

IN THE KITCHEN

Lesson preparation

1. Read the article. Are these sentences TRUE or FALSE:

- a. Linda Roberts cooks a three-course meal every evening.
- b. We spent more time cooking 20 years ago than we do now.
- c. Health advisers say we should never eat ready meals.
- d. The Spanish eat a lot of ready meals.
- e. Linda doesn't think her mother will start eating ready meals.

What's for dinner?



What are you doing, Mum?

Really? That's exactly what I'm making!

I'm cooking dinner. We're having roast chicken, potatoes, broccoli and peas.

Linda Roberts investigates the rise in popularity of ready meals

Like many working people, I never actually cook anything — I just don't have the time. My mother, on the other hand, still cooks a full three-course meal every evening, but then she doesn't have to work any more. I usually work very long hours and now I'm writing a book in my spare time, so ready meals are the perfect solution — or are they?

According to a survey by a British market research company, we only spend 20 minutes cooking each day — 20 years ago it was an hour a day. One reason for this change is ready meals. Now you can heat up a delicious Indian, Thai, Chinese or Italian meal in the microwave in under four minutes. What could be easier or quicker?

We all know these ready meals taste delicious, but many experts now believe they're bad for our health because they often contain a lot of sugar, fat and salt. Health advisers say

that we shouldn't eat ready meals too often and we need to read the labels carefully. Despite this, people who live in the UK spend over £1 billion a year on ready meals and the market is growing rapidly.

People in the USA and Sweden also buy a lot of ready meals, and they're becoming more common in Germany, France and Holland. The Spanish and Italians still cook their own meals, but things are beginning to change there too. My mother will never change, though – now she's doing an evening course in a traditional English cooking!

2. Put the verbs in brackets in the Present simple or Present continuous.

1

The ready meal I _____ (cook) right now is chicken and vegetables. I _____ (eat) a lot of ready meals because I _____ (prefer) to do other things in the evening. I _____ (learn) Italian at the moment, so I often _____ (watch) Italian films in the evenings. I _____ (think) my Italian _____ (get) quite good.

2

I _____ (not understand) her. She says that she _____ (put on) weight — well, that's because she _____ (never eat) properly. Also she _____ (not know) how to cook, so why she _____ (study) Italian instead of going to cookery classes?