

Playing with food

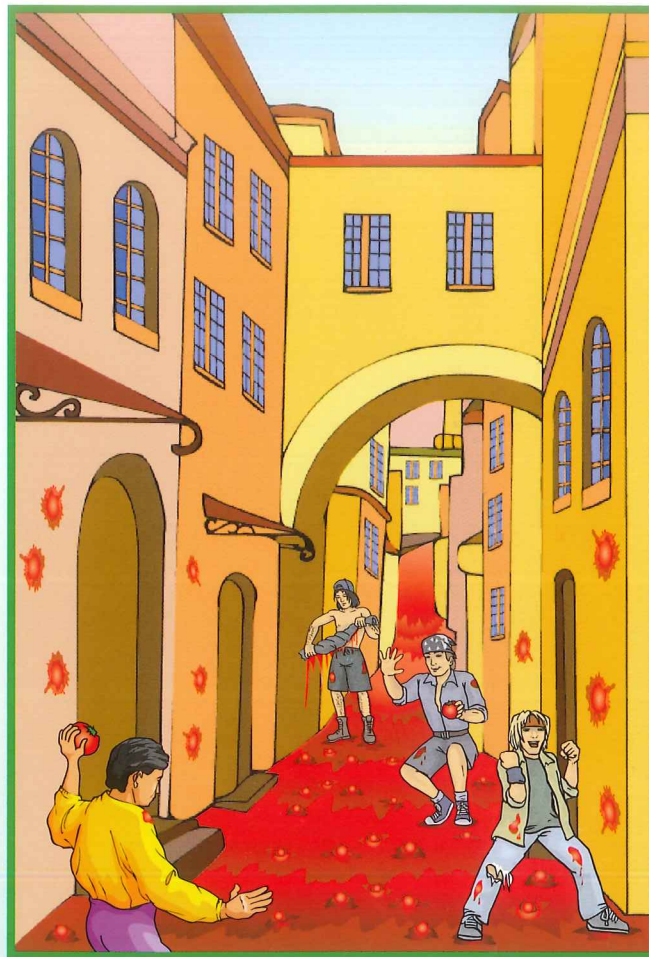
- 1 Have you ever been told not to play with your food? Have you ever wanted to throw that sausage at your friend? Normally if we were to do that we'd be in big trouble. But, there are some places in the world where people can play with their food in crazy ways. If you're in the mood for a big food fight, you should travel to one of these three towns.

Buñol, Spain



- 2 Every year the town of Buñol holds a festival called *La Tomatina*. This occurs at the end of August. On the Wednesday of *La Tomatina* something very strange happens. The streets fill with trucks containing tonnes of red tomatoes.

A cannon is fired and people start grabbing overripe tomatoes and throwing them at each other. The streets of Buñol turn into a flood of goey red. Despite the mess, there are rules so no one gets hurt. People are asked to wear goggles and gloves and it is forbidden to bring any glass or stone. Only tomatoes can



be thrown. Also, everyone must squash the tomatoes a bit before throwing them so that they don't hurt as much.

- 3 People from all over the world come to take part in *La Tomatina*. Normally there are 30,000 people throwing around 120,000 kg of tomatoes at one another. Large fire hoses are needed to clean the streets afterwards.

No one really knows why *La Tomatina* started. Some stories say that it began in 1944 when villagers threw tomatoes at bad musicians. Still, it's a lot of messy fun.

Ivrea, Italy



- 4 If you think that being hit by a tomato would hurt, you should stay clear of Ivrea. This Italian village holds a carnival in late February each year. The most famous part of this carnival is the *Battle of the Oranges*. This is a fight between nine teams of warriors on foot or in carriages. An orange is more dangerous than a soft tomato, so there are very strict rules for this battle.
- 5 The most important rule is that only the warriors can throw oranges. Spectators have to wear red helmets so they aren't targeted. Also, the battles can only take place in five areas of Ivrea. Teams can only play in their designated area and cannot leave until the battle is over.

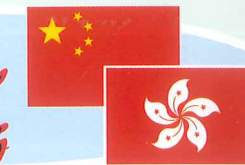
Each team has its own symbol and colour scheme, so players can find each other during the battle.

- 6 According to legend this all began in the Middle Ages, when peasants threw less dangerous beans at each other. One story says the orange throwing began in the early 20th century, when girls threw oranges at boys they were interested in. Another story, set in the 19th century, tells how the peasants rioted against a local duke and beheaded him. The oranges are meant to represent the duke's head.

A strange thing about the orange battle is the oranges themselves. They are not actually grown around Ivrea and are imported at a very high cost.



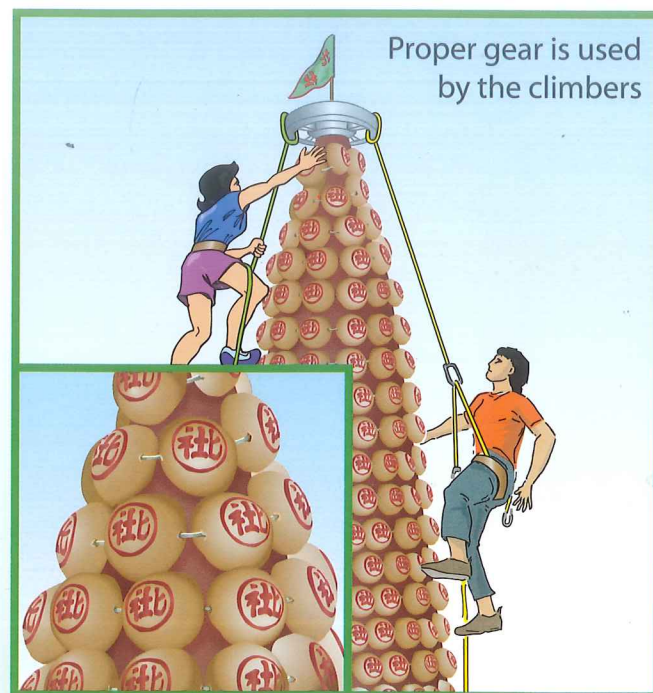
Cheung Chau, Hong Kong



- 7 Every year the island of Cheung Chau holds a festival to mark the eighth day of the Fourth Moon in the Chinese calendar (usually around May). This festival used to be part of a ritual carried out by locals to protect themselves from pirates. Nowadays the *Cheung Chau Da Jiu Festival* is mainly a showcase of Chinese culture from that region.
- 8 Cheung Chau Da Jiu is also known as the *Bun Festival*. The highlight of the weeklong festival is the Bun Snatching event. It is usually held at midnight on the second day of the festival. Three 20 metre bamboo towers, called bun mountains, are set up in front of the Pak Tai Temple and covered with steamed buns. In the past, young men raced each other to climb up and snatch the highest bun. The buns were believed to bring good luck to the families of whoever grabbed them.

- 9 In 1978, one of the bamboo towers collapsed, injuring 100 people. For safety reasons, the public bun snatching wasn't held again. Instead, people are given buns as they enter the festival.

To stop people from hurting themselves, the Bun Festival now has a single, metal tower for contestants to climb. Only twelve athletes are allowed to climb the tower. They are chosen from earlier heats. Other bun mountains are still made. There are three bamboo towers at Pak Tai Temple each year, as well as smaller ones scattered around the festival. These are just for show and cannot be climbed.



Questions

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| <p>1 Which town throws oranges in its crazy food festival?
a Buñol
b Ivrea
c Cheung Chau</p> <p>2 Why must people squash their tomatoes before throwing them?
a It makes them fly faster.
b It makes them splatter further.
c It makes them hurt less.</p> <p>3 When was a duke supposedly beheaded in Ivrea?
a during the middle ages
b in the 19th century
c in the 20th century</p> | <p>4 Bamboo towers covered in buns are also called
a bun mountains.
b Pak Tai Temple.
c Bun Snatching.</p> <p>5 What are people forbidden to have at La Tomatina?
a goggles
b glass
c goo</p> <p>6 These food festivals all demonstrate the importance of
a using local food.
b remembering traditions.
c being safe while having fun.</p> |
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Vocabulary

Find words in the text that match the meanings below. The word is in the section shown in brackets.

- 7 An organised celebration or event (2)
8 Allocated or selected (5)
9 Brought something into the country (6)
10 Seize quickly (8)
11 Competitors (9)

Grammar

Words that sound the same but have different meanings are called **Homophones**.

E.g. **to, too** and **two**. Write the correct **Homophone** in these sentences from the text.

- 12 Have you ever been told not to play with **your/you're** food?
13 Spectators have to **where/wear** red helmets.
14 Each **team/teem** has its own symbol.
15 Peasants **threw/through** less dangerous beans at each other.

Back To The Text...

- 16 In which food festival should a 'hit' hurt more?
a La Tomatina
b Battle of the Oranges
- 17 Which of these food festivals is not held in Europe?
a La Tomatina b The Bun Festival

- 18 Which is the only festival that involves some cooking?

- a La Tomatina
b The Bun Festival

Cloze

Food For Thought

Choose **five** of the following words to complete this cloze passage.

number child food lose
family latest dinner chips

Sitting down to have a meal together is a great family tradition. It is an opportunity for the 19 to share the events of the day and to catch up with the 20 news. The speed of modern day living has seen an increase in the 21 of 'take away' meals. Fast foods like fish and 22 or burgers are now a regular part of our diet. Is what they save us in effort worth what we 23 in family time?

Challenge Option

Vocabulary: How many words can you make from the word TOMATOES?