5 I Cut the Cheese!



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

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

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I Cut the Cheese!



To 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. 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 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 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 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 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

7 *intestine*: the tube-like organ connecting the stomach and anus

8 *swallow*: to pass from the mouth to the stomach

8 *blood*: the liquid in the body that carries nutrients and oxygen

9 *chemical reaction*: a change in chemical properties

9 *bacteria*: tiny living organisms

11 *digestive system*: the stomach and intestines together

11 *oxygen*: air; O_2

14 *stinkiness*: the level of a bad smell

15 *sulfur*: a chemical; S

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Reading Comprehension

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_2 in the atmosphere.

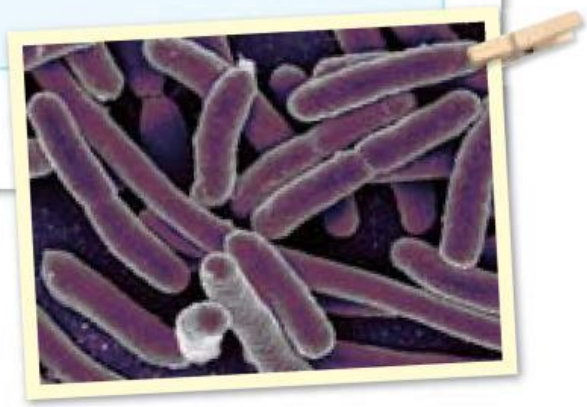
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Summary

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

into our intestines	**high sulfur content**	**Oxygen in food**
gas	**We swallow air**	**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

Track 10 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 _____.

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Discussion

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?

Grammar

***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.

Writing

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.

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Vocabulary and Idiom Review

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

1. A large part of my job _____ uploading information to the Internet.
a. ends up b. faces up to c. has to do with d. runs into

2. Because of last night's heavy rain, the ground cannot _____ any more water.
a. absorb b. release c. consist of d. swallow

3. I was proud to _____ that I did the work alone.
a. admit b. contain c. encourage d. matter

4. It was after 3:00 a.m., and the house was _____ and still.
a. harmful b. nervous c. silent d. stinky

5. I don't use rat _____ in my house because it might harm my cat.
a. form b. autograph c. source d. poison

6. She was upset because her flight was _____.
a. delayed b. funny c. produced d. frequent

7. The fax machine was the _____ of the annoying noise.
a. entertainer b. pressure c. myth d. source

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

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