

My tiny house



Hi, my name is Christie. I'm thirteen and I live in a tiny house in Canada with my mum and dad. My dad made our house himself. He used an old trailer, bought all the materials and learned how to build a tiny house by watching YouTube videos. We live in only 30 square meters, but the house is very comfortable because it is made of wood.

There are many people in the USA and Canada who choose to live in tiny houses. They are ecological, and you can even travel with them! We just hook it to our car and drive away when we want to live somewhere else. How cool is that? It is probably not a great house if you don't have a large car and nice roads, but this is not a problem in my country.



There are only two rooms in our house: I have my own bedroom, and the rest of the house is kitchen, dining room, library, living room and my parents' bedroom all at the same time. We also have a tiny bathroom, with a toilet and shower. Most of our energy comes from solar panels on the roof, so we don't usually need electricity. The only problem can be finding water when we travel around with our home.

I don't have many gadgets or appliances in my house, only a mobile phone and a tablet, but I don't need more. I prefer spending time outside, especially when we meet other people who travel with their houses. I love my tiny home and the life we lead in it.

True or false?

- 1 Christie lives in an old house.
- 2 Her house is comfortable because of the material her dad used to build it.
- 3 Many people in the USA and Canada have to live in tiny houses.
- 4 The best part about tiny houses are nice roads.
- 5 Christie's home has two bedrooms.
- 6 Their roof is where they get electricity from.
- 7 Christie is happy with her phone and tablet.
- 8 She has to spend time outside because there isn't enough room inside.

Your turn:

What do you think about life in a tiny house? Would you try it? Why (not)? What kind of home do you dream about?

Answers: F, T, F, F, F, T, T, F

We are what we eat

What does our favourite food have to do with our personalities? Here are some ideas from an American study published in 2012.



Did you know pizza is one of the most addictive foods? (This is because it has lots of fats and carbohydrates.) It is also a party food: cheap, easy to get and can feed a crowd of people. Therefore, pizza is the favourite food of extroverts, or people who love to be surrounded by others.



Chocolate has relaxing effects, and that is why many people love it. In general, those with a “sweet tooth” – who like cakes, candy bars, and biscuits – are often friendly, pleasant and outgoing.



Those who like many different vegetables and salads usually take life more seriously. They like to learn and take care of things. (They also take care of their health.) They may not be very emotional, however.



If you like hot and spicy food, you might be one of those people who always look for adventure and new experiences. This is the favourite food of risk-takers, but also people who love to have control in their lives.



If you love ice-cream, the study suggests, you might also love mysteries. Why? Because there are so many flavours and additions to choose from. You can always pick something different than you did last time.



People who like salty snacks, like chips and crisps, worry about the future more than others. Some of them become more ambitious, in order to fix it. Others just decide to enjoy (or suffer) whatever comes their way.

Questions and tasks:

- 1 Is the study right about your favourite food and personality? What do your friends and colleagues think?
- 2 According to the text, which people would you like to hang out with more? What would you eat? Come up with a menu.
- 3 Write a short essay on how you are like your favourite food.
- 4 Have a debate: Which food would you pick to eat for the rest of your life?
- 5 Do some research and find out: Who likes hamburgers, grilled food, soups, exotic food, sweet and sour taste, or seafood?

Food and health issues

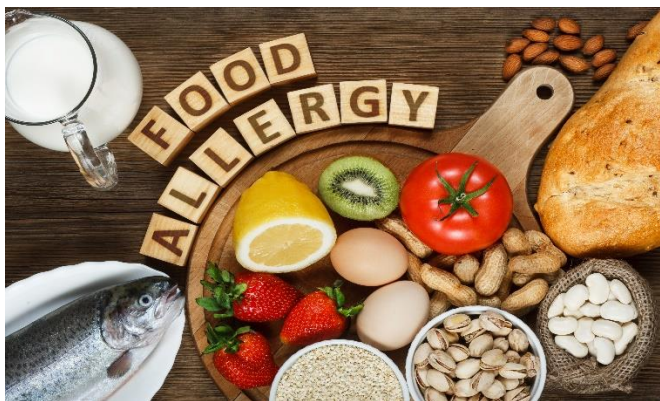
Along with air, sun, and water, food is one of the most important things for people. It is not a surprise, then, that there are many different problems people can have because of food.



We all get hungry now and then. However, even in the 21st century, there are people who do not have enough food to survive. In the past, long periods of hunger were usually caused by wars, illnesses, or weather. Today, about 10% of all people on the planet do not have enough food. This is why we have many organizations devoted to hunger relief. At the global level, the UN works towards the 2030 goal for "Zero hunger".



Food poisoning is an illness you get when you eat food that has bacteria, viruses or parasites. Symptoms often include feeling ill, vomiting or diarrhoea. Food poisoning is usually not serious, but some people need to go to the hospital.



Food allergy and intolerance are similar, but not the same. If you have a food allergy, your immune system will react, and the symptoms can be serious: choking, rash, swelling, and even fainting. Food intolerance often causes only digestive problems. You will not feel well in the stomach or intestines, but there are rarely other, more serious problems.



A person with an eating disorder thinks about food, eating, body shape and weight most of the time.

Anorexia is one of the most common eating disorders. People with anorexia fear to gain weight and therefore do not eat enough.

Bulimia is another problem, in which a person overeats, but then vomits, takes laxatives or exercises too much, so as not to get fat. Binge eaters eat more and faster than usual, even when they are not hungry. They cannot stop until they are full.

Questions and tasks:

- 1 Did you ever hear about any of these problems? Which ones?
- 2 Which of the issues from the text come from the environment, and which from our own bodies?
- 3 Are there any small steps you can do to help people with these problems?
- 4 Have a class discussion:
Thinking about question number 3, which food-related problems were easier, and which were more difficult?
- 5 Do a research on one or all these issues:
Where do people suffer from hunger the most?
What steps can you take not to get food poisoning?
Which foods are people most allergic to?
What are the main causes for eating disorders?