

Vocabulary Worksheet

Talking About Food — Taste & Texture



About the Worksheet

This worksheet is great for food lovers who want to learn and practice nine words that English speakers use to talk about taste and texture. You'll find definitions, examples, practice exercises, and an opportunity to share a story about your most memorable eating experience. In this worksheet, you'll learn and practice the vocabulary words *bland*, *greasy*, *crunchy*, *raw*, *soggy*, *sour*, *bitter*, *gone bad*, and *chewy*.



1. Bland

If a meal is tasteless or doesn't have a lot of flavor, we say that it's bland. Bland food usually needs salt, pepper, garlic, or something extra to spice it up. And if we're sick, sometimes our food can taste bland because our taste buds aren't working as well as they usually do.

EXAMPLES

*"My chicken is a little **bland**. Can you pass me the salt?"*

*"All foods taste **bland** to her right now because she has a cold."*

2. Greasy

If you need to wash your hands after eating something, that's probably because it's greasy. Greasy food is usually oily and has a lot of fat. Have you ever seen someone wipe a greasy slice of pizza with a napkin before they eat it? That's because greasy food is generally unhealthy, but almost always delicious.

EXAMPLES

*"I'm in the mood for a cheeseburger with some **greasy** french fries."*

*"How can you eat that much **greasy** food! Aren't you worried about your cholesterol?"*

3. Crunchy

Crunchy food should make a noise when you bite into it. If something has a crunchy texture, it's hard and crisp in a pleasant way, and it takes more effort for you to chew. Crunchy foods can be sweet or salty - or maybe even both. But make sure not to chew something too crunchy, like ice or hard candy. That's bad for your teeth!



EXAMPLES

*“My favorite fruits and veggies are the **crunchy** ones, like apples and celery.”*

*“I had a nice, **crunchy** granola bar with lunch today.”*

4. Raw

Raw food hasn't been cooked or processed in any way, and eating raw food can be a unique experience. Some people love to eat raw food because they believe it's healthier, while others worry that eating certain uncooked food can be dangerous. Generally, raw fruits and vegetables are safe, but eating raw meat can be a little risky depending on how it's prepared.

EXAMPLES

*“My brother puts a **raw** egg in his smoothies for extra protein.”*

*“She hates **raw** tomatoes, but she'll eat them if they're cooked.”*

5. Soggy

Have you ever eaten soggy cereal that was soaked with too much milk? You probably hated it, because most people find soggy foods kind of gross. We say that something is soggy when it's mushy and wet. Some foods - for example, desserts like tiramisu or tres leches - are supposed to be a little soggy.

EXAMPLES

*“My cereal got kind of **soggy**, so I threw it away.”*

*“I actually like **soggy** bread. Is that weird?”*

COMMON STRUCTURE

Get + soggy → My cereal **got** too **soggy**.



6. Sour

Sour things, like lemons and limes, have such a tart flavor that they might make your eyes water and your lips pucker. We say that something is sour when it has an acid taste, like vinegar or citrus fruit. Some things, like grapefruit, are supposed to be sour. But if your milk is sour, you should definitely throw it away.

EXAMPLES

*“That grapefruit was so **sour** that I had to add sugar.”*

*“I prefer my lemonade a little more **sour**, so I add extra lemon.”*

7. Bitter

We say that a food tastes bitter when it has a strong, sharp taste, like coffee or dark chocolate. A bitter flavor isn't bad, but it can be so powerful that people often need to add sugar or some kind of fat to balance the bitter flavor. It's very common to find bitter flavors in alcoholic drinks or beer, and many people like bitter tastes, which is why they might drink their coffee black.

EXAMPLES

*“Do you have any cream? Black coffee is too **bitter** for me.”*

*“Some people don't like Pale Ale beer because it tastes **bitter**, but I love it.”*

8. Go bad

When something has gone bad, it has started to rot, and it isn't good to eat any more. You usually know when foods like milk or eggs go bad because they have a rancid smell or taste. And if those leftovers that you've had in your fridge for two weeks smell weird, they've gone bad, and it's time to trash them.



EXAMPLES

*“I think this milk **has gone bad**, but I’m not sure. Can you smell it for me?”*

*“The tofu I was going to use for dinner **went bad**, so we just ordered pizza.”*

9. Chewy

Foods that have a chewy texture need to be, well, chewed with patience. It takes time and jaw muscles to eat something that’s chewy, like a piece of steak or a granola bar. If something is chewy, it’s not tender, and chewy meat might be overcooked. But some people like the feeling of chewy things, which is why they chew gum.

EXAMPLES

*“This steak has great flavor, but it’s a little **chewy**.”*

*“I love eating **chewy** candy at the movies, even though it always sticks to my teeth.”*



Summary Chart

Take a screenshot of this chart, print it out, or put it somewhere you will see it regularly. It's a great way to review phrasal verbs and remind yourself of how much you've learned.

TALK ABOUT FOOD – TASTE AND TEXTURE

EXPRESSION	MEANING	EXAMPLES
Bland	tasteless; flavorless	"These potatoes are kind of bland and need salt."
Greasy	oily; fatty; rich	"She'll be happy with some greasy fried chicken."
Crunchy	crispy; hard; crusty	"This apple is so crunchy and fresh."
Raw	uncooked	"I've never eaten a raw egg and never will."
Soggy	wet; mushy; soaked	"I put too much milk on my cereal, so it's soggy now."
Bitter	strong; sharp	"This dark chocolate is a little bitter, but not bad."
Go bad	started to rot; rancid	"I think this milk has gone bad; it smells strange."
Chewy	not tender; tough	"A piece of steak should be tender, not chewy."
Sour	acidic; tart	"This lemonade is still too sour. It needs more sugar."



Vocabulary Practice

1. WORDS IN CONTEXT

Match the words or phrases in bold to their synonyms or meanings.

not cooked flavorless acidic oily expired

1. If you think the cream has **gone bad**, don't put it back in the fridge!
2. I like to add some nice **sour** lemon to balance the saltiness of the fish.
3. She tries to stay away from most **greasy** food, but she'll eat french fries.
4. She was nervous about eating **raw** meat, but she said it was delicious.
5. Be sure to add salt to the water so the pasta doesn't taste **bland**.

2. FILL IN THE BLANKS

Complete the sentences with the correct words.

You might have to change verb forms (talk – talking or talked).

raw sour go bad bland greasy

1. The leftovers from two days ago _____ so quickly.
2. If the sauce is _____, add a little more garlic.
3. This apple is really _____.
4. The fish was okay, but the fries were too _____.
5. Mayonnaise is traditionally made with _____ eggs.



Vocabulary Practice

3. DEFINITIONS

Match the words or phrases to their definitions.

crunchy bitter soggy chewy

1. _____: strong and sharp on the tongue
2. _____: crisp so that it makes noise when you bite it
3. _____: unpleasantly wet and soft
4. _____: has to be chewed a lot before it becomes soft enough to swallow

4. WHAT'S ANOTHER WAY TO SAY...?

Rewrite the sentences with one of the words above.

You might have to make some changes to the sentences, or add/change a preposition.

1. I don't think this cake is supposed to be this **wet**.

2. Carrots are great because they're **crispy** and satisfying.

3. Your coffee is so **strong** that I always have to add milk and sugar.

4. These protein bars are cheap and have a nice, **tough** texture.



5. CLOZE

Read the text and complete the sentences with the correct words.

chewy sour go bad bland greasy

raw soggy bitter crunchy

“I once insulted a famous chef by telling him my meal had _____ and I wanted my money back. It’s an interesting story. My boyfriend and I usually eat a lot of unhealthy, _____ food, but we decided to go out to a fancy restaurant. Honestly, I’m a picky eater and I eat a lot of _____ foods, but I wanted to try something new.

We ordered oysters for an appetizer, which were _____ and _____. My boyfriend added fresh lemon to them, but then they were too _____. For my main course, I ordered a blackened tuna steak, but it tasted burnt and _____ to me. Then, for dessert, we ordered some kind of _____ cake that I’d never heard of before. The only things I enjoyed were the _____ breadsticks.

The chef wanted to talk to me when he found out I didn't like the tuna.

“Have you had tuna before?” I told him no. “I think you just don’t like tuna,” he said, and walked away. I haven’t gone back since.”



Speaking Practice

1. DISCUSSION

Answer the questions below.

1. Have you ever ordered a medium-done steak at a restaurant but it was almost **raw** when you cut into it? How did you handle it? Would you force yourself to eat it or demand another steak?
2. Have you left milk in the fridge until it **went bad** or tasted **sour**? What foods can you think of that are left to deliberately go sour?
3. How do you prefer your food - spicy or **bland**? Are there certain foods you just can't tolerate? What was your worst experience?
4. Do you like gum? Does your jaw hurt when you eat **chewy** foods? How would you react around someone who chewed their food noisily at a dinner or function?
5. When you see people eating **greasy** food, does it put you off? Why do you think people love this kind of food even though it's the least healthy?

2. SCENARIOS

Read the different scenarios and share your opinion or your advice.

Give as much detail as you can when answering the questions. Elaborate with examples or stories whenever possible.

I think you should ...

I recommend ...

Why don't you try ...

For example,

For instance,

Let me explain.

Even though/if

I remember when ...

This reminds me of ...

1. *"I've been trying to find healthier alternatives to french fries, so instead of potatoes, I've used sweet potatoes. Without fail, every time I make them, they turn out **soggy** and limp, but when I order them at a restaurant, they're crisp and delicious. What am I doing wrong?"*



2. *“There’s nothing more I love than a really good cup of coffee. While I like to make it myself, I also enjoy meeting friends for coffee. The problem is that one of my friends often invites me to have coffee at her place. I find it really strong and **bitter**. How do I tell her it doesn’t taste good?”*

3. *“Is it healthier to eat raw, **crunchy** vegetables or lightly steam them? Boiled vegetables taste too mushy and roasting them takes too much time. I’m also trying to avoid anything fried. Where can I find the best recipes?”*



Writing Practice

PRODUCTION

Choose 5 - 9 words you learned today, and use them to:

1. Write at least one paragraph about a bad meal you've had. If you need some inspiration, review the story about the tuna steak on page 8. Was it a misunderstanding? Was the food just bad? If you can't think of a bad experience, write about the most memorable meal you've ever had.

USE A VARIETY OF SENTENCE STYLES

Avoid using simple sentences. Instead, try to use a variety of sentence styles and lengths:

Type	Definition	Example
Simple	Consists of only one clause.	<i>"She likes traveling."</i>
Compound	Combines two independent clauses with: <i>and, but, yet, so, etc.</i>	<i>"She likes traveling, and she loves exploring new places."</i>
Complex	Combines one main clause and one dependent clause with: <i>if, even though, because, unless etc.</i>	<i>"Even though she likes traveling, she doesn't travel often."</i>

USE TRANSITION WORDS AND CONJUNCTIONS

Elaborate with examples or stories whenever possible. You can use the following transition words, phrases and conjunctions to connect your ideas:

- *For example,*
- *For instance,*
- *Let me explain.*
- *Even though/if*
- *I remember when ...*
- *This reminds me of ...*
- *Since ...*
- *Unless ...*
- *Until ...*
- *If ..., then ...*
- *Not only ..., but also ...*
- *Besides ...*



Answer Key

1. WORDS IN CONTEXT

1. expired 2. acidic 3. oily 4. not cooked 5. flavorless

2. FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. went bad 2. bland 3. sour 4. greasy 5. raw

3. DEFINITIONS

1. bitter 2. chewy 3. crunchy 4. soggy

4. WHAT'S ANOTHER WAY TO SAY...?

1. I don't think this cake is supposed to be this **soggy**.
2. Carrots are great because they're **crunchy** and satisfying.
3. Your coffee is so **bitter** that I always have to add milk and sugar.
4. These protein bars are cheap and have a nice, **chewy** texture.

5. CLOZE

I once insulted a famous chef by telling him my meal had **gone bad** and I wanted my money back. It's an interesting story. My boyfriend and I usually eat a lot of unhealthy, **greasy** food, but we decided to go out to a fancy restaurant. Honestly, I'm a picky eater and I eat a lot of **bland** foods, but I wanted to try something new. We ordered oysters for an appetizer, which were **raw** and **chewy**.

My boyfriend added fresh lemon to them, but then they were too **sour**. For my main course, I ordered a blackened tuna steak, but it tasted burnt and **bitter** to me. Then, for dessert, we ordered some kind of **soggy** cake that I'd never heard of before. The only things I enjoyed were the **crunchy** breadsticks.

The chef wanted to talk to me when he found out I didn't like the tuna. "Have you had tuna before?" I told him no. "I think you just don't like tuna," he said, and walked away. I haven't gone back since.