of the devil; but the theological basis of this claim is obscure.) Cacao beans were used by the Aztecs to prepare a hot, frothy beverage with stimulant and restorative properties. Chocolate itself was reserved for warriors, nobility and priests. The Aztecs esteemed its reputed ability to confer wisdom and **vitality** (=physical or intellectual vigor; energy). Taken fermented as a drink, chocolate was also used in religious ceremonies. The sacred concoction was associated with Xochiquetzal, the goddess of fertility. The celebrated Italian libertine Giacomo Casanova (1725-1798) took chocolate before sleeping with his lovers – because of chocolate's reputation as a **subtle** (=not loud, bright, noticeable or obvious in any way) aphrodisiac. More recently, a study of 8000 male Harvard graduates showed that chocoholics lived longer than abstainers. Their **longevity** (=living for a long time) may be explained by the high polyphenol levels in chocolate. They are said to protect against heart disease.

More contexts for the new words:

- (Informal): the plot of that book surely **grabs** the reader and doesn't let go to the very last page.
(=capture the attention of the reader)



- There is a **subtle** difference between these two plans.
(= small but important)



EXERCISE 1

Complete each gap with a suitable word.

1. Some scientists attribute the _____ of some 100-year olds to the fact that they eat chocolate.
2. The room was painted _____ a shade of pink, which made it look like a giant cake.
3. When feeling down, many people _____ chocolate.
4. That smell _____ memories of my grandma's kitchen.

EXERCISE 2

Complete the gaps using appropriate form of the words in BLOCK LETTERS.

1. His knowledge of the subject is _____ - nobody knows more than he does. **SURPASS**
2. When under stress, many people experience a strong _____ for chocolate. **CRAVE**
3. In hospital, babies have various devices attached to them which monitor their _____ signs. **VITALITY**

ENGLISH IN USE



Passive Voice

Let us revise briefly the structure and usage of **Passive Voice**.

Have a look at these examples from the text:

*Chocolate **is made** from the seeds of the tropical cacao tree.*

*Cacao beans **were used** by the Aztecs to prepare a hot, frothy beverage.*

Passive Voice is used when the focus is on the action. It is not important or not known, however, who or what is performing the action.

The structure is as follows:

Subject + a form of *to be* + Past Participle

Let's practice a bit:

EXERCISE 3:

Complete the sentences using the correct form of the verb in brackets:

1. Chocolate _____ (bring) to Europe by Christopher Columbus.
2. Chocolate _____ (eat) all around the world.
3. Its popularity may _____ (explain) by its distinctive taste.
4. Eating chocolate _____ (believe) to reduce stress.

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



There are many idioms using food metaphors, such as:

- **bring home the bacon** - earn the income
- **(have one's) cake and eat it too** - want more than your fair share or need
- **one smart cookie** - a very intelligent person

EXERCISE 4

Complete the sentences with a suitable food idiom.

1. Rick wants to _____. He wants to be single but he doesn't want me to date anyone else.
2. Your daughter is _____. She reads much higher than her grade level.
3. My husband has had to _____ ever since I broke my leg.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



Too much chocolate might be bad for you... sometimes you need **to cut down** on the amount you eat, otherwise you will **put on** too much weight and all your clothes will need **letting out**. And then... then the only thing you can do is **work out** a lot in the gym!

EXERCISE 5

Match the phrasal verbs with their meanings.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| a. cut down | 1. to add |
| b. let out | 2. to do less of something or use in smaller amounts |
| c. put on | 3. to exercise |

d. work out

4. to make larger

NEWS



CHOCOLATE MAGIC?

People who eat chocolate regularly tend to be thinner, new research suggests.

The findings come from a study of nearly 1,000 US people that looked at diet, caloric **intake** and body mass index (BMI) - a measure of **obesity**.

It found those who ate chocolate a few times a week were, **on average**, slimmer than those who ate it occasionally.

Even though chocolate is loaded with calories, it contains ingredients that may favour weight loss rather than fat synthesis, scientists believe.

GLOSSARY:

Intake – consumption

Obesity – the condition of being extremely fat

On average – typically

KEY TO EXERCISES

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Ex 1. | Ex 5. |
| 1. Longevity | A2, |
| 2. Subtle | B4, |
| 3. Crave | C1, |
| 4. Evokes | D3 |
| Ex 2. | |
| 1. Unsurpassed | |
| 2. Craving | |
| 3. Vital | |
| Ex 3. | |
| 1. Was brought | |
| 2. Is eaten | |
| 3. Be explained | |
| 4. Is believed | |
| Ex 4. | |
| 1. Have the cake and eat it too | |
| 2. One smart cookie | |
| 3. Bring home the bacon | |