12 READING

A Scan the article. In which country do people usually leave a 15–20% tip on food? In which country is tipping unnecessary?

TO TIP OR NOT TO TIP?

WHAT'S A TIP?

The verb *to tip* means to give money, and the noun *tip* is the money that you give to someone. It's a slang word from Old English. Around the world, many people give tips to people who provide a service for them. It's a way of saying thank you. But did you know that tipping customs around the world *vary* a lot?

WHO AND WHERE TO TIP

In some countries, like the United States, it's common to give a tip in a lot of different places. Almost everybody gives tips to servers in restaurants and cafés. Servers *rely on* those tips to add to the low *wages* they get paid for their jobs. People also tip taxi drivers and hairstylists. If an airport worker or a hotel bellhop helps you with a heavy suitcase, you tip them as well. In Japan, though, it's a very different story. In Japan, tipping isn't part of the culture, so it rarely happens. In fact, a tip might be *confusing* to the server. And in France, a "service charge" is included on all restaurant checks, so in fact, you've already tipped your server.

HOW MUCH TO TIP?

The amount people tip in the United States varies between 15 and 20% on restaurant checks. So, for example, if a restaurant total is $40, people give the server around $6–8. That seems like a lot of money for some visitors who come from countries where tipping isn't *customary*. According to one news source, the average tip in a New York restaurant is 19.1% of the total, but in London it's 11.8%. That's a big difference.

WHO'S THE BEST TIPPER?

A millionaire named Benjamin Olewine probably wins the prize for giving the world's most *generous* tip. Mr. Olewine paid for his server's nursing school fees as a tip! The waitress, Melissa, was working in a restaurant to save money for school. One day, she served breakfast to Mr. Olewine. The check was $3.45. The tip was more than $20,000!



B Read the article. Find the words in italics, then check (✓) the correct meaning of each word.

1. *vary*
- ☐ change
- ☐ stay the same

2. *rely on*
- ☐ ask for
- ☐ need

3. *wages*
- ☐ regular pay for a job
- ☐ tips received for a job

4. *confusing*
- ☐ unnecessary
- ☐ difficult to understand

5. *customary*
- ☐ usual
- ☐ unusual

6. *generous*
- ☐ very rich
- ☐ giving more than enough

C Check (✓) the statements that describe correct tipping behavior. For the items you don't check, what is acceptable?

- ☐ **1.** You're eating at a restaurant in London. You leave a 25% tip.
- ☐ **2.** You give your New York server a 15% tip.
- ☐ **3.** You give a large tip after your meal in Tokyo.
- ☐ **4.** Your bellhop in Chicago helps you carry your suitcase. You give him a tip.
- ☐ **5.** You pay your check in Paris and don't leave a tip.

D **GROUP WORK** Is tipping customary in your country? If it is, who do you tip and how much? If it isn't, what do you think about tipping?

LIVEWORKSHEETS