Lesson 1D

LISTENING | the ultimate comfort food
READING | why we eat

LISTENING

1 1.11 | **Listen to a radio interview about chocolate. Number the topics (a–e) in the order that they are mentioned.**

- **a** the first chocolate bars
- **b** an unsweetened drink made with cocoa beans
- **c** natural chemicals in chocolate
- **d** a drink sweetened with other ingredients
- **e** the amount of fat and sugar in chocolate

2 1.11 | **Listen again and choose the correct option (a–c) to complete each statement.**

1 The earliest drinks made with cocoa beans
- **a** were believed to be unhealthy.
- **b** had a spicy flavour.

2 The Spanish
- **a** were the first to make a sweet chocolate drink.
- **b** produced the first chocolate bars.

3 Foods that are naturally sweet
- **a** have always been considered healthy.
- **b** helped our ancestors to survive the winter.

4 Very few natural foods
- **a** contain both sugar and fat.
- **b** contain the same chemicals as chocolate.

READING

3 **Read the article below about why we eat. Match the headings (a–c) with the paragraphs (1–3).**

a Routine **b** Hunger **c** Emotions

4 **Read the article again. Are the statements True (T) or False (F), according to the writer?**

1 When children are under three years old, their appetite is regulated purely by hormones.
2 Gaining enjoyment from food helped early humans to survive.
3 Our senses only make us hungry when we need food.
4 Our body expects food at our usual mealtimes.

Why we eat

We eat because our bodies need food, right? Well, it seems things are actually a lot more complicated than that. Our appetite, apparently, is controlled by three distinct parts of the brain and between them, they may not always know what's best for us.

1 .....

Of course, we have a basic physical need for food and this tends to be controlled by the part of the brain responsible for regulating the amount of energy our body needs. After detecting a low level of sugar in our blood, our brain releases a hormone which sends a signal that our stomach is empty and that our body needs more fuel. Once nutrition is taken into the body, the brain releases a different hormone which tells us that we're full and can stop eating. Up to the age of around three, this is the main way in which our bodies regulate the amount we eat and explains why young children will naturally stop eating once they are full, even if there is still food on their plate. By the age of five, however, children still have this ability to self-regulate, but more parts of the brain start to affect their appetite. So the average five year old will continue to finish a whole plate of food, even if they're already full.

2 .....

The connection between food and pleasure is extremely powerful and this is controlled by the part of our brain which regulates our feelings. For very good evolutionary reasons, we are designed to feel happy when we eat food. This is a survival mechanism – if our distant ancestors hadn't enjoyed food, they might not have eaten enough and may not have built up stores of fat to keep them going when food was scarce. So, when we experience good food, our brain releases dopamine, the pleasure hormone, to give us the feel-good boost of happiness. This can be triggered when we see a plate of attractive looking food, or smell something which reminds us of a happy memory from childhood. However, our body sometimes wrongly interprets enjoying the sight or smell of food as hunger, even if we aren't actually hungry.

3 .....

Our bodies are designed to follow rhythms, like the rhythm of night and day. Things that we regularly do become fixed as unconscious behaviours that are difficult to resist. Again, this is a positive thing in many ways. Once something is a habit, we do it automatically, without having to waste energy making a conscious decision. However, our body may tell us we're hungry simply because it's breakfast time, even if we had a huge meal the evening before. And anyone who has tried to give up a habit knows how difficult it is to go against our body's instincts.