

Reading

The history of tea

British people drink 165 million cups of tea every day. But where did their favourite drink come from?

- 1 F Legend says, the history of tea started in 2737 BC. Chinese emperor Shen Nung was sitting under a tree. His servant was boiling some water when a leaf fell into the water. Shen Nung decided to try the new drink. He liked it, and so, tea was born!
- 2 ____ Is the story true? No one really knows. But we know that tea became a popular drink in China in the 7th century – and it became China's national drink. A writer named Lu Yu wrote an important book about tea in the 8th century which made tea drinking even more popular.
- 3 ____ Tea didn't arrive in Europe until the 17th century. At this time, Holland was an important sea power. The Dutch were the first to bring tea to Europe from the island of Java in 1606. Tea became fashionable in Holland, but it was expensive, so only rich people had enough money to buy it.
- 4 ____ Tea drinking didn't become popular in Britain until much later. A coffee house in the City of London was the first to serve tea in 1658. A few years later, the East India Company started importing tea from China, and tea became Britain's favourite drink – and this is still true today, hundreds of years later!
- 5 ____ But tea is popular all over the world – people drink mint tea in North Africa, green tea in China and Japan, rooibos tea in South Africa and maté in South America. Some people drink tea with sugar, others drink it with sugar, honey, lemon or milk, and some people don't add anything at all to their cup of tea.

There are many different kinds of tea, and many ways to enjoy it, but people all around the world agree that tea is amazing.

1 Read the article quickly and circle the correct answer.

Where does tea come from?

- a Britain
- b China
- c Holland

1 point for the correct answer

1

2 Read the article again. Match the headings (A–F) with the paragraphs. There is one extra heading.

- A Tea first appears in London
- B China's favourite drink
- C Tea or coffee?
- D How people like their tea
- E A drink for rich people
- F ~~Legendary beginnings~~

2 points for each correct answer

8

3 Read the article again. Give short answers to the questions.

- 1 Who drank the first cup of tea in the world?
Emperor Shen Nung.
- 2 Who wrote the first book about tea?

- 3 Did Europeans drink tea in the 16th century?

- 4 Where did Holland bring tea from?

- 5 Who drank tea in Holland? Why?

- 6 When did a British coffee house first serve tea?

- 7 Is maté popular in North Africa?

- 8 What does the text say people put in their cup of tea?

- 9 Do many people think that tea tastes good?

2 points for each correct answer

16

Reading total

25