



10 Questions about Food 🍲 with Martin [985] EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

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Introduction

Hello listeners, welcome back to Luke's English Podcast. This episode is a conversation with my friend Martin, all about food.

Martin has been on this podcast before, in episode 896, in which we rambled about his experiences of teaching English and living in different countries, and how difficult it is to order ice cream in the Czech Republic, because the word for ice cream in Czech is really hard for an English person to pronounce. It's zmrzlina, zmrzlina, which sounds like you're saying an English word backwards. Zmrzlina, right, sounds like a backwards word.

Anyway, we talked about that in episode 896. So Martin is an English teacher like me, and an English man like me, so obviously we have everything in common with each other. So the concept for this episode is this.

Martin came up with the idea of this episode. Basically, he prepares 10 questions on a specific topic, and then he asks me the questions and I can answer them, and all the Lepsters, that's you, will be happy to listen to me doing some rambling on a certain topic. And this is actually very helpful.

Thank you, Martin, for coming up with the idea. Very helpful because I don't really need to do any preparation, and by choosing a specific topic, it's a good way to bring up vocabulary. It can work as a form of vocabulary teaching, as various words and phrases on this particular theme will come up naturally during the conversation.

So it can work as a bit like a chapter from an English vocabulary book. You know those English vocab books like, for example, English Vocabulary in Use, right? What they often have is on one side, there's a text which has loads and loads of words. It's a text on a certain subject, and in that text are presented various vocab items.

And then on the other page, you've got exercises to help you practise using the vocab that's presented on the other page. So this episode is a bit like that first page in which we can present you with useful vocabulary on this subject in context. The theme for this one is food.

So watch out for loads of food-related vocabulary and expressions. Now, if you're a premium subscriber, you will see that a few days ago, I published a premium episode which will help you with the food vocab in this conversation. So the premium episode is a vocab quiz focussing on, you know, bits of food-related vocabulary, various types of food vocab, the ways that we describe food, ways of cooking food, idioms relating to food and other fixed expressions, a few phrasal verbs and things like that.

So in the premium episode, I picked out all of that food-related vocab and created a vocab quiz and recorded that as a way of helping you notice and learn vocab. And I did it with my wife. So my wife is my special guest in this premium episode.

And basically I tested her with my vocab quiz. And also we discuss some of the things that come up in this conversation, including what she thinks as a French person, what she thinks of English food, and what she thinks of my English cooking, the way that I cook food and stuff like that. So there's a vocab quiz and also a discussion.

Okay, here is in fact, here's a selection of four bits of vocab from the vocab quiz in this premium episode I'm talking about. So let me just test you right now. I'll give you a little sample of what you can expect.

So how do we describe, what is the phrase that we use to describe, let's say, when you have guests at your house, you're hosting people for a dinner party, what is the recipe that you always choose? It's just the one that you automatically will choose. This is your choice. The one that you just will automatically.

Well, it's your go to your go to choice, it's the one that you automatically go to the one that you automatically choose in a situation like that, like your favourite recipe. It's your go to choice. What do we call food that you eat that makes you feel okay? Let's say you're feeling a bit down or you're feeling a bit stressed or something like that.

Maybe you've had a long journey and you're feeling very tired, you just need food that's going to make you feel okay. It's kind of that, it's like food that gives you a lovely kind of cuddle or hug. What kind of food is that? That is food.

It's comfort food. That's right. Comfort food.

What about this? What do you call someone who prepares food in a kitchen? What do you call that person? That seems like an easy question, but watch out, there's a very common mistake that people make with this one. A person who prepares food, a person who cooks food is called a cook. A chef, if you're a professional, if you're a professional working in a kitchen in a restaurant, you might be a chef.

But just a person who's cooking food is called a cook and not a cooker. A cooker is the actual machine that you use to cook the food. Oven, hob, this thing is the cooker.

So the cooker is the machine and the cook is the person who uses it. And then the fourth bit of vocab from my quiz is how do you describe someone who is difficult to give them food because there's a lot of things they don't like, a lot of things they don't eat. No, I don't like mushrooms.

I can't have tomatoes. I don't like cheese. Oh, she's a very something person or a very something eater.

She's a very fussy eater or a picky eater. Fussy or picky. OK, so that's just a little selection of some of the vocab in my quiz that you can get if you listen to my premium episode on the [Teachalook.co.uk/premium](https://www.teachalook.co.uk/premium) if you want to sign up to LEP premium and get my vocab reviews and the other stuff, including this wonderful conversation with my wife.

Yes, we're going to start this episode in just a moment. I want to give you a reminder. Did you listen to the episode with Anna Brooke with all the paranormal experiences? I just wanted to give you a reminder that we are running a competition.

Send in your creepy stories. Have you ever had a strange experience, something unexplained, something maybe supernatural? It doesn't have to involve ghosts. It could just be a strange experience that you had that was a bit creepy.

Send us your descriptions. Describe what happened. OK, send us your descriptions of creepy experiences that you've had.

You can email them to me, luketeacherathotmail.com or leave them in the comments section of the episode with Anna, either on YouTube, Spotify or my website. The ones that I like, the ones that Anna and I like, I will read them out on the podcast. And the best one, according to Anna and me, we will be the judges.

The best one will win a copy of Anna's new book, *Death by Chocolate*. And what we're looking for is a description that basically fulfils the requirements of the task. Something that clearly described, clearly describes what happened is clear, well-organised and communicates something mysterious or creepy and gives a slightly mysterious or creepy vibe.

A few errors are OK as long as the text still does the job. Obvious or blatant use of AI will count against you. You have until the 30th of April at midnight your time.

That's the deadline. luketeacher@hotmail.com or the comments section of that episode with Anna. OK, send us your stories.

I really hope we get some stories because I know it's quite a specific requirement. I wonder how many of you have had weird or creepy experiences. We will see, I suppose.

But if you're in any doubt, if you're thinking, well, I've got that, there's that weird thing that happened to me, but I'm not sure I'll write it. If you've got any doubt at all, just send it, just write it and send it to me. OK, I'd love to get your stories right then.

So having said all of that, let's now get started with 10 questions about food with Martin. I'll speak to you again at the end. But now, without any further ado, let's get started.

And here we go.

Conversation

So I thought it would be nice for you to have, you know, less of the pressure on you. I would just ask you some questions on a sort of topic.

So maybe there would be sort of thematically linked, like a vocabulary book. You could take some vocabulary from there. And all you need to do is sit back and answer questions.

And OK, well, I won't blather on too much. I might jump in. But I think it would be nice for me to maybe throw the questions back to you as well at some point.

I haven't thought about the answers. It might seem so one-sided if it's just you asking me the questions. No, people want to, yeah.

I mean, when you look at some famous interviewers, they don't really talk about themselves too much, do they? They don't say, yeah. And then other people do do that. I find that quite annoying sometimes.

Like, let the man speak! Interviewers who chip in too much with their own comments. So you want to be one of those interviewers today who... I want to be Michael Parkinson, who doesn't ever talk about himself, does he? No, he doesn't. No, he didn't.

People want to listen to Luke Thompson's Luke's English. I mean, they get plenty of me as it is, you know. Today is a Tuesday, and yesterday's episode that published was a three and a half hour epic solo ramble.

So they get plenty of me. It's not like they're ever thinking, let's hear more of Luke for a change. I think they get plenty from me.

But no, I appreciate the gesture, Martin, that you decided that you would help out, and that you would, you know, save me from doing a lot of preparation and stuff. Yeah, ten questions. Ten questions, nice and short, on a theme.

Do another one, and then another ten questions another time. This is good. This is great.

Okay, so what's the theme that you've chosen for this first one? The opening theme for our first one, hopefully of many, is food. I thought everyone has some relationship with food, don't they? Yum, yum, yum. I love food, thankfully, because it's quite important, isn't it, in life? Yeah, yeah.

So my first question, very domestic question, is who prepares the food? What's the kind of ratio of food preparation in your house? So at home, I tend to do the sort of... I do breakfast pretty much every day, which is not that much. But I mean, standing in our kitchen at any mealtime, when you are the designated sort of food maker, is not the most relaxing experience, because you've got three people. And we've got like a sort of a kind of a bar thing in the middle of the kitchen.

It's like an open kitchen living room with one of those big... it's quite a high table. And so there's normally like my wife and daughter sitting on the other side, and then my son, who's two, in his high chair on the right. And they all are basically just... they've just got all these different demands.

And I'm essentially like a barman, you know, working in my own house, you know. So it'd be like, can I have a glass of water, please? Or it's, can I have a glass of water? And then I have to say, you've forgotten the magic word. Please.

And they're like, okay, then I'll do the glass of water. Yeah, that's my wife. And I've got my plate of food, but it's literally like one fork, bite, have my one fork, and then I've got to serve someone, you know.

Then I go back to, you know, my plate again. But anyway, so breakfast, I'll do that every day, more or less. And it's just, you know, a case of like making muffins or crumpets or whatever for everyone and putting butter and honey and then a cup of coffee here.

And then don't throw that on the floor and stuff like that. So I tend to do breakfast every time. That's my wife, who's always throwing food on the floor and spilling water.

And then in terms of dinners, it's me during the week and my wife at the weekend. Yeah, so I do a lot, but then occasionally, you know, something happens and my wife will end up doing a dinner during the week. You know, we sort of like, we'll play it by ear.

But most of the time it's me during the week and her at the weekend. Okay. And do you think what you make is particularly French or English, or is it sort of internationally recognisable to most people? So I think, you know, when my wife cooks, she will do a French thing.

She'll do a Beef Bourguignon, you know, or a Haché Parmentier or some sort of classic French dish. Yes. You know what those things are, right? I suppose.

I know a Beef Bourguignon. We would call it a Beef Stew. I never realised, of course, until I went there last year that Bourguignon is of course, it just means from Burgundy.

So I'd never put those two things together in my head before. And down there, because we went to Burgundy, it's like ordering, I don't know, toast or something. It's on every menu every day.

The most standard thing. Yeah. And they use red wine, I think, while they're cooking it.

So we call it a Beef Stew. Yeah. It's just like beef, onions, vegetables, a bit of red wine, carrots normally, a bit of red wine, and you just let it stew in the pot for a long time.

Yeah. But my wife will do one of them and she does Haché Parmentier. What was the second one you said? Haché Parmentier, which is basically what we call Shepherd's Pie, I think.

Shepherd's Pie or Cottage Pie. I can never remember the difference between the two. One of them is lamb, one of them's beef, you know.

You've got to think shepherd, lamb, right? So that's how I remember it. Shepherds have sheep. So Shepherd's Pie is lamb.

And Cottage Pie, because cottages are well known for having cows in them. So Cottage Pie is beef then. Yeah.

It's not the lamb one. That's how I remember it. Right.

So that's more or less the same thing in France. So that is essentially minced beef and onion and what have you, cooked as the base. And then on the top, you've got mashed potato.

You're telling me you can't hear that drilling in the corridor? I can't hear you faint scratching, maybe, but I didn't notice it until you said something. Okay. All right.

I shouldn't worry about it then. So yes, minced beef and then mashed potato on the top. And I think some grated cheese on the top of that.

And then it's baked in the oven. Yeah. So obviously in England, we call that a Cottage Pie, but in France, they call it Haché Parmentier, which sounds so much more sophisticated.

It's the same thing. That all sounds delicious. My link to the next question is things that are not delicious.

As a boy, what food did you really dislike? Was there something you hated as a child? As a child? Yeah, there were a few things. Mostly it was all right, because my mum was, slash is, a pretty good cook. So the food that she would prepare was pretty nice.

But then occasionally, there would just be, you know, you go, what's for dinner? You know? And then normally it was like, oh, you know, we're going to have Shepherd's Pie or Cottage Pie or something. Great. Toad in the Hole, which is an English thing, listeners, which is basically sausages and kind of... What? I had to explain Yorkshire Pudding.

Weird pastry stuff. Pancake mix. Batter.

Batter and sausages. Typically unhealthy English stuff. Maybe one of the questions you've got is something about English food, because on the

subject of food, the elephant in the room here, Martin, here's two English people talking about English food to an international audience.

The elephant in the room is that everyone's going, yeah, but English, it's terrible though, isn't it? You actually, you know, explain, explain your food culture. That's what they're all thinking. A toad? Toad in the hole? We have a habit of not making things sound very nice, do they? I mean, I think... Or indeed taste very nice.

But we don't help ourselves by calling things toad in the hole. I mean, if that was in another language, that would be... And it would sound amazing and delicious. But toad in the hole.

A toad, listeners, is like a frog, isn't it? But it's like a really big fat, like cousin of a frog. Probably poisonous and not something you would... You'd do witchcraft more than the kitchen, generally. Right.

If you wanted to put a curse on someone you hated, then maybe. But no, you wouldn't just cook that for your children. So, I don't know why it's called toad in the hole, but it's basically sausages submerged in batter, which is then baked in the oven.

It's delicious. But anyway, so what was the question again? What did I not like as a kid? The vocabulary we could introduce is, were you a fussy eater? Because that idea of being fussy is that you don't like lots... There were lots of things, often very basic things, that you don't like. So, I think if you said, I didn't like eating offal, which is like the innards of animals, you know, the heart and the lungs.

And I think that wouldn't be fussy. I think lots of people are not keen on offal. Because it tastes awful.

Is there a connection? I don't know. Awful. Actually, it's awful is the pronunciation, but comedic licence.

Awful is awful. Yeah. But no, I know lots of children are fussy and it means they don't like onions.

I don't like mushrooms. I don't like tomatoes. I don't like apples.

That would be a fussy eater, isn't that? Yeah. I wasn't particularly fussy or indeed picky, which is another synonym of that. I wasn't a particularly fussy eater.

I wasn't very picky. But I didn't like mushrooms until I was sort of a teenager, until I was like 18, 19. And then suddenly, mushrooms, wonderful.

So, you sort of develop a taste for things. But it was when I asked my mum, what's for dinner? And she would sometimes say, it's nut roast. Nut roast was just my worst nightmare.

And it was just awful. I hated it with a passion, just like the whole eating it, eating nut roast. It was like, you know, like some sort of awful torture that I had to be subjected to occasionally, just randomly, just random torture.

Your evening would just turn into a horrible nightmare because your mum has made a nut roast. These days, nut roast, delicious. I love a nut roast.

But back then, it was just the worst thing to have to eat. I mean, a nut roast is kind of like a sort of a loaf, which is made with, I don't know what, nuts, a lot of nuts and fruit. Not fruit, nuts and vegetables, all sort of mashed up together and then made into a sort of a loaf.

It's a sort of vegetarian substitute for a big piece of meat. But it's very good, tasty and healthy. But I hated nut roast.

I wonder if other countries eat that. Leave your comments below. Nut roast, listeners, what sounds worse to you? Toad in the hole or nut roast? Do you have either of those things? And also, leave your comments in the comments section.

If you have food in your culture, which, and now think about this, which is actually a lot more disgusting than a lot of English food. Because the French, for example, I live here and I love France, of course, but I do like to pick fun at French food culture because they're so serious about it. All French people believe that French food is the best in the world and is untouchable.

You can't criticise it. You can't argue with it. It's just brilliant and amazing.

And English food is weird. It's just jelly and stuff that we don't like. And I have to point out, well, you know, French, you eat weird stuff too.

They eat brains of a of a young cow and they'll eat a lot of glands. Is it the thymus gland from a cow? I can't remember what it's called now, but they'll just eat some glands. And yeah, this is fine.

This is fine French food. It's like, you're eating glands. What are you doing? Think about what you're doing.

And then you're looking at Britain and criticising us for eating fish and chips. Yeah. Anyway, I just had to get that off my chest.

No, that's a good point. I think we do. We don't take any pride in things that I think, which in other cultures would be really pushed as an amazing, interesting regional thing.

So we have Scotch egg, which is a hard boiled egg. It's wrapped in sausage somehow. I don't know how you manage to eat, wrap an egg in sausage meat and then covered in breadcrumbs.

And that is presumably quickly fried, is it? I don't know how you make a Scotch egg. But I think if I was in another country, you would not hear the end of it about what an amazing interesting bit of cuisine. Yes.

In our country, we are just like, well, I'm sorry. I'm sorry about this. I know it's embarrassing, but even when you said Scotch egg, it just sort of made me chuckle.

No one in France is laughing about their own food. No, the French people just don't. It's like, oh, tonight we have Hachy Parmentier.

Okay. You know, no, everyone's just like, bah oui, évidemment, Hachy Parmentier, c'est un classique de cuisine français. And fair enough.

I mean, fair enough. The food is good. It is.

It is generally pretty good. I do think things are better in England than they used to be. I don't know if you have any British listeners, so I don't want to offend anybody, but I think there is quite a regional split now.

It's in my opinion, and I apologise to all people north of Northampton, somewhere in the middle. We went on holiday last year to the north, and I think the kind of, how can I put this politely? Things have improved in the south quite a lot. There are a lot of very good restaurants in the south of England where you can get some pretty good food.

I think London famously has more Michelin star restaurants than Paris and, you know, statistics like that. But it's hard to find that range of quality I found in the north. Breakfasts, very good.

Tea and scones are cakes and things. Very good. I'm talking about Yorkshire and up there.

Trying to find a nice meal that isn't fish and chips, I found was hard. Down in the south around London, there's some amazing restaurants. Anyway.

Well, in Yorkshire, the knives will be out for you, Martin. They'll be like, you won't be welcome again. It wasn't really the first time.

It wasn't welcome the first time either. We'll be even less welcome the next time he comes, if he does. Anyway.

Go in disguise. That's what this beard is for, just in case I want to go back to Yorkshire. Just shave it off.

You'll be fine. So what were we talking about? Food. So food you hated as a child, but you love mushrooms now.

I love mushrooms now and I love nut roast now. So I don't know what I was thinking when I was 12, yeah. But your palate changes, doesn't it? As you, as you grow older.

And so before we, we should, before we leave this topic of French and British, we shouldn't just talk about Britain versus France, but is there living in France? What British food do you miss? What do you, do you stock up when you come back to Britain and buy some things which you can't get in France? Hmm. So generally I do stock up whenever I go back to England, I'll visit Sainsbury's and I will stock up on certain foods. So the things I stock up on are, so first of all, uh, I buy as much, uh, of a certain brand of peanut butter as I can get.

I don't know if it's a British brand or not, but it's Manilife. It's not, there's a plug for you folks. Uh, Manilife peanut butter, which is available from most, um, supermarkets in the UK and you can't get it in France.

Um, and for some reason it's just significantly better than all other peanut butter that you can get here. And it's a hundred percent peanuts, you know, there's no palm oil or any of that nonsense in there. Um, it's all a hundred percent peanuts, but it's just like amazing.

They, they sort of deep roast the peanuts and stuff first. And it's just absolutely outstanding. You can get a hundred percent peanut butter here, of course, but it just doesn't have the same outstanding flavour.

And my wife and daughter are both completely addicted to it. And so whenever I go to the UK, I have to, I basically break my back carrying huge pots, the biggest pots of Manilife peanut butter that I can find. Um, but other stuff.

So obviously tea, this doesn't really count as food, does it? But, um, it's food adjacent as a drink. Um, um, so I'll, I'll, I'll stock up on like, you know, proper good tea. Uh, so I'll get either Yorkshire tea or I'll go for Sainsbury's gold tea, which is perfectly great and has biodegradable tea bags, which Yorkshire tea doesn't have, which I think is, you know, a plus point.

Um, so I'll stock up on proper tea and maybe like, um, um, a packet of McVitie's chocolate digestive biscuits. Um, but other than that, most of the stuff here, most of the stuff you can get here. So in the supermarket, I'll often find cans of baked beans, surprisingly in a little special section.

It's like a weird food section. And they have all these sort of odd things from different parts of the world. And then sometimes you'll find Heinz beans.

If I see Heinz beans, I'll grab them. Um, so I can have my beans on toast, which my wife thinks is the most disgusting, like beans on toast. You're having sort of those two things that just don't ever go together in her mind.

Just the most normal thing in the world for me. Um, isn't it beans on toast? Yeah, because as far as I understand, I could be wrong, but Heinz is an American company, but, but Heinz baked beans is as alien to Americans as it is to the French or anyone. So that's something that we have in the UK, but yeah, Americans would don't, they don't, they have baked, they have a thing called baked beans, but it's nothing like what we think.

I think. Yeah. Yeah.

I was just, you know, the kind of, I don't know what kind of beans they are, just sort of like white beans in a kind of, uh, thick tomato sauce. Although there's probably quite a lot of salt and sugar in it. Derived from tomatoes.

You might not guess it was a tomato sauce, would you? You've never seen it or tasted it before. You wouldn't go, Oh, this is tomatoes. What is this strange orange sweet sauce? Yeah.

Cause it's kind of, it's not even exactly tomato coloured. It's sort of, or it, it, yeah, it's close to being the colour of tomato, but something has happened to it, which has turned it to a sort of orange colour, but it's still, I maintain it's still a fantastic thing. And if it wasn't for the, for the maybe salt and sugar content, I think it is a healthy dish because beans are good.

They're good for you. And is there with your children? Do you, have they followed you or followed mum in their opinion of baked beans on toast? My daughter thinks it's the most disgusting thing in the world. So I think she's quite kind of French in her, in her eating.

And if Marmite, Marmite is another one, uh, which is obviously another quintessentially English thing. This kind of this black sticky spread that you can put on toast and other things like that. And the thing about Marmite is that it, well, first of all, it's basically pure yeast.

It's like stuff that comes out when you make beer, there's this black sticky stuff that is, that is produced as a by-product of making beer. And most of the time, most normal people would throw it away, but here in the UK, it's put into jars and sold and people then just put it on toast and baked potatoes and stuff and eat it. Um, the other thing about, uh, it's very, very healthy.

It's basically just pure vitamin B12 in a jar. Yeah. Um, but the other thing that everyone needs to know about Marmite is that it divides people.

So either you love it or you hate it. Um, do you love or hate Marmite, Martin? I love it. I love it.

I love it. I got two jars downstairs. Right.

I didn't know. Yeah. I never thought about it coming from the brewing.

I mean, that sounds like a kind of a load of guys working in a factory making beer and getting us getting this thick, viscous black stuff. And for a bet, someone said, I'm going to eat some and then go, Oh, Ashley, that's amazing. It goes really well with a pint.

Um, it's, it's yeast extracts just to be completely clear. Um, and, and people get it wrong. People, um, for example, Americans again, or anyone really who discovers this stuff called Marmite that maybe their British friend has told them is brilliant.

And they, they're given a jar of it as a gift or something. And then they put it on toast. Like it's peanut butter.

They put a massive spread of it. It's meant to use just very sparingly. It's just a small amount because it's got a very strong flavour.

You certainly don't take a spoon and, and take a spoonful from the jar directly in your mouth. That's disgusting. You just put, well, it depends.

Martin's kind of gone, but you could do that. It depends on how much you love it. But, um, normally that's not the way it's, it's eaten.

You normally just put a little bit on some toast or into what you're cooking and it just gives it this nice flavour. Yeah. Uh, so Marmite, yes, they, they, they actually have Marmite on the shelves here again, in that weird little section.

Um, Marmite is often included and I'll, I'll always grab a jar. Although I don't know if I've ever finished a jar of Marmite in my life. Cause you don't need that much.

You only, you only need a little bit. And so, and it just, it just never goes off. It's, it's just indestructible.

And so I've, I've never actually finished, finished my jars of Marmite. They last forever. I once, uh, when I was teaching English, uh, in a language school, um, I don't know how we got talking about that.

The students were asking about what, what strange food do you have in Britain? And I, we got talking about Marmite and I couldn't really explain it. I could see people was, you know, you know, as a teacher, when people are

nodding politely, but they, you know, they don't really understand. And so I, I, I made a load, there was a toaster in the staff room.

I made a load of toast. I, I buttered up all this Marmite on toast, brought it into the classroom, little cut into little strips and everybody had to try. Yeah.

I don't, I don't think there were many. I don't think I converted many people to, uh, to Marmite that day. Have you ever, have you ever had any food in your class when teaching English? Um, I've never actually provided food myself to my students.

I've never, no, I've never thought of doing that. I've had students bring food in. Yeah.

Um, for example, uh, in the school that we used to work in, we used to get quite a lot of, I guess, uh, students from Saudi Arabia or other parts of the Arabic speaking world. And occasionally they would bring in Arabic coffee again, not food, it's a drink, but they would bring an Arabic coffee, which is like quite different to, I don't know, like the coffee as we know it. And, uh, it's kind of like got loads, it's got more, I guess, spices in it.

There's, I don't know what, is it cardamom, um, or even, um, um, what's that bright yellow, uh, spice? Uh, turmeric. Yes, exactly. I think there's turmeric or cardamom, not saffron, turmeric or cardamom or something in there, which gives it like a particularly sort of, uh, characteristic colour.

Um, so drinking, drinking, uh, Arabic coffee was really interesting, but I've never actually provided food myself and gone, look at this. Now you eat this and you will be, you will speak English really fluently. It's Marmite that you're missing, but teacher, I need, you know, IELTS 6.5. Marmite is what you need.

Teacher, I need British accent. Marmite. Yeah.

We'll get back to the basic grammatical structures of the present continuous in a moment, but first we need to eat more toast. Input. This is the input section of the lesson.

I will be inputting Marmite and chocolate digestive biscuits and a plate of Heinz baked beans on toast with a bit of Marmite added to the toast. And this is the road to fluency fluent in three months. Brilliant.

So, um, what else, what other questions have I got for you? It's very professional, isn't it? Uh, who was the last person or people you had over for lunch or dinner? Oh, we haven't had people for over for ages and ages and ages because we haven't sorted out our flat. And because we've had, cause cause we've got like a two and a half year old kid who has kind of, I don't know, just thrown a spanner in the works of our, of our, um, you know, hosting of guests. So we haven't had someone around for ages, Martin.

Okay. Just, we've just given up on hosting people recently. Uh, so I can't remember.

And we moved into our current place a few years ago and we've maybe had just a, just a few guests over, uh, in that time. So no one recently, the place we used to live in, we had people over all the time before we had kids and we used to invite people around quite a lot. So I can answer questions about me 10 years ago.

Okay. All right. Well, if a hypothetical question, if you were going to cook a meal, you had some people coming over for dinner and you wanted to impress them, what would be your go-to choice for, uh, what, what, what would you, what would you make? I'd make a phone call to, uh, Deliveroo.

I'd ask them to deliver something. Um, I don't know. I don't really have like, I feel like my cooking, I don't know if again, this is cause I'm British or what, but I feel like my cooking, of course it's not because there are loads of English, British people who are very flashy in the kitchen and, uh, you know, like we said before.

So, um, I always keep thinking of this because I'm sure that everyone listening is like, you know, just the whole, like, again, I'm going back to this again, because every now and then, right. When I'm teaching my lessons, uh,

here in France, sometimes a lesson will come up about food and the, and I've had some, oh, I don't know. Like these days, my lessons normally go really, really well.

And I don't have any problems with lessons, but you know, as an English teacher, occasionally you have a lesson that just goes all wrong and the wheels fall off. And it just kind of goes all completely wrong. I haven't had a lesson like that for a long time, except when the subject is food.

And I'm as a British person attempting to teach food and cooking vocabulary to a class of French people. Um, it, it just, it just doesn't work. It doesn't work because it involves me trying to explain some sort of food and all the French people going, what you do, what it's what, um, and they're all, they're all, they can't even with the lowest level of English, they still know more about food than you.

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. And they, and they just can't, uh, can't help themselves.

They can't help being, uh, you know, can't help showing some level of disdain and amusement over our cooking, you know? And I get all uptight and irate, you know, like you think that your food is the best in the world, but you eat glands and they don't understand, you know? And it's like, okay, right. Well that's, we've run out of time anyway. I'm glad we achieved all of the aims for this lesson.

Um, so, uh, what, what's my most impressive, uh, dish that I don't know. I don't think I really impress with my food. I think for me it's food is it's more just kind of like pretty basic stuff.

You know, as an English guy, I'll just do, I like to cook well, but I don't cook flashy stuff. Um, so I've got, I don't know, I'll, I would do, uh, maybe baked salmon, um, fillets in the oven, you know, um, kind of marinated in olive oil and soy sauce. Uh, you know, the soy sauce really helps, uh, a baked salmon fillet.

Um, and it just, yeah. And, and, and hot, uh, heat also helps. Um, you know, I basically, I just make food hot, Martin.

That's all I do. I just take food that temperature. Yeah.

I just, I just make it hot and keep it hot for a while until it's ready to eat. And then I put it on a plate and we eat it. Um, I've got a few recipes, but none of them are particularly flashy.

I think, I don't know. This is my chance to ask you the same question. Do you have, do you cook? Are you a cook? I had a, I had a girlfriend when I was quite, when I was a teenager and she cooked your girlfriend, she was doing some sort of, she was cookery course, cookery school, you know? And so she taught me some very basic things like how to make a white sauce, how to make it in a cheese sauce, how to make some really basic stuff, you know, when I was a teenager.

And so I kind of, uh, I, I was, I was an amazing cook when you're 18, you know, compared to everybody else. When I went to university, people were amazed. Um, but I, I think I rested on my laurels.

We would say she came too confident and never improved. And so I'm still stuck at that kind of 18, 19 year old level making that white sauce. I can still make a cheese sauce.

I can make spaghetti bolognese, you know, I can do these, I can make a cottage pie. Um, but, uh, chilli con carne. Um, yeah, I think I'm quite, quite good at making curries.

I got quite good at making Indian food, watching YouTube videos. There's a brilliant YouTube channel. Uh, what's his name? Latifs inspired.

And I've learned how to make all sorts of interesting Indian things, but I kind of, you know, you know what I mean as a British person, you can't, you never feel comfortable saying I'm good at making Indian food. Like it's not, again,

it's not our food, is it? Even though this guy says on his videos, he says, this is not Bangladeshi food. This is British Indian restaurant food.

Like it's a different thing. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. But, uh, yeah, no, so I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm not, certainly not a great cook.

I'm still stuck as stuck in 19. Well, when I was 18, I'm still stuck, but I think that's all you need. You know, those, those sort of recipes.

I like kind of comfort food and I like kind of wholesome, simple stuff, uh, family food. Um, and, uh, um, but it's not flashy impress the guests kind of stuff, right? It's just, you know, food that the kids will eat that they will like, that's healthy. Um, and that that's not too difficult to cook when I've got a child attempted to climb up my leg while I'm doing it, you know, Speaker 2 Do the children come home for lunch or do you, what happens in, do they have school, school lunches in France? Yes.

So this is obviously this is France. So yes, they're provided with decent school lunches and at the daycare, at the nursery, um, my son is fed and at school. Yeah.

They're provided with a full three or four course meal. Uh, this being France, there's a starter main course, dessert, cheese, uh, wine in a carafe of wine. I was going to joke.

They don't have wine. They don't of course, but um, no, they, they do start a main course, dessert, cheese. Wow.

So you can be sure that the kids, uh, are being fed pretty well, uh, at lunchtime. Although my daughter, it's a kind of canteen situation. So she gets to choose what she has and it's, it's like trying to work out what she's choosing.

You know, at the end of the day, you know, she comes home and you'll say, what did you have for lunch? And she sort of dismisses the question almost instantly. I don't remember. I can't remember.

What do you mean you can't remember? It was just a few hours ago. You have to remember. Oh, uh, I just had a fish, you know, she just clearly doesn't want to answer the question either because she just doesn't find it interesting or because what she ate was a chocolate yoghurt or three chocolate yoghurts and, uh, you know, uh, some fish fingers or something.

Yeah. She traded all her fish to some other kid for their chocolate yoghurt. Yes, exactly.

Which is quite possible, but no, the food that they provide at school is amazing actually. Yeah. Yeah.

Do French children still complain about school lunches? Cause in, in the UK, school lunches have a very bad reputation. Not many people look back fondly on school lunches, do they? No, they don't. What was your experience? What would tell me about your school lunches? What was the setup? So, you know, you queue up, remember going to the war or something.

You, you, your head immediately went to your, into your hands. Um, yeah, I remember like, uh, dinner ladies, right. Uh, who are employed to provide the food and stuff, dinner ladies.

And there would typically be a ladle that goes, uh, uh, uh, a dinner lady and a huge metal pot with God knows what inside. And the ladle, which is that big spoon goes into the pot and then onto your plate. And as you slide your tray, you continue to slide your tray and you take the bits and pieces.

I remember some pretty bad things. I've mostly forgotten. But then when I was a teenager at secondary school from like the age of 11 to 15 or 16, there was a long period where I would eat exactly the same thing for lunch every single day.

And then I can't believe I did it, but like a few years, cause you could choose at that point, you know what you wanted. And I would always have two slices

of pizza and two, what they called crack knolls and a glass of milk. A crack knoll was a, I don't, that's, I think just at my school, they called them crack knolls, but you'll know exactly what they are.

It's basically crushed up cornflakes mixed in with chocolate. And then, and then like an ice cream scoop, like the dinner lady scooped it out with an ice cream scoop. And then this kind of like a half, half a ball of cornflakes covered in broken cornflakes covered in chocolates and the chocolate would set.

I don't know if they put them in the oven and baked them for a bit or something. I don't know, but then it would be like this chocolatey cornflake ball. And that was the dessert.

And I'd have two of them and a glass of milk. So two slices of pizza, two crack knolls and a glass of milk. That's, that's what I'm built on.

Amazing. I suppose the milk was probably quite good for your, your growing bones, the calcium, but pizza and chocolate cornflakes, probably not. I think the pizza has got virtually no nutrition, nutritional value, considering it was just, there wasn't even any anything on it.

It was just cheese, vague tomato sauce and pizza base. But it was so delicious. It was just so good.

I just couldn't, I was completely addicted to this lunch every day. It was like, well, if I've got the choice, I'm definitely having that again. Yes.

I will never be bored of this. And, um, maybe the cornflakes, maybe there's something of value in that, but I had a bowl of cornflakes for breakfast already. Yeah.

So if it wasn't for my mum's cooking, I would probably be malnourished. You'd have got scurvy or something. Okay.

School lunches. Brilliant. Well, um, you just talked about eating the same thing every, over and over again for two years.

I'm not sure if this is related, but in America, the land of the free, uh, they famously allow prisoners who are going to be executed to have anything they like for their final meal. So would you in that situation, would you, presumably you wouldn't still be choosing two slices of pizza and a crack knoll. Two crack knolls.

What would be your choices? My question. Well, a bit like Ali G I would, I would choose the all you can eat buffet and I would just keep eating and eating and eating and then never be able to execute me because I still haven't finished. Sorry.

Um, I don't know. What would I choose my last meal? I don't know. I think it would probably be like something my mum cooks, which is like the ultimate kind of comfort food.

I nearly said Kung Fu food. That's weird. Comfort food, not Kung Fu food.

What's that? So what's your mum's top dishes then? What's your favourite things that she makes? Um, so she does, you know, all sorts of stuff that's like, every time we go, we say, mum, can you make your lasagna? And she's like, really? And then she's apologising to my wife and my wife. Absolutely. My French wife absolutely loves my mum's spaghetti bolognese and lasagna.

And it is amazing. It's the most amazing lasagna. So I don't know what she does to it, but it's just, it just tastes so good.

It's so comforting. And yeah, my mum apologises to my wife. And so I'm sorry.

It's lasagna again. And my wife's like, yes, lasagna, you know, but, um, but it is really good. So maybe I would just go for my mum's lasagna with this, with this nice salad.

And she makes this salad dressing and she's she's got the ratio of ingredients in the salad dressing completely down after however many decades it is that she's been making it. So it's like a mix of olive oil and, and white wine, vinegar, mustard, um, garlic, like crushed garlic, um, uh, a bit of salt, a tiny bit of sugar into this, um, uh, salad dressing, which is just put on some lettuce and cucumber and avocado and tomato. But that is just so good in combination with this British lasagna.

Yeah. Yes. I'll have that please.

It's you're so right. We all do that. Don't we? We apologise for lasagna.

We say, uh, I'm sorry. It's only lasagna, but it's like one of the most time consuming things you can make is a lasagna and you've got to, you've got to make two sources really. I mean, you, you've got to make that holiday sauce or the tomato sauce and you've got to make a cheese sauce and yeah.

And everyone loves lasagna. I mean, it's like, Oh yeah. Yeah.

You know what? You know what? I think I'm just going to have lasagna. Yeah. Really? Yeah.

Me. Yeah. Me too.

Yeah. But as British people, we always, we always apologise. I mean, sorry.

Only it's only this, you know? Yeah. It's weird that we do. We're obviously known for apologising.

Um, although I'm not sure that people really understand exactly the ways in which we apologise. Cause we will apologise as a, as a, what's the word for it? Uh, we, we apologise before we do something. So it's not like we're apologising after like, I think when people think, people hear, Oh, British people apologise a lot.

They assume that we're always saying, Oh, sorry, I did this. Sorry for that. Sorry that we're apologising after we've done something, but we apologise before we've done something in order to somehow make the thing that we're doing better than it's a very complicated psychology is if we say, sorry, before we do it, then that's going to make the thing more palatable and better.

I think it's perhaps being sort of modest and self deprecating. Isn't it? You know what I mean? But you're saying what I'm, Hey, I'm not showing off. I'm not, I'm not immodest.

I'm not saying this is, I'm not going to say this is amazing. That's for you to say. Although my sister-in-law does do that.

But anyway, um, that's another story. Look what I made. Isn't this, isn't this delicious? She says, I think you're, you're not British.

Are you, you have to say, sorry, first you can't say it's delicious. You have to apologise. And then we have to go, no, no, no.

It's delicious. Exactly. It's a little game we play.

We say, sorry, it's only lasagna. The other people say, Oh no, I love lasagna. And you go, well, and, and we all know, really, I'm quite pleased with my lasagna.

Yeah. But, uh, I'm going to say, well, what was the question? Did I answer the question? Your favourite, your favourite food, your favourite meal? Yes, you did. Oh yeah.

That's it. If I'm about to be executed, presumably I murdered someone or maybe I committed treason. Yeah.

Um, and I'm about to be executed in the morning. Um, I mean, I, I don't think they do that in Britain unless I killed the King. I think it's the only way in which you maybe be executed these days.

But so this, I'm assuming that I'm in some other country, maybe in some sort of autocratic country where it's a very hypothetical situation. Oh, okay. Sorry.

I'm a very literal person. You've got to be in America being executed. Yeah.

I'm in Texas. I'll have some Mexican food. What have you got? We got Mexican food.

Right. I thought so. The apologising thing when I used to teach English students would, you know, well, in my language we say bon appetit, you know, and in, uh, in Spanish you say, you know, Joe, I don't know all these different, in every language there's a phrase for, and now please enjoy your meal.

And, um, so students would sometimes ask, what do you say in English? I said, well, we, we don't really, uh, I used to joke and say, well, we say, good luck, but then they say, sorry. But yeah, we say, sorry. Let's say we say, dig in.

Don't we dig in. It just means don't wait for me. You start.

It doesn't mean enjoy it. It just means go ahead, eat, get it over with and dig in something like you're doing something. And it sounds more like gardening than digging, digging a grave for someone.

Let's get this done. Come on, dig in. Let's dig this.

Let's just dig our way through this. Anyway. So, um, I've lost, we said we would just, I was, the idea was, I was going to ask you 10 questions in half an hour.

We're coming up to an hour. We're still talking about food, but I'll say this is the last question then slightly off topic, but we're still connected to the world of the dinner party. But another hypothetical, very common hypothetical

question is you have a, in a dream dinner party, you can invite anybody from history alive or dead.

Which three people would you invite? Okay. This old question. Now, first of all, I wouldn't invite anyone dead because that would be, that would be disgusting.

Wouldn't it? I was, you know, you're very literal again. He's going to put you right off your food. Isn't it? You know, it's like, uh, if you invite any, you know, especially if they've been dead for a while, you know, I'm sorry.

I can't, I don't think I can eat this. I'm sorry. It's just, I can't because there's a dead man at the table.

There's in fact two dead people here. Um, but I get the, of course it's hypothetical. They would be brought back to life.

Ideally. So yes. Yeah.

Okay. Okay. So this question, right.

So who are you? You can invite any P any three people to your hypothetical dinner party alive or dead. Who would you, who would you pick? I find it really hard to answer this question because, um, why, why do I find it hard to, I don't know. I sort of struggle with the concept of the dinner party because I sort of think, okay, so I can invite the three people and it may be, it's just like three people I would love to meet, but the dinner party could potentially be a terrible evening because though, you know, it's just going to be me talking to that one guest.

I can't ask you lots of questions. So Paul McCartney, tell me about how you did this. Great.

Thanks. Now. Uh, and then I'm like, right.

Uh, grandma, um, it's like my grandma, you know, grandma, what was it like living through world war two? And then, okay. And then, then over here, I've got Rob. Right.

So who, who would it be? I don't know. Stuart Pierce. What was it like scoring that goal in the FA cup final in 1990? And then, you know, like, okay, you two just be just grandma, Paul McCartney, Paul McCartney, grandma, you know, let me, I'm just going to talk to Stuart Pierce for a bit.

Um, it's just going to be really weird. Also, we're assuming that they actually will, would want to come to my dinner party as well. You know, I might say Paul McCartney, Hey, I'm having a dinner party.

Oh, I'm sorry. Um, you know, I'm in Sao Paulo. I'm doing a gig.

I can't make it in this hypothetical universe. They, but they have to come, but they might, they might just sort of sulk through the whole evening and refuse just one word answers because they, they don't want to be there. Cause like Winston Churchill, Winston Churchill was, I was, I was, I was resting in peace and I've been brought back from the afterlife and brought back to earth.

My back hurts. He's like, Oh God, my back hurts. I really need the toilet.

And I have to come here and sit with you for three hours. And you and your, yeah, you and your grandmother and some guy, some football player that I've never even heard of. Okay.

I'm too literal. I'm too literal. I need to actually just like go with it.

All right. So who would be my three guests? I find it so hard to answer this question. I can never think of the right, the right combination of people probably change every day for most people.

Wouldn't it? You'd think of another three or another, uh, yeah. Okay. Should we change it to three living people then? No, no, no.

I can go with the, with the dead people. That's right. Cause you know, I've now I've understood that it's just, it's just a hypothetical discussion question.

Okay. Right. Let me get to the point.

So, um, I don't know. I think one, one guest, one guest that I would think of is HG Wells, the writer. Yeah.

Okay. Uh, cause I'm a big fan of his, uh, writing. I love all his stories.

I think they're amazing. Have you had HG Wells stories on your podcast? Have you read many of his? Yes. I've read, uh, I think three of his, at least three of his stories, um, or two, two of his short stories and some of the, the war of the worlds.

Um, and so I just, yeah, he's, he just had this incredible imagination. Uh, his short stories are just extraordinary. And he was very kind of, it was a real visionary because he came up with these sorts of science fiction stories that were very prescient and they, um, really, uh, turned out a lot of them turned out to be very close to the truth.

You end up with these fantastical things, which he kind of predicted. I remember he wrote one about, uh, there's something it's called something like the fantastic flying machine or something, but I mean, he's, he's written, he's written it in the 1890s, perhaps. I don't know.

It could be wrong, but I mean, before flight, you know, but he's, what he's describing is quite, uh, that was that, was that one you read out on yours? It's not the one that's not one of the ones I've read out, but I know the one it's, it's a, the story of, uh, a guy who, um, has this incredible ambitious, uh, idea to build a flying machine. And it's described made of wood and all these bits of rope that are pulled together and stuff and him and his, his, his associate, uh, build it. And it's a lot of character about how ambitious he is and no one believes it's going to work.

And people see it on the side of the hill. They don't know what it is. And then one day they do it and it's incredible.

It flies spoiler alert. It flies through the air. It's absolutely amazing.

No one has ever can believe what they're seeing. And then they lose control and they crash and die. Oh, okay.

I didn't remember the block that from my mind, which is another thing I love about your stories that they all, they often have like these, uh, really surprising endings. Yeah. I was living in East Putney in London when I read that.

And, uh, there's a bit in it describing the, it's how it swoops down over East Putney tube station platform. Yeah, that was quite, that's why I remember it. Yeah.

Yeah. Good choice. Also, you know, someone, uh, interested in society and had, uh, opinions about, um, the way that, uh, society should be run and stuff.

So it kind of, I expect not just an interesting storyteller and someone who's got an interesting mind, but someone with opinions about things, which should be interesting. Once again, we're caught up in the practicality of it because if it was real, you would just want to talk to him when you, you wouldn't. Yeah, exactly.

It's like John Lennon. Stop. You can just get writers, go and write a song and come back in 45 minutes to an hour.

And then I'll talk to you. HG Wells, you go and write a short story in that time. Um, so yeah.

Who else then? So I've got HG Wells. Um, now this is again, what everyone says in these sorts of situations, it's like, well, since I can bring anyone back, I'll bring back a member of my family so I can ask them things that I never asked them. Uh, I can't decide which one though.

It's either my, my maternal grandfather or my paternal grandfather. So my maternal grandfather, Dennis, um, maybe him, because I'd love to ask him about what he did in world war two. He was, he, he, he was involved in D day.

He landed on one of the beaches and, and then had a, you know, campaign in Europe and stuff. And he never talked about it really, uh, when he was alive. Yeah.

So I want to drag him back to reality to ask him about things that he just obviously never wanted to talk about. So I will force him to tell me and a couple of people that he's never met before, uh, everything he did in world war two. Um, or, uh, my paternal grandfather, Eric, who I never met because he died before I was born.

So I would quite like to have the opportunity to, to meet him and actually get to know him. Um, and then the third person, I dunno, I thought of Carrie Fisher actually. Uh-huh.

Star Wars Princess Leia, the actress who played Princess Leia, but she was a sort of very witty person, very clever person, a writer, someone who was a very good sort of conversationalist, the sort of great guest on a chat show. And, um, I just think, think she was very funny and, uh, down to earth, very good talk, a very interesting person, insightful conversation. Someone who's very, uh, willing to be candid, you know, would be willing to share a lot of her own personal opinions and experiences and things like that.

Plus I could have Princess Leia at my table, although I wouldn't talk about that with her because she's probably fed up with having to, you know, people, Oh my God, Princess Leia, you know? So I wouldn't actually say that, but it would still be a kind of a thrill for, for the, the, the, again, the 12 year old me would be quite happy about that. I often wonder with people who are that famous for one particular thing, you've got to walk a fine line, haven't you? If you meet them between, they must find it annoying if people say, Oh, tell me about this scene in star Wars. I don't know that, but equally or not perhaps

equally, but they must also find it odd if you never acknowledge the fact that they are extremely famous for this thing, you know? Yeah.

The whole dinner party would go by. We'd talk about, you know, what my grandfather did in, in battle and then Carrie Fisher's like, okay, wait a minute. So you brought a science fiction writer.

You brought a guy who was involved in a lot of war and you've never, you didn't think to ask me once about star Wars. What, how did that, how's that working out? Are you not going to ask me about that? Yeah. Yeah.

I like about your choices that I think if you, this question gets asked all the time, doesn't it? Dinner party guests. And there must be several times where people have all chosen the same combination. So the people, there's been many times people have answered Gandhi, Queen Elizabeth the first and Julius Caesar or something like that.

You know, nobody has ever said HG Wells, Carrie Fisher and my grandfather, Dennis. No, that's right. It's a unique, unique combination.

So well done again. I don't know if it's going to be a successful dinner party at all that Martin, I don't know if those three people are going to get, like my granddad, I don't think he would have got on particularly well with Carrie Fisher, who is very much all about oversharing, you know, and my granddad was a very kind of like taciturn person, you know, uh, not the sort of person shared a lot. Um, and then there's HG Wells who you can, apparently you couldn't shut him up.

I don't know. I think my granddad and HG Wells would probably, I think my granddad would be very, uh, interested in listening to him. I don't know what he'd make you Carrie Fisher.

She would probably think, why am I here with these men? You know, I don't know. Have you, um, have you ever met anybody famous and talk to them about, um, uh, you know, I've been in that situation of not knowing whether to mention the elephant in the room or not. Yes.

Yes. I have. I've, I've mentioned this on the podcast before.

So apologies for any listeners who have heard me talk about this before, but I once met Eddie Izzard. Uh, yeah. Yes.

And I actually had dinner with him, the comedian. So for people who don't know Eddie Izzard sort of, you know, great standup most famous during the nineties and then the noughties, um, uh, really brilliant standup comedian who became an actor and then an activist and stuff afterwards. Um, but just a brilliant standup.

And, and, uh, I, when I lived in Japan for a couple of years, uh, didn't really didn't have TV, had some, I had a TV with some video cassettes, like a few video cassettes, but didn't have that much entertainment. And I had Eddie Izzard standup shows on CD. And I listened to them a lot over and over and over again.

And I kind of really got into listening to them and got to know the routines really well, really enjoyed listening to his standup CDs. And he became a sort of comedy hero of mine very much. And then like later on moved here to France, ended up doing standup here, got to know some French standup comedians, including a guy called Yacine Bellous, which, uh, who, um, is good friends with Eddie.

Okay. And Eddie Izzard speaks French and he sometimes does stand up in French. And so I found myself one evening, I went to, I found myself, I went to one, I went to one.

So Eddie Izzard came to, um, France, uh, as part of the D-Day commemorations years and years ago. Let me start this story again. Uh, my uncle, my grandfather did this.

So, uh, Eddie Izzard came to, um, Normandy, um, as part of the D-Day commemorations. It was like 70 years since D-Day was it anyway. Um, and, uh, he came and he did some shows.

He did a, a three hour show. It was an hour of standup in German, an hour of standup in French and an hour of standup in English, back to back. He broke off from his American tour to come to Normandy to do this big thing as part of the commemorations for D-Day.

You know, his, his idea was that, you know, uniting the three languages through comedy. He's very pro-European, isn't he? Yes, that's right. And Yacine said to me, oh, uh, come to the show and maybe afterwards you can come backstage and I can introduce you to Eddie.

And I thought, wow, this is amazing. So I came to the show, watched him do his show and everything. It was brilliant.

And then afterwards, I was like standing around and Yacine appeared out of a door and said, hey, come, come here. So I went, wandered over. I then walked through some corridors and then there I am in Eddie Izzard's dressing room with Yacine and a couple of other people.

And Eddie's there after he's done his show, you know, recovering from his show and Yacine's like, oh, this is Luke. He's a comedian as well. And so I shook his hand and said, oh, wow.

It's great to meet you. And then Eddie was like, right, let's go and have, let's go and have some dinner then. Where should we go? And then we all went off to a restaurant and there was, I was sitting there with Yacine and another friend of mine.

And then just, so it was my friend, me, Yacine and Eddie there and some other people. And so some of the time Eddie was talking to those other people and then half the time he would turn and sort of be with us. And I'm sitting there at the table with Eddie Izzard thinking to myself, I, I've got nothing, I've got nothing to offer.

You know, I felt so self-conscious, like, oh God, I can't keep up. Cause that half the time they're speaking French, you know, cause everyone on the table can speak French. So, and Eddie Izzard really loves to speak French.

So half the time they're chatting away in French and I'm just sort of sitting there not contributing anything, even in English. I'm like, oh, I don't know. I don't feel like I've got anything of value to offer this situation.

So the whole time I was just like, oh my God, I can't believe I'm sitting next to Eddie Izzard, you know, more or less sitting next to Eddie Izzard. And then at the end of the evening and bear in mind that that morning he flew from Chicago. He's all jet lagged.

He did three hours of comedy, you know, in three languages. He's exhausted and we're all standing outside the restaurant, you know, we've got all getting our coats on and stuff. I find myself standing next to Eddie and I thought, right, this is my chance to tell Eddie Izzard, you know, how, how much of a hero he is.

And I really kind of made a meal of it. And I, and I, I sort of rambled, nice food link made a meal of it. There we go.

Yeah. Yeah. That's right.

I mean, it means I messed it up. Yeah. If you make a meal of something, it means you do it really badly and you kind of mess it up, which is interesting as an English expression that we consider making a meal as equivalent to doing something really badly.

But yeah, so I made a meal of this and I ended up rambling to hit to this, uh, exhausted Eddie Izzard rambling to him like, Oh Eddie. Um, and he's kind of trying to remember who I am, you know? Oh, um, listen, you know, I used to live in Japan and when I, I didn't have a TV and, and, um, so I had some of your CDs and I just used to listen to your CDs all over the, all the time. And then I like looked at him and was like, so you're in my head now.

Why, why did I say that? You know, I kind of looked at it, looked at it, looked at him, went, you're in my head. And he just, he didn't know what to say. He just was like, okay.

Like for the first time in his life, Eddie didn't know what to say. And he was just like, right. Okay, great.

And then he was thinking, right. I really need to get to the airport. I need to get out of this country.

Who's this again? Help. The conversation didn't go anywhere, but I was just like so desperate to sort of like tell him how inspiring his comedy was and stuff. But I just, since then I've, I've just always thought, no, that's not what you do when you meet someone, you say to them, listen, I'm a huge fan.

I love your work. That's the way you should put it. I really love your work.

It's brilliant. Anyway. Um, you know, how was the show tonight? And then you just start talking to them as a normal person, you know, because as far as they're concerned, they're just a normal person and you're a normal person.

They don't need that, that, you know, hero worship stuff. It's just all. Well, I don't think, I don't think you should feel bad about it for two reasons.

I think, uh, firstly, they probably get that every day of their lives, don't they? Someone coming up and they can see, ah, this guy's going to regret it later. They must know, wow, this is someone who's such a fan that now they're going to think about every word they said and feel terrible about it. So that, that must be normal.

And also, as you say, he's probably extremely jet lagged and just out of energy at the end of an incredible long day. Yeah. Did you say you did a three hour gig? You did in three languages.

That was that night? Yeah, that was that night. I mean, you could excuse him if he just stared silently into your eyes and didn't say anything. Yeah.

And what do you say? What's the, what, what's the rejoinder to you're in my head now? Is it like, thanks or what? Good. Or, uh, you know, like, you know, in all our course books as English teachers, you know, we teach, how are you? I'm fine. You know, uh, thanks very much.

You're welcome. You're in my head now. Um, uh, I don't know what to say.

Okay. Okay. All right.

There's never a chapter in the vocabulary book on dealing with obsessive fans. Yeah. Or just dealing with really awkward conversations and you don't know what to say.

Oh, that's nice. Yeah. So what should we, should we, um, come to a close on food? Yes.

Okay. Let's get the bill. This episode was sponsored by Manny life.

Is that right? Yeah. Manny life and the Heinz beans. Well, that was great.

I enjoy talking to you. Maybe we'll do another one. Another topic.

Yeah. I really enjoyed this. Thank you for preparing the questions for saving me the bother of having to do all that stuff.

This has kind of been like Martin's English podcasts. You sort of been hosting this one. Um, yeah, I appreciate that.

Thanks a lot. Good to talk to you. Yeah.

It was a pleasure. I really enjoyed talking about that. Funnily enough, one of my questions I'd crossed out was, um, is French cuisine the best or why or why not? Then we ended up talking about that pretty much nonstop anyway.

It's a good question though. What is the best cuisine in the world? I mean, it's a really good question. French is up there, but I don't know.

I think Italian food is potentially better. Sorry, French people. I used to, I went to Thailand a couple of times when I was younger for like a month at a time.

The first time I went, I remember my first evening out seeing a guy. Have I told you this before? A boring old man repeating my same stories. But, um, in the first evening I went out to a restaurant and there was a couple of guys that there, one eating spaghetti carbonara and the other one that with a baked potato.

And I can remember thinking, you absolutely, you know, what kind of person comes to Thailand and eats that. But after two weeks, I love Thai food and all spicy stuff. After, uh, after two weeks of Thai food, breakfast, lunch, and dinner, I was like, where was that place? You could get a baked potato.

I went, I've got to have something really bland. I want to have something after two, two weeks of, um, pad Thai and green chicken curry and mango sticky rice. Like for two weeks, just give me a baked potato.

Yeah. So I don't know. And when we were in Burgundy recently, you know, so amazing, amazing meals.

Yes. But sometimes I think like, wow, if I'm honest with myself, one evening I had a kind of, it was just a, an egg poached in a sort of red wine gravy. That was, it came with some other things, but that was it.

It was an extremely posh restaurant. And that was the, and it was like, this is amazing cooking, but did I really enjoy a poached egg in red wine gravy? Not really. Whereas the next day I had some sort of burger and chips.

I definitely enjoyed that, you know? So I think sometimes we're a little bit, uh, Emperor's new clothes worried about, um, being honest, what you actually enjoy. Give me a nice sausage sandwich. Yeah.

Toad in the hole, please. You don't like toad in the hole. Well, I just think I love sausages, but I just think a sausage that's done it is you've, you've essentially baked that sausage.

I mean, you roasted a sausage. It's not, it's not a great way to they're invariably burnt across the top and raw underneath, aren't they? Yeah. Okay.

Fair enough. It's not the best way to cook a sausage. This is true.

You've got a pan, pan fry a sausage probably, um, or grill a grill, no pan fry a sausage. But I guess toad in the hole, it's kind of probably one of those recipes that's made in order to get rid of ingredients, isn't it? Or it's the sort of thing that my mum would have cooked for my brother and me just because we would have eaten it. It's the sort of thing that's not that expensive.

The kids will definitely eat this. I just have like good memories of it because it was basically just carbohydrate and sausage meat. Um, that's what you want when you're again, 12 years old.

Yeah. I think all that Yorkshire pudding is just an old fashioned cheap way of filling up the family on what is it? Flour and flour and fat. I think that's all it is, isn't it? It's not really any ingredients to it.

So I think this, this accounts for a lot of English food. It's just stuff that's cheap and filling. Um, I don't know why this is, is this just a class thing? Is this that the working class communities needed to find ways to fill up their families on not very much money on it with limited ingredients.

I think of like, we have a dessert bread and butter pudding. I'm talking to you now. Like I'm still being doing the episode.

I don't know if I feel like I'm still recording. I feel like I'm still going to include this as a bonus. But, um, but we have a dessert bread and butter pudding, which is just old stale bread crusts, uh, thrown into a bowl of milk.

Maybe a few raisins scattered over the sprinkled over the top and then put in the oven. And that's all it is, isn't it? It's it's old bread and milk. Oh, I suppose sugar.

It's so good though. And again, I think in other countries that would be like, oh, this is our regional speciality. You must try this in Spain, France, Italy, all over.

This would be a something people take enormous pride in. And we're like, well, obviously I'm sorry. It's just bread and butter.

So, so you're saying in other food cultures, they actually do it on purpose that I intend to buy the bread to do it. Whereas for us, like our bread and butter pudding is more just like a, oh, we've someone's made a mistake. We've got too much bread.

What are we going to do with it? Well, we can't just throw it away. Uh, so we better make it into something. All right.

I cover it in all this extra milk and some sugar and raisins that they've got, they're cheap. Um, and then put it in the oven. So it's one of our, our cuisine is a sort of a mistake.

Whereas Italian food is like carefully planned in advance and based on generations of, of tradition. And ours is more like, oh, I don't know. How are we going to, you know, what are we going to do with all this stuff? Yeah.

Yeah. In Europe, there's lots of food. That's quite similar.

Isn't there? It's like, uh, there's a Spanish version or an Italian version or a French version of what we would just consider stew. So like Lancashire hot pot or whatever, or in, I mean, scouse comes from that dish, isn't it? It's just chuck everything in a pot and it's called scouse. Oh, is that right? Yeah.

So like a Lancashire thing, you just chuck everything in a pot. It's again, it's just something warm in the winter. Might have a bit of meat in it, but it's vegetables and just chuck it all in there.

Some people call it Irish stew because it's the same thing in Ireland, but it's called that locally scouse. And because the people of Liverpool used to eat it, they're called scousers and it's the, but that, that trade route from Liverpool that goes around the top of Britain to Scandinavia, uh, to all the ports along the north of Germany and Denmark and Sweden, they have a similar dish called also called something like scouse. It like sounds almost the same.

This is the same language, some sort of, and it, this is a basic dish of a stew of some boiled vegetables and meat you eat in the winter. But I'm sure in those countries it's like, Oh, this is our traditional speciality. People are travelling from, you know, thousands of miles away and they're, they're being hosted by like the, you know, the tour, the high level tour guides to, uh, uh, uh, uh, arranging for them to have like the local speciality.

It's a stew. And yeah. The other thing I wanted to talk about, we didn't talk about was that how few words we have for other languages have more words to describe more varieties of things that when I, when I, sorry, that's the problem I have when I'm teaching French people about food, because they're like, how do you say this in English? And like, I don't know, there's no word for it.

Or they've got one word, like one very sophisticated sounding word to describe a way of cooking, which like boiled, boiled, that's it. Boiled cabbage. Exactly.

When I, so I spent five years in Spain teaching and in particular in this one sort of sea, uh, a port on the, on the North, North West coast, La Coruna and seafood is incredibly important. And everybody spends, you know, money on having the best seafood. And like you were saying, the only lessons I ever had problems with were the, the disastrous lessons was where I, people started asking me about, what is this type of prawn? What's this? What's this in Spanish? It's a small, it's a prawn.

And this one King prawn. That's well, that's a big King prawn. And this one shrimp.

I don't know. And then we've got like 30 different types of, well, they'd say this, this crab. I don't know.

I don't know anything about crabs. That's a red crab. And that's another crab.

That's not a red crab. Exactly. And they'd get really angry.

No, that's not a crab. I don't know. Exactly.

Exactly. Exactly. My experience.

Yeah. All right. Well, yeah, I really enjoy, I really enjoyed that.

Thank you for preparing the questions. And next time we'll do a different topic. Yes.

Good to speak to you, man. Take care. So there you go.

That was 10 questions about food with Martin Aaron. Thank you very much to Martin for taking the time to prepare the questions. This is a format that we can use again and again, and Martin's going to come up with other topics and other questions.

If you've got any suggestions for topics, is there a specific topic that you would like us to do next time? If you've got a specific topic in mind, let us know and Martin can prepare some questions and you can hear us rambling about that. I hope you enjoyed that conversation. It was fun, a fun way and funny way to talk about a certain subject and also to reveal lots of vocab on a certain subject in context.

Send in your comments. I'd love to read your responses, get the conversation started. What about the questions that Martin asked me? Here are those questions.

If you fancy us answering any of these yourself in the comments, then go ahead. Who prepares the food in your house? What food did you really dislike as a child? Were you a fussy eater? What? Well, we've got what British food do you miss? But obviously that might not apply to you unless you've ever lived in the UK and now you don't and you miss certain things. Like what I really miss is Cornish pasties, Luke.

Have you ever had any food in your class when teaching English? That one again might not apply to you, but what do you think of the combination of food and learning? Do they go together, food in the classroom? How do you feel about that? What about food on the podcast? What about when someone eats or drinks on a podcast? How do you feel about that? People do have strong feelings about that. Who was the last person or people you had over for lunch or dinner? What did you cook? What's your go-to recipe in that situation? If you were going to, oh, this is the same question. If you were going to cook a meal and you wanted to impress someone, what would be your go-to choice? Do French children complain about school lunches? Well, do children complain about school lunches in your country? What are school lunches like? In Britain, kids typically will complain about school lunches.

What was your experience with school lunches as a child? If you were about to be executed and you were offered one final meal of your choice, what would you choose? And imagine you're having a dinner party and you can invite any three people, alive or dead, who would you invite? And yes, those people would be somehow magically brought back to life again. You wouldn't just have three corpses at the table. That would be terrible.

But you're having a dinner party. You can invite any three people. Who would you invite and why? A reminder of Anna's competition.

Send us your creepy stories. We want your creepy stories. Have you ever had a strange experience that you can't quite explain or something that made you frightened? Describe it.

Send us your description. LukeTeacher at Hotmail.com or in the comments section of the episode recently with Anna Brooke about paranormal experiences. I'd love to know your stories.

Send them to me. Anna and I will read them. The ones that we like, I'll read out on the podcast and the best one will receive a copy of Anna's new book, Death by Chocolate.

There you go. So send us your stories. I'm keen to read your accounts of creepy, strange and unexplained experiences.

Also, remember, check out the premium episode that accompanies this conversation that you heard just now. As I said at the beginning, I picked out various bits of vocab relating to this subject of food and created a vocab quiz and then recorded an episode with my wife and I tested her using the questions. So you can try to maybe compete with her or keep up with her when it comes to answering the questions with the bits of vocab.

And when you've done that, you can listen to this conversation again and those bits of vocab will be glaringly obvious to you. You'll be surprised. It's a surprisingly effective method of teaching you, taking time to actually focus on bits of vocab and then listening in context.

You will suddenly notice things that maybe you didn't even notice before or things you didn't understand before. It's a kind of like a fast track to broadening your vocabulary in a very effective way. And also my wife and I chatted about various things like what she thinks as a French person of my cooking and of English food in general.

It's a nice episode on lots of different levels. You can check it out if you are a premium subscriber, teachaluke.co.uk/premium And that is it for this episode.

Thank you so much for watching or listening wherever you have been enjoying this episode. Thanks again to Martin. I look forward to doing the next one of these.

I don't know what topic he will choose next time, but it's going to be interesting and enjoyable, I'm sure. Have a lovely morning, afternoon, evening or night wherever you are in the world and whatever you are doing with yourself at this moment in time, whether you're sitting on public transport or walking down the street or just lying down in a dark room or, I don't know, flying a helicopter or digging a huge hole in the ground for some reason or, I don't know, what else could you be doing, travelling across the ocean to an oil refinery or a secret base in the middle of the sea because you're working for a James Bond bad guy from a James Bond film who's created like an evil base where he's going to take over the world with some super weapon. And you answered a job advertisement in the newspaper that said, you know, guys wanted for, you know, evil base construction job, you know, discretion advised, discretion required, you know, job description must be very bad at shooting weapons and, you know, you don't mind being killed by British special agents.

Maybe that's you. If that is you, then, well, just good luck and I hope that everything goes all right for you and that the bad guy ultimately doesn't succeed and that you survive. Yeah, and if you see James Bond, say hi from me.

Okay, that's the end of the episode. Have a lovely time and I'll speak to you next time. But for this time, it's time to say goodbye, bye, bye, bye, bye.