

The background of the top section is a close-up photograph of an olive branch with several green olives and dark green leaves. The lighting is soft, creating a natural and fresh atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the left side of this image.

CLOSE UP  
UNIT 2:  
FOOD FOOD  
FOOD

READING: OIL FOR LIFE

TC LIYANA

# An *Oil* for Life

## Word Focus

**crush:** to press something very hard and break it

**harvest:** to pick and collect crops

**fresh:** not preserved or old

**improve:** to make something better

Maria Alcalá of Madrid speaks for many Mediterranean people when she says that "a meal without olive oil is boring". (1) \_\_\_\_\_ knows when the Mediterraneans first fell in love with olives because it was before people wrote and kept records. However, there is some evidence that people began growing olive trees around the Mediterranean Sea approximately 6,000 years ago. The Mediterranean countries still (2) \_\_\_\_\_ 99% of the world's olive oil with Spain being the world's biggest producer.

From ancient times (3) \_\_\_\_\_ today, the basic process of producing the oil is the same. First, farmers **crush** the olives. Then, they take the liquid and separate the oil from the water.

Many olive growers keep their ancient traditions and still **harvest** the olives (4) \_\_\_\_\_ hand. "We harvest in the traditional way", says Don Celso, an olive farmer from Tuscany, Italy. "It is less expensive to do it with machines but it's more a social thing. Twenty people come to help with the harvest and we pay them in oil".

Ancient civilisations used olive oil (5) \_\_\_\_\_ money and medicine. They even used it during war – they would heat it up and drop it down on the enemy! (6) \_\_\_\_\_ days, it is still used in religious ceremonies as it was in ancient times. It is also great for making fish and cheese stay **fresh**. There are even olive oil lamps.

One important study showed that Mediterranean people have the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ hearts in the western world. This is partly to do with frequently using olive oil. Other studies have shown that using olive oil can help to protect people from some types of diseases. The world is beginning to understand the advantages of using olive oil and it isn't an unusual thing to see on dinner tables outside the Mediterranean region anymore. The olive oil producing countries now sell large (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of olive oil to countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and North and South America.

Olive oil **improves** the lives of people everywhere when it is part of a well-balanced (9) \_\_\_\_\_. Ancient people knew about its benefits and modern science has confirmed them. Luckily, the Mediterranean people are happy to (10) \_\_\_\_\_ their secret with the world.



BASED ON THE TEXT, MATCH THE MEANING OF THE WORDS. WRITE *a*, *b*, *c*, *d* or *e* in the box.

**D** Find the words 1–5 in the text and match them to their definitions a–e.

- |                |                          |   |
|----------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1 evidence     | <input type="checkbox"/> | a something like water that you can pour easily         |
| 2 process      | <input type="checkbox"/> | b a series of things that you do to make something      |
| 3 liquid       | <input type="checkbox"/> | c reasons for believing that something is or isn't true |
| 4 civilisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | d an illness; something that makes you very sick        |
| 5 disease      | <input type="checkbox"/> | e a large group of people with its own culture          |

Read the text again. Fill in the blanks with the suitable answers from the choices given here.

## Exam Task

Read the text and choose the correct word for each space. For each question, mark the correct letter, a, b, c or d.

- |    |            |            |              |            |
|----|------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| 1  | a Anyone   | b Everyone | c No one     | d Someone  |
| 2  | a better   | b want     | c buy        | d produce  |
| 3  | a since    | b for      | c through    | d until    |
| 4  | a by       | b in       | c on         | d with     |
| 5  | a as       | b at       | c on         | d of       |
| 6  | a There    | b These    | c This       | d Those    |
| 7  | a lightest | b lowest   | c healthiest | d smallest |
| 8  | a amounts  | b groups   | c lots       | d numbers  |
| 9  | a food     | b dish     | c diet       | d plate    |
| 10 | a give     | b offer    | c share      | d show     |



THANK YOU.  
GOOD JOB!

