

A Reading Exercise with Food Related Phrasal Verbs

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This is a lesson using food-related phrasal verbs in context. Print it out. Have your students guess what the phrasal verbs mean. This activity can be followed-up with the Internet TESL Journal's quiz on [Food Phrasal Verbs](#).

Tom Smith Bolts It Down

Phrasal verbs add colour to spoken language. Here are some phrasal verbs related to food and eating. Guess what they mean as you read.

Tom Smith usually has only 15 minutes to eat lunch so he bolts it down (1). This does not mean he eats much for lunch since he only has a sandwich and a coffee. However, his wife Susan loves cooking and she always whips up (2) a wonderful dinner. This explains why Tom is not so thin. He pigs out (3) every evening on a full course dinner - a roast with vegetables and a pasta side and to top it off (4), a big dessert which Susan picks up (5) on the way home from school where she is a teacher. Susan is quite petite, so it is not surprising that she only picks at (6) all the food she prepares and just gnaws at (7) a carrot or some other vegetable while she listens to Tom speak about his day. For breakfast, Tom sometimes warms up (8) Susan's left-overs and then he runs off for another day of work. This is against the doctor's advice so Tom should think about cutting back (9) on meat and eggs to bring down (10) his cholesterol. Actually, Mary, the woman who helps them with their house also has high cholesterol, even though she has cut out (11) meat and eggs and is on a diet of fish and steamed vegetables. Recently, however, Susan has noticed that the whiskey bottle is emptying out quite quickly so she suspects that Mary is knocking it back (12) now and again. This would be OK except for the fact that this is Susan's favourite bottle of whiskey!

So, what did the phrasal verbs mean? Write a short explanation for each.

1. to bolt down
2. to whip up
3. to pig out
4. to top off
5. to pick up
6. to pick at
7. to gnaw at
8. to warm up
9. to cut back
10. to bring down
11. to cut out
12. to knock it back

Now check if your guesses were right with the little quiz at:

<http://iteslj.org/quizzes/lb/pvfooddrink.html>