

Preliminary (PET) Reading Part 3 - Identifying Distractors

A. Discuss with a partner.

1. Do you like cooking? Why / Why not?
2. Do you think you are a good cook? Why / Why not?
3. How do you do these things?
 - a. make a cup of tea or coffee
 - b. cook pasta
 - c. fry an egg
 - d. grill chicken
 - e. prepare a salad dressing



B. Match the cooking verbs (1-8) to a definition (a-h).

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| 1. boil | a. bring liquid to a high temperature where it bubbles |
| 2. drain | b. remove liquid by pouring it out |
| 3. stir | c. combine ingredients together |
| 4. add | d. put more of something in a recipe |
| 5. mix | e. wash quickly with water |
| 6. rinse | f. prepare food using heat |
| 7. cook | g. improve food or make the flavour better |
| 8. enhance | h. move food with a spoon or other tool |

C. Read the text about cooking pasta and complete the tasks. For each question, choose the best answer (A, B, C or D).

Cooking the Perfect Pasta

Cooking pasta might seem simple, but there are some essential steps to ensure it turns out perfectly. First, always use a **large pot with plenty of water**. This **helps all the pieces of pasta stay separate**. Add **salt to the water** before **it boils**; it helps to enhance **the flavour of the pasta**. A tablespoon of olive oil can also be added, but some chefs argue it's unnecessary.

When the water is boiling, add the pasta and stir for a few seconds. Cooking times vary depending on the type of pasta, so always check the packet instructions. For example, spaghetti typically takes 8–10 minutes to cook al dente. The water might look cloudy, but that's normal. The instructions will help you choose the right cooking time, but you should always check by trying a piece of pasta to see if it is the right texture. Some people like to throw their pasta at the wall to see if it sticks, but this isn't a very reliable trick.

Once the pasta is ready, drain it immediately but do not rinse it or let it dry. Rinsing removes the starch that helps sauces stick to the pasta. To complete your dish, mix the pasta with your chosen sauce straight away. A quick toss in a hot pan with the sauce can make all the difference. Top with cheese or herbs for extra flavour, and your perfect pasta dish is ready to serve.

Information in the text has been highlighted to identify the question (blue), the correct answers (green) and distractors (red). Explain why the distractors are incorrect using evidence from the text.

1. Why should you use a large pot when cooking pasta?

- A. To make the water boil faster.
- B. To prevent the pasta from sticking together.
- C. To make sure the pasta absorbs the salt.
- D. To help the flavour of the pasta.

For questions 2-5, underline the correct answers in the text, and circle the distractors (or use coloured highlighters). Then, explain why the distractors are incorrect using evidence from the text.

2. When should you add pasta to the pot?

- A. As soon as the salt is added.
- B. Before the water starts boiling.
- C. When the water is boiling.
- D. Once the oil has been added.

3. How can you tell the pasta is ready?

- A. The pasta feels firm when bitten.
- B. It sticks to the wall when thrown.
- C. The cooking time matches the packet instructions.
- D. The water looks cloudy and foamy.

4. What should you do right after draining the pasta?

- A. Rinse it under cold water to cool it down.
- B. Leave it to dry.
- C. Mix it with the sauce while it is still hot.
- D. Add olive oil to stop it from sticking.

5. How does the writer suggest finishing the pasta dish?

- A. Prepare with lots of cheese.
- B. Cook it again in a hot pan.
- C. Mix it with the sauce while it is still hot.
- D. Serve it immediately.

D. Now complete the following Preliminary (PET) Reading Part 3 task, carefully considering distractors. Read the text about preparing salad dressing and answer the questions. For each question, choose the best answer (A, B, C or D).

Preparing a Simple Salad Dressing

Making a tasty salad dressing is easier than you think, and it can change a plain salad into a delicious dish. Start by mixing three parts of oil with one part of vinegar. Olive oil and balsamic vinegar are popular options, but you can also try sunflower oil or apple cider vinegar for a different flavour. Some people prefer an equal mix of oil and vinegar, but this can make the dressing too sour for most tastes.

After you have the base, add a pinch of salt and a little pepper. If you like it sweeter, you can mix in a small amount of honey or sugar. For a sharper taste, you can squeeze some lemon juice. Some chefs say you can skip the pepper or add garlic for more flavour, but these options depend on your preferences. If you want it creamy, add a spoonful of mayonnaise or yoghurt. You can also use herbs like parsley or basil to add more flavour.

It's important to mix the dressing well. Use a whisk or shake it in a jar with a lid until it is smooth. Stirring with a spoon isn't enough to combine the ingredients properly. When it's ready, pour it over your salad just before you eat it. If you make extra dressing, store it in a container in the fridge, where it will stay fresh for up to a week. Some people believe it lasts for up to two weeks, but it's best to use it sooner. Shake it well before using it again.

By following these steps, you can make a dressing that goes well with almost any type of salad, from leafy greens to cooked vegetables.

1. What is the correct ratio of oil to vinegar?

- A. Equal parts oil and vinegar.
- B. Three parts oil to one part vinegar.
- C. More vinegar than oil.
- D. Two parts oil to one part vinegar.

2. What should you do if you want the dressing to taste sweeter?

- A. Add garlic to the mixture.
- B. Use balsamic vinegar instead of apple cider vinegar.
- C. Leave out the pepper.
- D. Mix in honey or sugar.

3. Which ingredient can make the dressing creamy?

- A. Garlic.
- B. Yoghurt or mayonnaise.
- C. Olive oil.
- D. Lemon juice.

4. How should you mix the dressing?

- A. Shake or whisk it until smooth.
- B. Stir it with a spoon until smooth.
- C. Leave it to combine naturally.
- D. Heat it in a jar with a lid.

5. How long can you store the dressing in the fridge?

- A. Up to two weeks.
- B. A few days.
- C. About one week.
- D. More than a month.



ANSWER KEY

- A. Answers will vary
- B. 1-a 2-b 3-h 4-d 5-c 6-e 7-f 8-g
- C. 1-B 2-C 3-A 4-C 5-C
- D. 1-B 2-D 3-B 4-A 5-C