

TEST 1 PAPER 1: READING Part 2 (questions 9-15)

Part 2

You are going to read an article by retired lawyer and keen cook John Griffiths. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A-H** the one which fits each gap (9-15). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Cooking for friends

Choosing the degree I should study for at university was quite difficult for me as there were two careers that I found equally attractive: the law and catering. After much soul searching, I realised that whilst I could be a lawyer during the day and then enjoy cookery as a form of relaxation, the reverse was not true. Thus, I opted for a law degree and made food and wine my number one hobby.

I have never regretted this decision. Working as a lawyer provided a good living and allowed me enough spare time to indulge myself by enjoying some very fine food and wines at many superb restaurants. A life in catering would have meant that I would always have been working when my friends were playing and vice versa. The hours that have to be worked by chefs are quite ridiculous. They have to arrive at their restaurant by mid-morning, at the latest, to prepare for lunch. They work all afternoon dealing with the business side of their establishment and developing new recipes. Then, they must prepare for evening service probably crawling into bed in the small hours of the next morning feeling absolutely shattered!

Sharing my love of fine food and wines with good friends in the relaxed atmosphere of my home has more than compensated for not owning a restaurant. Being a professional chef probably would have meant that, by now, I would be sick of the sight of food, much as I am completely turned off by the merest mention of anything to do with the law!

Planning a meal for people I love is a great pleasure. I have a vast collection of cookery books and I am an avid fan of many a TV chef. The problem I have, therefore, is choosing what to cook from so many different possibilities. How do I choose? Well, that depends very much on the friends. A starting point has to be catering for their own likes and dislikes and trying to avoid serving them the same dishes as last time they visited. I don't claim to be anything other than an enthusiastic amateur but quite a few friends appear to be daunted by the prospect of cooking for me. They seem to think that some of the food I produce is better than they can do and, not wanting to appear to be a show-off or to overwhelm them, I sometimes hold back and cook something simpler than the more adventurous fare I might really have wanted to try.

The friends I like cooking for most of all are those who share the love of food and wine as much as I do and who are quite happy to reciprocate, in grand style, when I pay them a return visit.

Generally, my cooking has become less complex and pretentious over the years and, although I use recipe books and TV chefs as inspiration, I tend to find that the best way of deciding what to cook is to see what is available when I do the shopping. Years ago, I would have retired early to bed with a great heap of books around me, ploughing through them trying to find recipes that would be seasonal, suitable and impressive only to find that, when I visited the shops, many of the ingredients I needed were either unavailable or not very good.

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Nowadays, I tend to do the reverse: what I cook is controlled by what I have been able to buy.

14 I might have had one or two vague ideas but, more often than not, I am scrabbling through pages of recipes trying to find something new to do with some scallops, a leg of lamb and a punnet of raspberries. I nearly always buy some crème fraiche, a bunch of coriander and some seasonal vegetables. My store cupboard is pretty good and I can usually find all the spices I need, together with onions, garlic, chillies and boring stuff like flour, butter and so on.

15 I strongly believe that if you have good ingredients you will be able to turn out something worth eating.

At the end of a meal there is nothing better than settling down with a strong espresso and a dish of the very best chocolates. The very best of friends can normally provide entertaining conversation but, to me, the finest compliment I can be paid is that they aren't afraid of gently nodding off. It shows that they feel satisfied, relaxed and happy as a result of my efforts!

A How do you fit a decent social life into that sort of existence?

B The choices I make depend not only on the wines that might best complement the food but also upon the preferences of my guests.

C However, it was the luxury of having the time to cook for friends at home that underlined the good sense of the decision I had made.

D Another factor is their attitude to their own cooking skills.

E It is not unusual for me to simply make everything up as I go along!

F It is one of the great joys of my life and cooking has remained fun.

G This means that, very often, I don't know what I am giving my friends until a few hours before they arrive.

H For these friends, I like to pull out all the stops!

