

**WORDS TO KNOW**

carnations      car • na • tions  
 calories        cal • o • ries  
 chopsticks     chop • sticks  
 explorer        ex • plor • er  
 macaroni       mac • a • ro • ni  
 misunderstood   mis • un • der • stood

poisonous      poi • son • ous  
 spaghetti      spa • ghet • ti  
 thunderstorm   thun • der • storm  
 varieties       va • ri • e • ties  
 vegetables     veg • e • ta • bles  
 vinegar        vin • e • gar

**Food for Thought**

You've probably never eaten Italian spaghetti. You see, it doesn't really come from Italy. It is actually a Chinese dish. The great explorer, Marco Polo, first brought some from China to his home in Italy.

Spaghetti and macaroni are two kinds of food called pasta. Pasta means the food is made from some type of noodle. There are more than 150 varieties of pasta. No one thought to put tomato sauce on pasta for hundreds of years. Instead they used wine as the sauce.

By the way, macaroni really is an Italian dish. It was first made in the 16th century.

Maybe you like mushrooms in your pasta. Lots of people think they taste great, and they are low in calories. Mushrooms have been eaten for thousands of years. The Greeks and Romans thought that thunder made mushrooms. You see, every time there was a big thunderstorm, clumps of mushrooms would appear.

The Egyptians prized mushrooms so much that only their rulers could eat them. The common people were not allowed to sample them.

Unfortunately, some kinds of mushrooms are poisonous. Some well-known kings and popes have died from eating a bad bunch. For years people tried all sorts of home cures, like mixing them with vinegars. At last they gave up. No one in Europe ate them for over a thousand years. But they became popular again during the 16th century.

Speaking of vinegar, it has a long history. Many different flavors were used by the Romans and Greeks. How would you like to try vinegar mixed with pepper, carnations, or mustard? That's what the French did.

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Of course, we know that chop suey is from China. Or is it? The truth is that chop suey was invented in America by a Chinese official. One night he invited a group of his American friends to dinner. They wanted some Chinese food, but he didn't have any in the house.

The man had his cook combine all the vegetables he could find and add soy sauce. Then this new dish was served with chopsticks. All agreed it was delicious. They wanted to know the name of this wonderful Chinese food.

The host looked around and saw the chopsticks and the soy sauce. So he said, "It's called chop-soya." His friends misunderstood and thought he said chop-suey. And that's how a new Chinese-American dish was born.

WORDS READ	TIME	WORDS PER MINUTE

1. What country did spaghetti come from? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name two kinds of pasta. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The Greeks thought that mushrooms came from \_\_\_\_\_
4. The French used pepper, carnations, and mustard to flavor \_\_\_\_\_
5. An American dish invented by a Chinese official is \_\_\_\_\_
6. Chop suey gets its name from these two things: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. If you found mushrooms growing in a forest, would it be a good idea to taste them? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_