**Pre-Reading**

Think about the following questions.

1. How much gas do you think the average person has a day?
2. What kinds of foods cause a person to have gas?
3. Does your culture have many different names for passing gas? Do you know any English words for passing gas?

**Vocabulary Preview**

Write the letter of the word or phrase with the same meaning as the underlined word.

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| a. dangerous                              | d. let go                           |
| b. a weight or force pushing on something | e. say one did something; confess   |
| c. takes in                               | f. slowed; stopped for a short time |

1. \_\_\_ No one likes to admit making a mistake.
2. \_\_\_ It hurt when the doctor put pressure on my stomach.
3. \_\_\_ Your body absorbs nutrients from food as it goes through your intestines.
4. \_\_\_ It is OK if a child eats a little sand. Sand is not harmful.
5. \_\_\_ He released the balloon, and all of the air came out.
6. \_\_\_ On her way home, she was delayed by her boss. He wanted to talk to her.

# I Cut the Cheese!



Toot, to cut the cheese, or to fart are all funny ways to talk about something that everyone does: passing gas! A normal person passes about half a liter of gas a day, which equals about 14 farts per day. Lots of people are embarrassed by passing gas, but there is no need to feel this way. The first step is to admit that everyone does it.

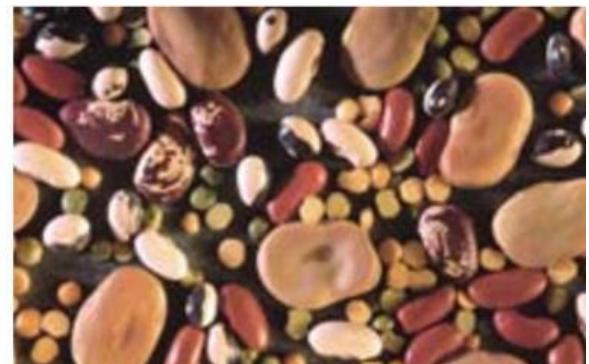
5 After you face up to this fact, then you can really enjoy learning some interesting facts about your gas.

There are several sources of gas. Gas in our **intestines** has to do with both the air we **swallow** and the gas molecules in our **blood**. In addition, gas is also produced from **chemical reactions** and **bacteria** living in our intestines. Nervous people usually have 10 more gas for two reasons. They swallow more air when they get nervous, and food usually goes through their **digestive systems** faster, which means that the **oxygen** in the food cannot be absorbed quickly enough. Therefore, the oxygen naturally found in the food goes into the intestines and becomes gas.

Another interesting fact is that a person's diet affects the **stinkiness** of his or her 15 gas. Foods with a lot of **sulfur** in them—such as eggs, meat, and cauliflower—cause stinkier gas. On the other hand, beans cause a lot of gas, but this gas isn't usually stinky because beans aren't high in sulfur. However, they do contain a lot of sugars that bacteria in the intestines love. The bacteria eat the sugars and produce gas.

Finally, people wonder, "Where does gas go 20 when you hold it in? Is this held gas harmful?" Well, this gas will not poison you, but you may get a bad stomachache from the pressure. The gas that you hold in is neither released nor absorbed. It moves back up into the intestines and sooner or later comes 25 out. It is not lost, just delayed.

Now that you know some facts about gas, be proud of yourself and say, "Yes, I cut the cheese!"



Reading Time \_\_\_\_\_ minutes \_\_\_\_\_ seconds

344 words

<sup>7</sup> **intestine:** the tube-like organ connecting the stomach and anus

<sup>8</sup> **swallow:** to pass from the mouth to the stomach

<sup>9</sup> **blood:** the liquid in the body that carries nutrients and oxygen

<sup>10</sup> **chemical reaction:** a change in chemical properties

<sup>11</sup> **bacteria:** tiny living organisms

<sup>12</sup> **digestive system:** the stomach and intestines together

<sup>13</sup> **oxygen:** air; O<sub>2</sub>

<sup>14</sup> **stinkiness:** the level of a bad smell

<sup>15</sup> **sulfur:** a chemical; S

### Choose the best answer.

1. What is the main idea?
  - a. Dangers of gas
  - b. Jokes about passing gas
  - c. Myths about gas in our bodies
  - d. Things to know about our gas
2. How much gas does a person produce in one day?
  - a. None
  - b. Less than one liter
  - c. One liter
  - d. Fourteen liters
3. Why does gas from our bodies smell bad?
  - a. The air is bad.
  - b. It contains sulfur.
  - c. Food is digested quickly.
  - d. It is from bacteria.
4. According to the reading, which of the following foods would cause stinkier gas?
  - a. Candy
  - b. Steak
  - c. Black beans
  - d. Pasta
5. What does the word "diet" in this reading probably mean?
  - a. A part of the digestive system
  - b. A program for losing weight
  - c. Special foods to improve health
  - d. The food a person eats

## Idiomatic Expressions

### Find these idioms in the reading.

- **face up to** [ to confront; to boldly meet ]  
She could not **face up to** her friend after the embarrassing accident.
- **have (something) to do with** [ to be connected with; to be related to ]  
Your low grades probably **have** something **to do with** the fact that you rarely study.
- **sooner or later** [ sometime in the future; eventually ]  
**Sooner or later**, women will get paid as much as men.

### Fill in the blank with one of the above idioms. Change its form if necessary.

1. Everybody has to see the doctor \_\_\_\_\_.
2. It is useless to lie. Someday you will have to \_\_\_\_\_ the truth.
3. Scientists think warmer temperatures \_\_\_\_\_ higher levels of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.

## Summary

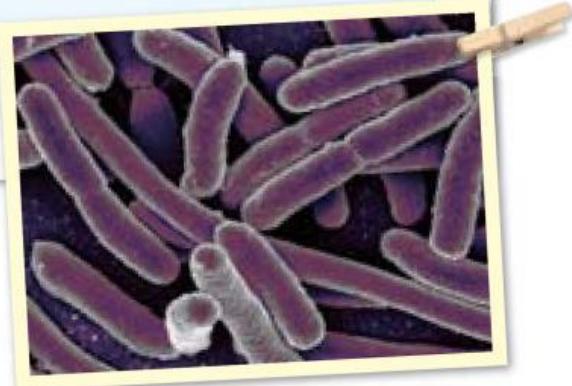
Scan the passage and complete the chart with the correct information.

into our intestines  
gas

high sulfur content  
We swallow air

Oxygen in food  
which contain sugar

| Sources of 1 _____                                       | Notes   |
|--|---|
| • 2 _____.   | • Nervous people swallow more.  |
| • Air molecules in our blood goes 3 _____.               | • Eating beans, 4 _____ produces more gas because the bacteria feed on the sugar. |
| • Bacteria in our intestines produces gas.               | • Food with a 5 _____ makes stinkier gas.   |
| • 6 _____ gets into our intestines from eating too fast. |   |



## Listening

### An Amazing Fact



Listen to the dialog and complete each sentence.

1. The speakers are talking about an insect that \_\_\_\_\_.
2. These insects produce a lot of gas because of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. These insects produce as much methane as \_\_\_\_\_.

Discuss the following questions.

1. Is passing gas embarrassing in your culture? Are other body functions embarrassing?
2. What kinds of things are embarrassing in other cultures but not yours?
3. Has anything funny or embarrassing happened to you or someone you know?

### ***There Is or There Are?***

*There is* is followed by a single noun, and *there are* is followed by a plural noun.

*Lots of people are embarrassed by passing gas, but there (is / are) no need to feel this way.*  
*There (is / are) several sources of gas.*

Write your own short paragraph by answering the questions below.

### **A Funny Story**

**(1)** What funny event or accident happened? **(2)** When did it happen?  
**(3)** Where did it happen? **(4)** Who was there? **(5)** How did people react?

### **Example**

*One time, my bathing suit came off in the pool. I was swimming during a party in high school. It happened in my friend's pool. There were about fifteen people at the party. Everybody was laughing, but I was really embarrassed.*

## Vocabulary and Idiom Review

**A. Choose the best word or phrase to fill in the blank.**

**B. Choose the correct form of the word to fill in the blank.**

8. He stood at the bus stop and looked \_\_\_\_ at his watch.  
a. nervousness      b. nervous      c. nervously

9. \_\_\_\_, it is not her best painting, but it is still interesting.  
a. Admission      b. Admit      c. Admittedly

10. You don't have to kill those insects. They are \_\_\_\_.  
a. harm      b. harmful      c. harmless