

Unit 17 What's in the fridge?

Expressions and clichés with words related to food and cooking

Learn the expressions

1 This unit deals with vocabulary about food. There are a lot of food-related idioms in English that describe personalities or mental states. Let's look at some of them. Complete the sentences with the expressions in the box. Check your answers in the answer key on this page.

a hard nut to crack	a piece of cake	in a pickle
not their cup of tea	worth their salt	

- Someone who is in a difficult situation is _____.
- Something that is very easy is _____.
- Something someone doesn't like is _____.
- Someone who is a good worker is _____.
- Someone who is difficult to persuade in an argument is _____.

2 An idea or a phrase that is used very often—usually to give advice—is called a cliché. Match the clichés with their meanings.

1. Don't bite off more than you can chew. ____	a. Don't be unhappy about something that has already happened.
2. You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. ____	b. When too many people are involved in doing something, the result doesn't come out well.
3. Don't cry over spilled milk. ____	c. You have a better chance of getting what you want if you're nice than if you're mean.
4. Too many cooks spoil the broth. ____	d. Don't attempt something that is too much to handle.
5. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. ____	e. You shouldn't depend completely on one thing or one event to be successful.

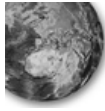
Answer Key

Exercise 1

- in a pickle
- a piece of cake
- not their cup of tea
- worth their salt
- a hard nut to crack

Exercise 2

- d
- c
- a
- b
- e



Use the expressions

3 Read the situations and choose the best response. Circle *a* or *b*.

- Hal has many talents and interests, but dancing is not one of them.
 - You're right: It's a piece of cake for him.
 - You're right: It's not his cup of tea.
- I've tried to persuade Emily not to marry Bob. After all, he's 20 years older than she is. But she won't listen.
 - Well, she's always been worth her salt.
 - You know, she's always been a hard nut to crack.
- I've been late for work twice this week, and my boss wants to see me this afternoon.
 - You're in a pickle, aren't you?
 - Don't bite off more than you can chew.
- Should we ask Joe, Amy, and Veronica to help us with this project?
 - Not a good idea: Let's not cry over spilled milk.
 - Not a good idea: Too many cooks spoil the broth.
- Tony is so sure he'll get into Carson College that he isn't applying to any other schools.
 - He shouldn't bite off more than he can chew.
 - He shouldn't put all his eggs in one basket.
- I'm so upset. I waited too long to get tickets for the concert, and now it's sold out.
 - You're a hard nut to crack.
 - Don't cry over spilled milk.
- This exercise isn't very hard, is it?
 - No, not at all. It's a piece of cake.
 - No, not really. It's in a pickle.
- The other day, a customer canceled an order at the last minute, but my boss didn't get angry. He told the customer he'd call back in a month to see if he'd changed his mind.
 - Well, he knows that too many cooks spoil the broth.
 - Well, he knows that you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.
- I'm taking six classes this semester and I'm also looking for a part-time job.
 - Wow, that's a lot! Just make sure you don't bite off more than you can chew.
 - That's going to be tough for you. I see you're a hard nut to crack.
- Tanya received a very challenging assignment at work, and she completed it three days early.
 - She shouldn't cry over spilled milk.
 - She's always been worth her salt.

Make the expressions your own

4 Answer these questions about yourself. Explain your answers.

- When was the last time you were in a pickle? What did you do?
- Have you ever cried over spilled milk? What happened? How did you get over it?
- Did you ever bite off more than you could chew? When did you realize it?