

Oxford
Como



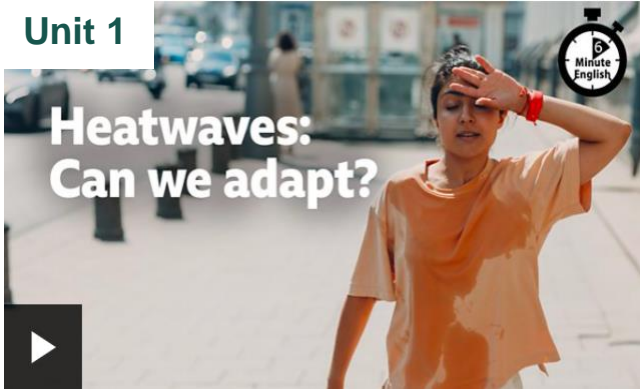
**In our
time**

**Engaging English
Conversation Topics**

Index

Unit 1 – Heatwaves	pg. 2
Unit 2 – The right way to say sorry	pg. 6
Unit 3 – Is it wrong to eat plants?	Pg. 11
Unit 4 – The benefits of doing nothing	pg. 15
Unit 5 – Doomscrolling	pg. 19
Unit 6 – Food and Mood	pg. 23
Unit 7 – The hidden life of buffets	pg. 27
Unit 8 – Can AI have a mind of its own?	pg. 32
Unit 9 – Why do you procrastinate?	pg. 37

Unit 1



The conversation addresses rising global temperatures, especially in India, and the challenges of keeping homes cool without modern amenities.

The dialogue highlights an innovative solution using reflective white paint on roofs to combat heat. It also introduces 'jaali,' a traditional Indian cooling method, emphasizing the blend of old and new solutions to tackle current challenges.

Beth I have a confession to make, Neil - I love the hot weather. It's a chance to get outside, maybe get a suntan. But sometimes it gets too hot, even for me.

Neil Yes, depending where in the world you live, you've probably noticed that it's getting hotter year after year. 2023 is the hottest year on record with heatwaves in many countries around the world, even Britain.

Beth When it gets too hot, the human body knows how to cool down. It **sweats**, passing salty water called sweat through the skin to lose heat. But unlike the body, houses don't know how to keep cool. And in hot parts of the world where air conditioning is unavailable, or unaffordable, this is a real problem.

Neil In this programme, we'll be hearing about an innovative new idea for keeping houses cool in one of the hottest countries on Earth, India. And as usual we'll be learning some useful new vocabulary as well.

Beth But before we hear more about this sweaty subject, I have a question for you, Neil. Living in cities where summer temperatures regularly exceed 45 degrees Celsius, Indians have been finding clever ways to keep their houses cool for over five thousand years. One of them is called 'jaali', but what exactly is it? Is 'jaali':

- a) a tall house designed to reduce sunlight?
- b) a honeycomb pattern used in windows? or,
- c) a system for spraying cool water?

Neil Hmm, I'll guess jaali is, b) a honeycomb window pattern.

Beth OK, Neil, we'll find out the answer later in the programme. In May 2022, the temperature in Uttar Pradesh, the largest state in north India, reached 49.2 degrees Celsius. Roshni Diwakar is a consultant for the Mahila Housing Trust, an NGO helping poor Indian women to heat-proof their houses. These women often work from home while their husbands are out in the heat working on construction sites. Here Roshni describes a typical house to BBC World Service programme, People Fixing The World:

Roshni Diwakar They live in a small one-bedroom house with no windows, no natural **ventilation**. They don't necessarily have illegal electric connections, and even if they do, they don't have electricity 24 hours a day - there are **power cuts**, especially in the summer months. Many of them have tin roofs which of course will really heat up. Health gets affected, because their health is affected, their livelihood gets affected because they're **daily wage earners** - if you don't work you don't earn.

Neil Many of the houses have no window so there is no **ventilation** - the movement of fresh air around a space. Air conditioning needs electricity which most families can't afford, and even those who can experience frequent **power cuts**— periods when the supply of electricity is stopped.

Beth In this heat, sickness is common. Often the men can't work, which is a problem because they are the **daily wage earners**- someone who earns money on a day-to-day basis meaning that they will receive no money if they cannot work. Families spend most of the day outside in the street, and at night it's still too hot to sleep, even on the roof.

Neil But fortunately, Roshni has been working on a clever cool roof solution – white paint. Painting reflective anti-solar white paint on the roof can reduce room temperatures by up to 4 degrees. It may not sound like much, but it makes a big difference and allows families to work, cook, and even sleep inside. Here's Roshni again, talking with BBC World Service programme, People Fixing The World:

Roshni Diwakar This has honestly been the most successful of the technologies that they've adopted. We started off by doing it in the city of Ahmedabad, but we've done it across other cities - we've done it in Bangalore, we've done it in Jodhpur. In fact in Jodhpur we've done it in an entire **slum**.

Myra Anubi Mahila Housing Trust gets external funding and uses it to **subsidise** the cost of the paint meaning communities only end up paying 15 to 20% of the actual price.

Beth Roshni's housing trust has been painting houses in cities all over India. In Jodhpur, a city on the edge of the Thar Desert, they painted an entire **slum**— a poor and crowded area of a city with very bad housing conditions.

Neil What's more, the trust **subsidises** the paint meaning they pay part of the cost, so even the poorest families can afford it. It's a great example of Indians skilfully finding ways of adapting to the heat – a modern version of 'jaali', you could say. So, what was the answer to your question, Beth? Was my idea - that 'jaali' is a honeycomb pattern used in windows – correct?

Beth It was... the correct answer! 'Jaali' is a honeycomb design with many small holes set into wooden or stone windows. The small holes keep out the sunlight, and cool down the air coming in.

Glossary

Heatwaves: Brief, intense hot weather periods.
The city experienced a severe heatwave last summer.

Suntan: Browned skin from sun exposure.
She got a deep suntan after her beach vacation.

Sweat: Salty fluid for body temperature regulation.
After his run, his forehead was dripping with sweat.

Air Conditioning: System controlling air temperature and quality.
The office stays comfortable thanks to the air conditioning.

Jaali: Indian honeycomb window pattern for ventilation.
The jaali design in her house is both functional and beautiful.

Power Cuts: Interruptions in electricity supply.
The town experienced frequent power cuts during the storm.

Tin Roofs: Metal roofs that heat up in sunlight.
The tin roof made the attic unbearably hot in summers.

Daily Wage Earners: People earning money daily without a fixed salary.

Daily wage earners are affected most during economic downturns.

Livelihood: Means of securing life's necessities.

Fishing is the main livelihood of the coastal village.

Match each word in the left column with its correct definition in the right column.

Word	Definition
Heatwaves	a) Browned skin from sun exposure.
Suntan	b) People earning money daily without a fixed salary.
Sweat	c) Provision of fresh air to spaces.
Air Conditioning	d) System controlling air temperature and quality.
Jaali	e) Means of securing life's necessities.
Ventilation	f) Salty fluid for body temperature regulation.
Power Cuts	g) Interruptions in electricity supply.
Tin Roofs	h) Metal roofs that heat up in sunlight.
Daily Wage Earners	i) Brief, intense hot weather periods.
Livelihood	j) Indian honeycomb window pattern for ventilation.

Word	Definition
Sickness	A. A type of paint that reflects sunlight and reduces temperature.
Daily wage earners	B. A design in windows with many small holes to keep out sunlight.
Reflective anti-solar white ...	C. A condition impairing one's health.
Subsidise	D. Individuals who earn money only for the days they work.
Slum	E. A poor and crowded area with bad housing conditions.

True/False Comprehension Questions:

1. Beth enjoys hot weather because she can go outside and potentially get a suntan.
True/False
2. According to Neil, 2023 was the mildest year on record.
True/False
3. Britain experienced heatwaves in the year 2023.
True/False
4. The human body cools down by releasing salty water called sweat through the skin.
True/False
5. In certain hot areas, every household has affordable air conditioning.
True/False
6. The episode is discussing an innovative idea to keep homes cool specifically in the USA.
True/False

Find the right question

1. Which question is Beth answering?

"I love the hot weather."

- Why do you go outside?
- What do you think about the cold weather?
- Do you like hot weather?

2. Which question is Neil responding to?

"2023 is the hottest year on record with heatwaves in many countries around the world, even Britain."

- When was the last time Britain experienced heatwaves?
- What's special about the weather in 2023?
- Are heatwaves common every year?

3. Which question is Beth addressing?

"When it gets too hot, the human body knows how to cool down."

- How does the body react to cold weather?
- What happens when it's too hot for the body?
- Do humans sweat in the cold?

4. Which question is Neil answering?

"In this programme, we'll be hearing about an innovative new idea for keeping houses cool in one of the hottest countries on Earth, India."

- Where won't the programme be focused?
- What will be discussed in this programme?
- Are they talking about heating houses?

Questions for you...

- Have you ever experienced a heatwave? If so, how did you cope with the extreme temperatures?
- Can you recall a particularly intense heatwave from your past? How did it impact your daily routines and activities?
- Describe any precautionary measures or strategies you've adopted in response to heatwaves. Have they been effective?
- Share a memorable story or event that occurred during a heatwave. How did the extreme heat play a role in that experience?

Unit 2

The right way to say sorry



In this "6 Minute English" episode from BBC Learning English, hosts Neil and Beth discuss the different ways people say "sorry" in English. They explain that the word can have different meanings based on the situation. For example, if someone is sick, you might say "sorry" to show you care. But if you make a mistake, like stepping on someone's foot, you say "sorry" to admit it was your fault. The hosts also talk about how often British people

apologize.

An example they give is Boris Johnson, a British politician, who had to say "sorry" for a mistake he made. The main message of the dialogue is that it's important to mean it when you say "sorry." It's not just about the words, but also about being sincere.

Neil Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil.

Beth And I'm Beth.

Neil There are many ways of saying sorry in English, and they all have a slightly different meaning. If you tell me you're ill, and I say, "Oh, I'm sorry", that means I sympathise, and I hope you get better soon.

Beth If you step on my toes by mistake, and say, "I'm so sorry", you mean oops that was my fault and I didn't mean to do it.

Neil And if you don't really feel sorry, you might be sarcastic, "Oh, I'm soooo sorry!" meaning exactly the opposite – that you're not sorry at all.

Beth Saying sorry for something you've done in English can be quite confusing, and to make things worse, the British are world champions at apologising. In this programme we'll discuss ways of saying sorry, and as usual we'll be learning some useful new vocabulary as well.

Neil Sorry! but I'm going to have to stop you there, Beth, because first I have a question to ask. We know that the British love to say sorry. In fact, a recent survey found that some Brits apologise up to twenty times a day. So according to the same survey, how many times per day does the average Brit say sorry? Is it:

a) four times per day? b) six times per day? or c) eight times per day?

Beth I'm going to guess it's six times a day.

Neil OK, Beth, I'll reveal the answer later in the programme. Since the British are famous for apologising it's no surprise that Louise Mullany started researching the language of apologising in Britain, at the University of Nottingham. Now a professor of sociolinguistics, Louise spoke with BBC Radio 4 programme, Word of Mouth:

Professor Louise Mullany And I was really interested in looking at how people apologise, particularly public figures so I did a lot of research in the workplace and looking at the media, and looking at politicians in particular, and one of the things that really interested me at the time was a lot of writers were talking about us entering an age of an apology, and there's a real sense that public figures in particular are called upon to apologise for multiple different things, and if they don't apologise then that's a big faux pas.

Beth Saying sorry is especially important in politics, and Professor Mullany studied the apologies of public figures – famous people, including politicians, who are often discussed in newspapers

and seen on radio and television. When politicians make mistakes, they are expected to apologise, and failing to say sorry is a faux pas – a remark made in a social situation that causes embarrassment or offence.

Neil Most politicians hate apologising and with good reason. Saying sorry means taking responsibility, and the apology needs to be sincere. A good example of this is the apology Boris Johnson made to the House of Commons during the 'Partygate' scandal in the UK when he broke COVID lockdown rules and had to pay a fine - a sum of money paid as a punishment for breaking the rules. Here, Professor Louise Mullany, analyses the apology for BBC Radio 4 programme, Word of Mouth:

Professor Louise Mullany It's very unusual in a political apology because he comes out and says, 'I am responsible', but there is the caveat that he wasn't certain that he was breaking the rules, he didn't realise which he continues to say in his apology that came out after the fine, so he repeats the apology, and he caveats it around other political events... and he uses humility when he was in the House the day after he paid his fine, and was very quick to say, 'I've paid the fine, I've given the reparation, I've paid the money, let's draw a line under the whole business now'.

Beth Boris Johnson claimed he didn't know he was breaking the rules. His apology contained a caveat – a warning that what he said was limited, or not completely true. Eventually, Boris Johnson did apologise, but many people didn't trust him and he couldn't draw a line under the 'Partygate' scandal. If you draw a line under something, you try to move on from a bad situation and make a fresh start.

Neil Apologising is hard work – the apology must be sincere, and often the person does something to show they mean it. Which reminds me that it's time to reveal the answer to my question, Beth.

Beth Yes. You asked me how many times a day the average Brit says sorry, and I guessed it was six. Was I right?

Neil Well, I'm very sorry, but that was... the wrong answer. The average Brit says sorry around eight times a day, making it probably the most over-used word in the English language. Sorry about that!

Beth Right, let's recap the vocabulary we've learned from this programme about saying sorry, starting with sarcastic, doing or saying the opposite of what you really mean, for example saying 'I'm reeally sorry!', when you aren't.

Neil A public figure is a famous person whose life and behaviour is often discussed in the media and in public.

Beth A faux pas is a socially embarrassing remark or action.

Neil A fine is a sum of money paid as a punishment for doing something illegal or breaking a rule.

Beth If you say something with a caveat, it contains a warning that what you have said may not be completely true or is limited in some way.

Neil And finally, if you draw a line under something you consider it finished in order to move on and make a fresh start. I'm sorry to say that, once again, our six minutes are up and it's time to draw a line under this programme! Goodbye for now!

Beth Bye!

Glossary:

Sarcastic: Doing or saying the opposite of what you really mean.

She was being sarcastic when she complimented his cooking.

Public figure: A well-known person frequently discussed in the media.

The mayor is a prominent public figure in the city.

Faux pas: A socially embarrassing action or remark.

Forgetting someone's name at a party is a faux pas.

Fine: A monetary penalty imposed as punishment.

The driver had to pay a fine for parking illegally.

Caveat: A warning or proviso about a particular statement or claim.

The offer comes with several caveats.

Draw a line under: To consider something as finished and not dwell on it.

After the disagreement, they decided to draw a line under it.

Sympathise: To feel or express compassion or pity for someone.

I sympathise with your situation.

Survey: A method of gathering information or opinions from a sample of people.

According to a recent survey, many people prefer online shopping.

Apologise: To express regret for something one has done wrong.

He had to apologise for his late arrival.

Reparation: Making amends or compensation for a wrong or injury.

He made a reparation by volunteering at the community center.

Match the word on the left with its definition on the right:

Word	Definition
Sarcastic	A. A monetary penalty imposed as punishment.
Public figure	B. A state of isolation or restricted access.
Faux pas	C. The study of language in relation to social factors.
Fine	D. Doing or saying the opposite of what you really mean.
Caveat	E. A well-known person frequently discussed in the media.
Lockdown	F. A socially embarrassing action or remark.
Sociolinguistics	G. A warning or proviso about a particular statement or claim.
Sympathise	H. To feel or express compassion or pity for someone.

Match the word on the left with its definition on the right:

Word	Definition
Apologise	A. Making amends or compensation for a wrong or injury.
Reparation	B. To consider something as finished and not dwell on it.
Humility	C. The quality of being humble or having a modest view of one's importance.
Draw a line under	D. A show or segment that is broadcast on television or radio.
Programme	F. A person who is professionally involved in politics.
Survey	G. A method of gathering information or opinions from a sample of people.

True/False Comprehension Questions:

1. Neil and Beth are hosts of a show called "6 Minute English" from BBC Learning English.
True / False
2. If someone says, "Oh, I'm sorry" when you tell them you're ill, it means they did something wrong.
True / False
3. The British apologize less frequently than other nationalities.
True / False
4. Professor Louise Mullany researched the language of apologizing at the University of Oxford.
True / False
5. Boris Johnson was certain he was breaking the rules during the 'Partygate' scandal.
True / False
6. The average Brit says sorry approximately six times a day.
True / False

Find the right question

1. Which question is Neil addressing?

"There are many ways of saying sorry in English."

- a. How do you say hello in English?
- b. Are there different ways to apologize in English?
- c. Why do people say sorry?

2. Which question is Professor Louise Mullany responding to?

"I was really interested in looking at how people apologise, particularly public figures."

- a. Who are the public figures you've researched?
- b. Why did you choose to study the language of apologizing?
- c. How do people greet each other in your research?

3. Which question is Beth replying to?

"I'm going to guess it's six times a day."

- a. How many times do you think the average Brit says sorry in a day?
- b. How many shows do you record in a day?
- c. How many languages can you speak?

4. Which statement is Neil confirming?

"Well, I'm very sorry, but that was... the wrong answer."

- a. Did I get the answer right?
- b. Is the show ending now?
- c. Are you sure about the statistics?

Questions for you ...

1. Can you recall a time when you had to apologize for something significant? What happened and how did you feel?
2. How often do you find yourself saying "sorry" in a day? Do you think you overuse the word?
3. Describe a situation when someone apologized to you and it made a big difference in your relationship with them.

Unit 3



Hosts Neil and Rob discuss whether it's right or wrong to eat plants. They talk about how plants, even without traditional senses like eyes and ears, can still perceive their surroundings. For example, plants can detect light, smell chemicals in the air, and even communicate with each other. Some studies even suggest that plants might have a form of intelligence.

The main issue discussed is the morality of eating plants, considering their abilities. The final message is that while plants have impressive abilities, it's still considered acceptable to eat them. However, it's essential to understand and respect the complex nature of plants.

Neil Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil.

Rob And I'm Rob.

Neil Many people these days choose not to eat meat, and for vegetarians, eating animals is wrong. But what about digging up a carrot, or picking apples from a tree? Is that wrong too?

Rob I don't think so, Neil. Plants aren't alive in the same way as animals, are they? They can't think or feel pain. And even vegetarians need to eat something. Fruit, vegetables, rice, beans – they all come from plants.

Neil It's true that plants don't have brains or nerves, but according to some scientists, they're much more than passive things rooted in the ground. Plants can learn and remember, they solve problems, and can even recognise other plants in their 'family'. So, given the amazing things plants do, is it right to eat them? That's what we'll be discussing in this programme, and as usual we'll be learning some new useful vocabulary as well.

Rob But first I have a question for you, Neil. Anyone who's seen cows grazing knows it's usually animals that eat plants, but some plants have turned the evolutionary tables to eat animals instead. So, which tropical plant is famous for trapping insects to eat? Is it:

a) the corpse flower? b) the American skunk cabbage? Or c) the Venus fly trap?

Neil I think it's c) the Venus fly trap.

Rob OK, Neil. We'll find out if that's the right answer later in the programme. Plants have been on the planet for hundreds of millions of years longer than humans and have used that time to evolve special skills. Here's Professor Rick Karban, a biologist at the University of California, explaining more to James Wong, botanist and presenter of BBC Radio 4 programme, *Is Eating Plants Wrong?*

Prof. Richard Karban Without eyes plants can perceive a lot of information about light, without noses plants can perceive chemical information, without ears plants can perceive sounds, and so we've come to realise that plants are very perceptive about what's going on in their environments.

James Wong You could argue for example that plants can perceive most of the senses that humans can.

Prof. Richard Karban I would agree with that and then some...

James Wong What d'you mean, 'and then some'?

Richard Karban Anyone who's had a dog knows that dogs have a much keener sense of smell than humans do, and we're now learning that plants are very responsive to chemicals in their environment.

Neil Even without ears, eyes, or a nose, plants are very perceptive – they notice things around them. In fact, Professor Karban says that plants perceive as much as humans and then some - an

idiom meaning 'and even more' which is used to emphasise that what you mentioned before was an understatement. For example: Bill Gates is rich and then some!

Rob Like dogs, plants have a keen sense of smell, which they used to detect chemicals in the air. Here, keen means powerful and intense.

Neil OK, so plants can 'see' light and 'smell' the air, but does that mean they're intelligent?

Rob Maybe so. Studies modelled on the famous Pavlov's dog experiment, have trained pea seedlings to find the quickest route to light through a maze, and remember it – evidence of memory. In another experiment, potted plants were lined up with roots joining them like a chain of people holding hands. The plants talked to each other, passing along information about water and air temperature through their roots, like children playing a game where a message is passed on, in a whisper, through a chain of people, becoming distorted in the process. Distorted means changed from its original form.

Neil All this takes brain power, and there's clearly evidence that plants might have some kind of intelligence. So, given all of this, is it wrong to eat them? That's what James Wong asked, Michael Marder, professor of philosophy at the University of the Basque Country for his BBC Radio 4 programme, Is Eating Plants Wrong?

James Wong Is it wrong to eat plants?

Prof Michael Marder It is not in and of itself wrong to eat plants, but we have to do so while keeping in mind the context in which we're doing this. We have to first of all think about what kinds of plants we are eating, what are the parts of those plants? Are we in fact destroying the entire living being, or just taking certain of its parts such as fruits and leaves that are not essential to it that can actually fall off without doing harm to the whole organism?

Rob Professor Marder says that eating plants is not wrong in and of itself – when considered alone, without taking anything else into account. But he thinks it's important to remember the context – the situation or circumstances in which something happens. Picking an apple, for example, is okay because it doesn't kill the tree itself which can go on to produce more fruit.

Neil It seems plants really are clever – but do they know the answer to your question, Rob?

Rob Ah yes, I asked you to name the famous insect-eating topical plant.

Neil And I said it was the Venus fly trap.

Rob Which was the correct answer! Well done, Neil. OK, let's recap the vocabulary we've learned, starting with the adjective perceptive – quick to notice and understand things.

Neil The idiom, and then some means 'and even more' and is used to show that something has been understated.

Rob A keen sense of smell, sight or hearing, is powerful and intense.

Neil Distorted means changed from its original form.

Rob The phrase in and of itself means when considered alone, without taking anything else into account.

Neil And finally, the context is the general situation in which something happens. Once again, our six minutes are up. Goodbye!

Rob Goodbye!

Glossary:

Vegetarians: People who do not eat meat, and sometimes other animal products.
Many vegetarians believe that eating animals is ethically wrong.

Perceptive: Quick to notice or understand things.
Even without traditional senses, plants are surprisingly perceptive.

And then some: An idiom meaning 'and even more'.
She's talented and then some; she's a genius!

Keen: Powerful and intense, especially related to senses.
Dogs have a keen sense of smell.

Distorted: Changed from its original form, often in a way that makes something seem worse or better than it really is.
The message became distorted as it was passed along.

In and of itself: When considered alone, without taking anything else into account.
The act, in and of itself, wasn't wrong, but the intentions behind it were questionable.

Context: The situation, reasons, or circumstances in which something occurs.
In the right context, his actions make sense.

Pavlov's dog experiment: A famous psychological experiment with conditioned responses in dogs.
The study on plants was modeled after the Pavlov's dog experiment.

Intelligence: The ability to learn, understand, and think in a logical way about things.
There's evidence that plants might have some form of intelligence.

Match the word on the left with its definition on the right:

Word	Definition
Keen	A. An idiom meaning 'and even more'.
And then some	B. People who do not eat meat, and sometimes other animal products.
Distorted	C. Quick to notice or understand things.
Vegetarians	D. Powerful and intense, especially related to senses.
Perceptive	E. Changed from its original form.

Word	Definition
Pavlov's dog experiment	A. The ability to learn, understand, and think in a logical way about things.
Context	B. When considered alone, without taking anything else into account.
Intelligence	C. The situation, reasons, or circumstances in which something occurs.
In and of itself	D. A famous psychological experiment with conditioned responses in dogs.

True/False Comprehension Questions:

1. Neil believes that picking apples from a tree is wrong.
True / False
2. Plants have been on Earth longer than humans.
True / False
3. According to Professor Rick Karban, plants cannot perceive light, chemical information, or sounds.
True / False
4. The idiom "and then some" means 'a little bit'.
True / False
5. In one experiment, pea seedlings were trained to communicate with each other.
True / False
6. Professor Marder believes that eating any part of a plant is wrong.
True / False

Find the right question:

- 1 Which question is Rob answering?

"Plants aren't alive in the same way as animals, are they?"

- a. Why do plants not feel pain?
- b. Are plants and animals the same?
- c. Why do vegetarians eat plants?

2. Which question is Neil answering?

"I think it's c) the Venus fly trap."

- a. What's your favourite plant?
- b. Which plant traps insects to eat?
- c. Which plant is the most dangerous?

3. Which question is Professor Richard Karban answering?

"Without eyes plants can perceive a lot of information about light, without noses plants can perceive chemical information, without ears plants can perceive sounds."

- a. How do plants communicate?
- b. Can plants see or hear?
- c. What can plants perceive?

4. Which question is Professor Michael Marder answering?

"It is not in and of itself wrong to eat plants, but we have to do so while keeping in mind the context in which we're doing this."

- a. Why do people eat plants?
- b. Is it wrong to eat plants?
- c. How do plants grow?

Questions for you ...

1. Have you ever considered becoming a vegetarian? Why or why not?
2. Were you ever surprised by something you learned about plants or their abilities? Share your experience.
3. Do you believe that plants have a form of intelligence, even if it's different from animals? Why?
4. Can you recall a time when you learned something new and it changed the way you viewed or approached a common practice, like eating certain foods? How did it impact your choices?

Unit 4

The benefits of doing nothing



In this episode, hosts Beth and Neil delve into the idea of relaxation and the potential advantages of not always being active. They discuss how many animals, often spend significant amounts of time doing nothing. The dialogue also touches on the concept that boredom can be a catalyst for creativity and innovation. The core issue discussed is the misconception that constant activity and productivity

are always beneficial.

The final educational message emphasizes the value of slowing down, switching off, and embracing moments of inactivity. It suggests that these moments can lead to greater creativity, innovation, and overall well-being.

Beth Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Beth.

Neil And I'm Neil. Phew! I've spent all day in meetings, then shopping, then collecting the kids from school - I'm exhausted, Beth! What have you been doing today?

Beth Oh, not much, just sitting around doing nothing... relaxing and kicking back!

Neil Lucky you! Don't you have work to do?

Beth It may not look it, Neil, but I'm actually as busy as a bee! If you've seen nature documentaries about worker bees flying from flower to flower, you probably think animals are always on the move. But the surprising truth is, away from the cameras, most animals spend most of the time doing absolutely nothing at all.

Neil In the natural world where finding food and shelter is hard work, why have some animals evolved to do nothing? And if it's good enough for animals, would being lazy work for humans too? That's what we will be discussing in this programme, and as usual, we'll be learning some useful new vocabulary as well.

Beth But first, let me work up the energy to ask you a question, Neil. Of course, some animals have a reputation for lounging about – lions, for example, can sleep up to twenty hours a day! But what is the slowest moving animal on Earth? Is it:
a) the giant tortoise b) the three-toed sloth or c) the koala?

Neil Well, I think it's the three-toed sloth.

Beth OK, Neil. I'll reveal the correct answer at the end of the programme. Now it's no surprise that lazy lions love relaxing, but even animals with reputations for being busy spend time doing nothing. Look carefully into an ant's nest and you'll see around half of them just sitting there motionless. Here's Professor Dan Charbonneau, an expert in insect behaviour, discussing the lazy rock ant with Emily Knight, presenter of BBC Radio 4 programme, Naturebang.

Emily Knight Dan's research has focused on ant colonies, a species called *temnothorax rugatulus* or the rock ant.

Professor Dan Charbonneau I think ants are a symbol of industriousness, you know, they have this whole tiny little society going on that's kind of similar to ours... some idealised version what humans might be if we could only pull it together and all work together we could be as industrious as the ants, but then when you look at it, roughly about half the colony is inactive at any given time.

Neil We think ants are industrious, or hard-working. Groups of ants, called colonies, seem tiny, perfect societies where everyone works hard for the good of the group.

Beth Then why are so many of them inactive? One possible answer is that they're reserve ants, ready to step in if disease or disaster strike. But could it simply be that they don't work because they don't need to. Would you get out of bed on Monday morning if you didn't have to?

Neil Maybe the ants can teach us a thing or two about relaxing. But wouldn't it get boring just sitting around all day?

Beth Not according to psychologist, Dr Sandi Mann. She thinks being productive – working to produce a lot for the amount of resources we use, is overrated. Boredom has its benefits too, as she explains to BBC Radio 4 programme, Naturebang.

Dr Sandi Man Would humans have invented bread or beer or fire, you know, if we hadn't been bored and were wondering, 'what on earth would happen if we mix this with this?', you know. Are all these sorts of inventions the mother of boredom?

Emily Knight But in this world of constant stimulation switching off is harder than it's ever been.

Dr Sandi Mann That's why we're constantly swiping and scrolling and looking for the next big thing, and the new thing and we bored of things very quickly... so it's a kind of paradox to get rid of this unpleasant state of boredom is actually to allow more boredom into your life.

Beth Dr Mann doubts humans would have invented things without the curiosity that comes from being bored. Boredom is the mother of invention, an idea based on the famous proverb, necessity is the mother of invention, an idiom meaning that if you really need to do something, you will think of a way of doing it.

Neil Instead of fearing boredom we can open up to its benefits by switching off - stopping worrying or thinking about something and relaxing. Slowing down helps too - something we can definitely learn from our animal cousins.

Beth I think now's a good time to reveal the answer to my question, since we have nothing else to do.

Neil You asked me to name the world's slowest animal and I guessed it was the three-toed sloth. Was I right?

Beth That was the correct answer! With a top speed of 30 centimetres per minute, three-toed sloths move so slowly that algae grow on their coats! OK, let's recap the vocabulary that we've learned from this programme starting with the phrase kicking back – stop doing things and relax completely.

Neil The adjective industrious means hard-working.

Beth A colony is the name given to a group of certain animals including ants and some seabirds.

Neil Someone who is productive is able to produce a lot for the amount of resources they use.

Beth The proverb necessity is the mother of invention, means that if you really need to do something, you will think of a way of doing it.

Neil And finally, to switch off means to stop worrying or thinking about something and relax. Once again, our six minutes are up – it must be time to sit down, close your eyes, and just do nothing! Goodbye for now!

Beth Bye!

Glossary:

Exhausted: Extremely tired, often as a result of physical or mental effort.

After running the marathon, she was completely exhausted.

Relaxing: Engaging in an activity that is calming or enjoyable, often after work.

He spent the evening relaxing with a good book.

Evolved: Developed gradually over time, especially from a simple to a more complex form.

Birds have evolved to have feathers and wings for flight.

Lazy: Unwilling to work or use energy.

He felt too lazy to get up and make breakfast.

Lounging: Lying or sitting in a relaxed or lazy manner.

She was lounging on the sofa all afternoon.

Reputation: The beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something.

Lions have a reputation for being fierce predators.

Motionless: Not moving; stationary.

The cat sat motionless, watching the bird.

Industrious: Diligent and hard-working.

Bees are often seen as industrious creatures.

Inactive: Not engaging in or involving any or much activity.

Many ants in the colony remain inactive.

Productive: Producing or able to produce significant amounts of work.

She had a productive day at work, finishing all her tasks.

Match the word on the left with its definition on the right:

Terms	Definitions
Lounging	A. Diligent and hard-working.
Reputation	C. Extremely tired, often as a result of physical or mental effort.
Inactive	B. The beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something.
Exhausted	D. Lying or sitting in a relaxed or lazy manner.
Industrious	E. Not engaging in or involving any or much activity.

Word	Definition
Lazy	A. Developed gradually over time, especially from a simple to a more complex form.
Productive	B. Engaging in an activity that is calming or enjoyable, often after work.
Motionless	C. Not moving; stationary.
Relaxing	D. Producing or able to produce significant amounts of work.
Evolved	E. Unwilling to work or use energy.

True/False Comprehension Questions:

1. Neil had a relaxing day just like Beth. *True / False*
2. Lions can sleep for up to twenty hours a day. *True / False*
3. In an ant's nest, all ants are always active and busy. *True / False*
4. Dr. Sandi Mann believes that being productive is more important than being bored. *True / False*
5. The three-toed sloth is the fastest animal on Earth. *True / False*
6. The phrase "kicking back" means working hard. *True / False*

Find the right question

1. Which question is Neil answering?
"Phew! I've spent all day in meetings, then shopping, then collecting the kids from school - I'm exhausted, Beth!"
 - a. What did you buy today?
 - b. Why are you so tired?
 - c. Did you have a good day?
2. Which question is Beth answering?
"It may not look it, Neil, but I'm actually as busy as a bee!"
 - a. Are you enjoying your day?
 - b. Why are you just sitting around?
 - c. Do you like bees?
3. Which question is Professor Dan Charbonneau answering?
"I think ants are a symbol of industriousness, you know, they have this whole tiny little society going on that's kind of similar to ours..."
 - a. Why are ants so small?
 - b. What do ants symbolize?
 - c. Do ants live in big societies?
4. Which question is Dr. Sandi Mann answering?
"Would humans have invented bread or beer or fire, you know, if we hadn't been bored and were wondering, 'what on earth would happen if we mix this with this?'"
 - a. Why did humans invent fire?
 - b. What happens when humans get bored?
 - c. Do humans like bread and beer?

Questions for you ...

1. How do you usually spend your day? Are there moments when you just sit and do nothing?
2. Do you believe that sometimes being "lazy" or taking a break can be beneficial for your mental health? Why or why not?
3. In today's digital age, where we're constantly swiping and scrolling on our devices, do you find it challenging to "switch off" and relax? How do you manage it?
4. Dr. Mann mentioned that boredom can lead to invention and creativity. Can you recall a time when you felt bored and it led to a new idea or activity in your life?

Unit 5



"Doomscrolling" is a term that describes when people spend a lot of time looking at negative news on their phones or computers. In a discussion on BBC Learning English, Sam and Neil talk about this behavior. They wonder why so many people are attracted to bad news.

Some experts believe it might be because of our ancient history. But there's a difference now. In the past, people only knew about local problems. Today, because of the internet, we hear about

problems from all over the world. This can make us feel sad.

In the end, Sam and Neil remind listeners that it's also important to read positive news. They suggest that instead of always looking at negative stories, people should also focus on good things happening around the world.

Sam Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Sam.

Neil And I'm Neil.

Sam Have you heard the expression doomscrolling, Neil? It's when people spend a lot of time reading, or 'scrolling', a mobile phone or computer screen in order to read negative news stories – stories full of doom.

Neil I hate to admit it, but I do sometimes doomscroll.

Sam Well don't feel too bad, Neil, because you're not alone. Research from the University of California found that people all over the world doomscroll, regardless of culture. What's more, there may even be evolutionary reasons why we're attracted to bad news.

Neil In this programme, we'll be investigating why we feel compelled to look at, and even seek out, bad news. And, as usual, we'll be learning some new vocabulary, as well.

Sam But before that I have a question for you, Neil. Doomscrolling is a very modern idea which is only possible with the 24/7, non-stop cycle of news reporting. So, according to international news agency, Reuters, what has been the top global news story of 2023 so far? Is it:

- a) The war in Ukraine?
- b) Increasing prices and inflation? or,
- c) Prince Harry's autobiography?

Neil I think the answer is an issue that's affecting everyone – inflation.

Sam OK, Neil. I'll reveal the answer at the end of the programme. Now, it might be true that the non-stop news cycle makes doomscrolling possible, but that doesn't explain why we do it.

Anthropologist Ella al-Shamahi thinks the answer may lie in human evolution. Here she outlines the problem for BBC Radio 4 programme, Why Do We Do That?

Ella al-Shamahi We go searching out for bad news, looking for things that will make us feel ick inside. And so many of us do it. Is it a result of 24/7 doom on tap on our phones? Or, is it some kind of compulsion that comes from somewhere way, way back?

Sam Reading bad news stories makes us feel ick – an informal American phrase which means feel sick, often because of something disgusting or disturbing. It's a feeling caused by the fact that, thanks to the internet, now we have the news on tap – easily available so that you can have as much of it as you want, whenever you want.

Neil But Ella thinks that's not the whole story. There's another theory: way back in human history, when we lived in caves, it seemed everything could kill us, from wild animals to eating the wrong mushroom. Knowing what the dangers were, and how to avoid them, was vital to our survival, and from an evolutionary perspective, survival is everything. As a result, we humans naturally pay attention to the negative stuff, something Ella calls 'negativity bias'.

Sam But while cavemen only knew what was happening in their local area, nowadays we know the bad news from all over the world. Here's Ella again, discussing this with her friend, TV presenter, Clara Amfo, for BBC Radio 4 programme, Why Do We Do That?

Ella al-Shamahi Before it would be like, I don't know, I'm assuming you'd go to the neighbour's cave and they'd only know... the bad news from... that particular mountain. Whereas now, it's like, 'Let me tell you about the really bad information and situation that's going on in some island somewhere...'. It's just the good news doesn't make up for it...

Clara Amfo It really doesn't, and I think trauma's romanticised, really. 'What doesn't kill you makes you stronger', 'this is a test'. I think we're conditioned to believe that negative experiences shape us more than joyous ones.

Neil Reading bad news from around the world can depress us, and Ella thinks that the little good news we do hear doesn't make up for the depressing news. To make up for something means to compensate for something bad with something good.

Sam Good news is hard to find. In fact, Clara thinks society has romanticised bad, traumatic news. If you romanticise something, you talk about it in a way that makes it sound better than it really is. Connected to this is the saying, 'What doesn't kill you makes you stronger', meaning that by going through difficult experiences in life, people build up strength and resilience for the future.

Neil Maybe it's best to stop doomscrolling altogether, but with so much bad news pouring into our mobile phones every day, it's not easy.

Sam OK, it's time to reveal the answer to my question, Neil. I asked you what news agency, Reuters, considers the top news story of 2023 so far.

Neil And I guessed it was b) inflation.

Sam Which was... the correct answer, although there's still plenty of time for 2023 to bring us more doom, hopefully along with a little positivity too. OK, let's recap the vocabulary we've learned from this programme about doomscrolling – spending lots of time reading bad news stories on your phone.

Neil Feeling ick is American slang for feeling sick, often because of something disgusting or disturbing.

Sam When something is on tap, it's easily available so that you can have of much of it as you want.

Neil The phrasal verb to make up for something means to compensate for something bad with something good.

Sam. When we romanticise something, we make it sound better than it is.

Neil And finally, the saying 'what doesn't kill you makes you stronger' means that by going through difficult life experiences, people build up strength for the future.

Sam Once again our six minutes are up, but if doomscrolling's not for you, remember you can find lots of positive news stories to build your vocabulary here at 6 Minute English.

Neil Don't forget that there is more to BBC Learning English than 6 Minute English. Why not try to improve your vocabulary through the language in news headlines. Try the News Review video on our website or download the podcast.

Sam But that's bye for now!

Neil Bye!

Glossary:

- Doomscrolling:** The act of continuously scrolling through negative news.
I noticed I was doomscrolling for hours, reading all the sad news.
- Culture:** The ideas, customs, and behaviors of a particular group of people.
Every culture has its unique traditions and celebrations.
- Evolutionary:** Relating to the gradual development of something over time.
Humans have an evolutionary need to be social and form communities.
- Compulsion:** A strong urge to do something.
She felt a compulsion to check her phone every few minutes.
- Ick:** An informal American phrase meaning to feel sick or disgusted.
The sight of the spoiled food made him feel ick.
- On tap:** Easily available whenever wanted or needed.
With smartphones, information is always on tap.
- Negativity bias:** Pay more attention to negative things than positive ones.
We often remember bad events more than good ones.
- Romanticise:** To describe something in a way that makes it sound better.
Movies often romanticise historical events.
- Trauma:** A deeply distressing or disturbing experience.
Experiencing trauma can have long-term effects on a person's mental health.
- Resilience:** The ability to recover quickly from difficulties.
Her resilience helped her overcome many challenges in life.

Word Matching Activities:

Words	Definitions
Doomscrolling	c) Relating to the gradual development of something over time.
Culture	a) A strong urge to do something.
Evolutionary	d) An informal American phrase meaning to feel sick or disgusted.
Compulsion	b) The act of continuously scrolling through negative news on mobile phones or computers.
Ick	e) The ideas, customs, and behaviors of a particular group of people.

Word	Definition
Resilience	a) The ability to recover quickly from difficulties.
Trauma	d) A deeply distressing or disturbing experience.
On tap	e) To describe something in a way that makes it sound better.
Romanticise:	b) Easily available whenever wanted or needed.
Negativity bias:	c) The tendency to pay more attention to negative things than positive ones.

True/False Comprehension Questions:

1. "Doomscrolling" refers to the act of reading positive news stories on mobile phones or computers. *True / False*
2. Research from the University of California found that only people from certain cultures engage in doomscrolling. *True / False*
3. The non-stop news cycle is the only reason why people engage in doomscrolling. *True / False*
4. Ella al-Shamahi believes that the reason for doomscrolling might be connected to human evolution. *True / False*
5. In the past, humans only knew about bad news from their local area, but now they know about bad news from all over the world. *True / False*
6. Neil guessed that the top global news story of 2023 so far, according to Reuters, was about Prince Harry's autobiography. *True / False*

Find the Right Question

1. Which question is Neil answering? "**I hate to admit it, but I do sometimes doomscroll.**"
 - a. Do you enjoy reading good news?
 - b. Have you ever heard of doomscrolling?
 - c. Do you often doomscroll?
2. Which question is Sam answering? "**It's when people spend a lot of time reading, or 'scrolling', a mobile phone or computer screen in order to read negative news stories – stories full of doom.**"
 - a. What is the meaning of doomscrolling?
 - b. Why do people use mobile phones?
 - c. How do you feel about negative news?
3. Which question is Ella al-Shamahi answering? "**We go searching out for bad news, looking for things that will make us feel ick inside.**"
 - a. Why do people feel happy reading news?
 - b. How do people access news today?
 - c. Why are people attracted to bad news?
4. Which question is Neil answering? "**And I guessed it was b) inflation.**"
 - a. What do you think about the war in Ukraine?
 - b. What has been the top global news story of 2023 so far according to Reuters?
 - c. Do you like reading Prince Harry's autobiography?

Questions for you ...

1. Have you ever caught yourself "doomscrolling"? How did it make you feel and how did you manage to stop?
2. With the rise of 24/7 news cycles, do you think it's harder to avoid negative news today compared to the past? Why or why not?
3. Can you recall an instance where you focused more on the negative aspects of a situation rather than the positive?
4. Can you think of a time when you felt that a difficult experience made you stronger or more resilient?

Unit 6

Food and mood



The dialogue discusses the relationship between the food we eat and our emotional state or mood.

It explores the concept of emotional eating, where people eat not because they are hungry but because of how they feel. It highlights how stress can suppress appetite. The dialogue also introduces scientific research that shows a connection between a healthy diet and improved mental health. They emphasize the importance of understanding the link between our diet and our

mood. The dialogue concludes with a reminder that making healthier food choices, can be beneficial for our mood and health.

Sam Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Sam.

Rob And I'm Rob.

Sam When someone feels sad or in a bad mood, they often try to feel better by eating their favourite food... I usually go for a peanut butter sandwich myself. Do you have a favourite comfort food, Rob?

Rob Hmm, maybe a cream chocolate éclair... Comfort food is a type of emotional eating – eating lots of food because we feel sad, not because we're hungry. But unfortunately, most comfort food is high in carbohydrates and sugar and, after a few minutes, it leaves us feeling even worse than before.

Sam Today, scientific research into the relationship between what we eat and how we feel is growing. In this programme we'll be investigating the connection between our food and our mood. We'll hear how healthy eating makes us feel better, and of course, we'll be learning some new vocabulary as well.

Rob Great! But first I have a question for you, Sam. People who link what we eat with how we feel make a simple argument: the food you eat supplies nutrients and energy to the brain, and the brain controls our emotions. That might sound simplistic, but the brain is a vital link in the connection between food and our mood. So, Sam, my question is: how much of the body's total energy is used up by the brain? Is it: a) 10 percent, b) 20 percent, or c) 30 percent?

Sam Hmm, that's a good question. I'll say it's a) 10 percent.

Rob Right. Well, I'll reveal the answer later in the programme. Emotional eating is often caused by feelings of depression, anxiety or stress. Chef Danny Edwards, who has suffered with depression, works in one of the most stressful places imaginable - a busy restaurant kitchen. BBC World Service programme, The Food Chain, asked Danny about his eating habits at work:

Danny Edwards: Actually, when you're working in a kitchen environment for long periods, your appetite can become suppressed because you sometimes don't want to eat, or you don't feel like you can stop and eat, and all of that. So, it very often is grabbing something on the go which obviously, as we know, is not great for us... So you go for something that's quick, so hence why a lot of chefs have quite a bad diet.

Sam Even though he's surrounded by food, Danny says that working under stress actually decreases his appetite – the feeling that you want to eat food. In a busy kitchen there's no time for a sit-down meal, so Danny has to grab and go – take something quickly because he doesn't have much time, although he knows this isn't very healthy.

Rob So when even chefs have a difficult relationship with food, what about the rest of us? Professor Felice Jacka, is an expert in nutritional psychiatry. She studied the effect of eating a

healthy diet – food such as fresh fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereals, and olive oil – on people suffering depression. Professor Jacka found that the patients whose mental health improved were the same patients who had also improved their diet.

Sam But Professor Jacka's ideas were not accepted by everyone. Here, she explains to Jordan Dunbar, presenter of BBC World Service's, The Food Chain, about the opposition her study faced from other doctors:

Prof Felice Jacka So I proposed to do this for my PhD study, and everyone thought I was a bit bananas, you know, and there was quite a bit of, I guess, eye rolling maybe. I'm not surprised by that because the discipline of psychiatry was very medication- and brain-focused.

Jordan Dunbar What did people say in the field? Were they sceptical?

Prof Felice Jacka Oh, hugely sceptical and sometimes very patronising. But this again comes from the fact that general practitioners, psychiatrists, medical specialists get almost no nutrition training through all those years of study.

Rob When Professor Jacka investigated the link between food and mood, her colleagues thought she was bananas – a slang word meaning silly or crazy. They rolled their eyes – a phrase which describes the gesture of turning your eyes upwards to express annoyance, boredom or disbelief.

Sam Other colleagues were patronising – they behaved towards her as if she were stupid or unimportant. Professor Jacka thinks this is because most doctors have little or no training about nutrition and the effect of food on mental health. But her ground-breaking research, named 'The Smile Trial', has been successfully repeated elsewhere, clearly showing the link between eating well and feeling good.

Rob So, the next time you're feeling down and your brain is calling out for a donut, you might be better eating an apple instead! And speaking of brains, Sam, it's time to reveal the answer to my question.

Sam Yes, you asked me how much of the body's energy is used up by the brain. And I guessed it was ten percent...

Rob Well, I'm afraid you are wrong. In fact, around 20 percent of the body's energy goes to feeding the brain, even though it only makes up two percent of our total body weight. OK, let's recap the vocabulary we've learned from our discussion about emotional eating – that's eating too much food because of how you feel, not because you're hungry.

Sam Appetite is the desire to eat food.

Rob If you grab and go, you take something quickly because you don't have much time.

Sam Calling someone bananas is slang for silly or crazy.

Rob If you roll your eyes, you move your eyes upwards to show you feel annoyed, bored or don't believe what someone is telling you.

Sam And finally, if someone is patronising you, they speak or behave towards you as if you were stupid or unimportant. That's the end of our programme. Don't forget to join us again soon for more topical discussion and useful vocabulary here at 6 Minute English. Bye, everyone!

Rob Bye!

Glossary:

1. **Emotional eating:** Consuming food in response to feelings rather than hunger.
Many people resort to emotional eating when they are feeling stressed or sad.
2. **Appetite:** The natural desire to satisfy a bodily need, especially for food.
When I'm sick, I usually lose my appetite.
3. **Comfort food:** Food that provides consolation or a feeling of well-being.
Ice cream is a popular comfort food for many people.
4. **Nutrients:** Substances that provide nourishment essential the maintenance of life. *Vegetables are packed with essential nutrients that our body needs.*
5. **Grab and go:** To take something quickly because there's limited time.
During busy mornings, I usually grab and go a sandwich for breakfast.
6. **Bananas (slang):** Silly or crazy.
He had a bananas idea about flying cars.
7. **Roll your eyes:** Turning your eyes upwards to express annoyance, boredom, or disbelief.
She would roll her eyes every time he bragged about his achievements.
8. **Patronising:** Treating someone as if they are stupid or less important.
It's frustrating when people are patronising towards me.
9. **Nutritional psychiatry:** Examines the relationship between diet and mental health.
Professor Jacka is an expert in nutritional psychiatry.
10. **Brain-focused:** Concentrating or emphasizing the importance of the brain.
The discipline of psychiatry was very brain-focused.

Match the glossary item with its definition:

Glossary Item	Definition
Nutritional Psychiatry	a) Food that provides consolation or a feeling of well-being and is often high in sugar or carbohydrates.
Stress	b) The practice of consuming large quantities of food in response to feelings, rather than hunger.
Comfort Food	c) A state of mental or emotional strain resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances.
Appetite	d) A field of study exploring the relationship between diet and mental health.
Emotional Eating	e) The natural desire to satisfy a bodily need, especially for food.

Glossary Item	Definition
Grab and Go	a) Silly or crazy.
Bananas (slang)	b) To take something quickly because one doesn't have much time.
Healthy Diet	c) Treating with an apparent kindness that betrays a feeling of superiority.
Patronising	d) A person's condition with regard to their psychological and emotional well-being.
Mental Health	e) Consuming a variety of foods that give you the nutrients needed to maintain your health, feel good, and have energy.

True/False Comprehension Questions:

1. Emotional eating is when people eat because they are hungry. *True / False*
2. Stress can increase a person's appetite. *True / False*
3. Chef Danny Edwards mentioned that he often has a sit-down meal during his work in the kitchen. *True / False*
4. Professor Felice Jacka's research was immediately accepted and praised by her peers. *True / False*
5. The term "bananas" in the context of the dialogue refers to a type of fruit. *True / False*
6. The brain uses up 10 percent of the body's total energy. *True / False*

Find the right question

1. Which question is Rob answering?
"Hmm, maybe a cream chocolate éclair..."
 - a. What's your favorite dessert?
 - b. What do you think about chocolate?
 - c. Do you have a favourite comfort food?
2. Which question is Danny Edwards answering?
"Actually, when you're working in a kitchen environment for long periods, your appetite can become suppressed..."
 - a. Why do you eat so much?
 - b. How do you manage your meals at work?
 - c. Do you always feel hungry in the kitchen?
3. Which question is Professor Felice Jacka answering?
"So I proposed to do this for my PhD study, and everyone thought I was a bit bananas..."
 - a. Why did you choose this topic for your PhD?
 - b. Do you like bananas?
 - c. How did you feel about the feedback on your research?
4. Which question is Rob answering?
"Well, I'm afraid you are wrong. In fact, around 20 percent of the body's energy goes to feeding the brain..."
 - a. How much energy does the body use for the brain?
 - b. What's the size of the brain compared to the body?
 - c. Why did Sam guess incorrectly?

Questions for you ...

1. Have you ever eaten due to emotions rather than hunger? What did you eat?
2. Do certain foods affect your mood? Which ones?
3. What's your go-to comfort food when feeling down?
4. Has stress ever reduced your appetite? How did you handle it?

Unit 7



The hidden life of buffets

Neil and Sam discuss the concept of buffets, where people can eat as much as they want from a variety of dishes. They explore the reasons people enjoy buffets, including the desire to get value for money and to impress others, especially at events like weddings. However, they also touch on the problem of food waste and the pressure to always have a bigger and better buffet than the last. The episode concludes with the message that while buffets can be enjoyable, it's essential to be mindful and not overindulge.

message that while buffets can be enjoyable, it's essential to be mindful and not overindulge.

Neil Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil.

Sam And I'm Sam.

Neil Have you ever been to an all-you-can-eat buffet, Sam? You know – a meal in a restaurant where you can eat as much food as you like.

Sam Yes, I went to an Indian buffet once. I didn't eat all day before the meal, but I only managed to finish three or four plates...well, maybe five!

Neil It sounds like your eyes were bigger than your belly, or stomach – a phrase describing someone who has taken more food than they can eat. In this programme we'll be discussing buffets – a feast of many different food dishes where diners are allowed to eat as much as they want – or as much as their stomachs will allow. And, of course, we'll be learning some new vocabulary as well.

Sam The popularity of buffets is booming, especially in Middle Eastern and Asian countries where the variety of foods means there's something for everyone. But feasts are big and boastful - usually too much is cooked, and buffets have been criticised for waste.

Neil We'll hear more soon, but first I have a question for you, Sam. The word 'buffet' originated from the French name for the table on which food was served but buffets themselves don't come from France. So, in which country did buffets begin?

a) The United States of America b) Sweden c) China

Sam Well, the US is famous for supersizing food, so I'll guess a) America.

Neil OK, Sam. We'll find out the answer later in the programme. John Wood, owner of cooking company Kitchen Cut, knows a lot about buffets – he used to run a one thousand seat breakfast buffet at the five-star Jumeirah Beach Hotel in Dubai. Here John shares his observations on human buffet behaviour with BBC World Service programme, The Food Chain.

John Wood There are different people that treat buffets in different ways. Some people think this is a great opportunity to try little bits and lots of everything, and we come back as many times as I like. And other people just - whether they don't like getting up and down, which is understandable from their table - just want to pile it high, and people they want to get value for money. So, if you're paying \$100, \$200 a head for a buffet, you're gonna pile it up high and take the most expensive things you can you know, and get your money's worth.

Sam John says buffet diners want to get their money's worth – get good value for the money they spend, so they often pile up food on their plate. If you pile something up, you gather a large amount of it into one place to build what's called a pile.

Neil But buffets are not just about eating until you explode - they're also an opportunity to show off to your friends. Weddings are big in India, and usually include a buffet. The richer the people

getting married, the bigger the buffet, sometimes inviting as many as five thousand guests. If each guest eats around six dishes, we're taking about a seriously big buffet!

Sam Sandeep Sreedharan is a wedding caterer from Goa in South India – he owns a company which provides the food and drink for special social occasions. Here he talks with Ruth Alexander, presenter of BBC World Service, The Food Programme, about organising an Indian wedding buffet:

Sandeep Sreedharan It's a very vicious circle, I think, right? Everybody wants to overwhelm everybody around you.

Ruth Alexander OK. That's the aim. They are out to impress - they want to 'wow' the guests - knock their socks off.

Sandeep Sreedharan Hain... knock their socks off. They should just go back saying, 'I couldn't eat even half of it!', you know. Some people just come for eating. They don't even worry about who's wedding is it... They know that... 'Who's the caterer? Ah, these guys are catering. Oh my God, this is gonna be great.

Sam Wedding buffets are designed to amaze and overwhelm the guests with their huge displays of food. They need to 'wow' the guests or knock their socks off – an idiom meaning to amaze and impress someone.

Neil The problem is that no matter how extravagant and expensive one buffet is, the next one has to be even more impressive, something Sandeep calls a vicious circle – a difficult situation which has the effect of creating new problems which then make the original situation even worse.

Sam It seems the secret to enjoying a buffet is trying a little bit of everything, without stuffing yourself until you can't move – although in the past, I think, that was exactly the idea.

Neil OK, it's time to reveal the answer to my question - where did the buffets originally come from?

Sam I guessed it was from the United States. Was I right?

Neil That was... the wrong answer, I'm afraid, Sam. In fact buffets are thought to have come from Sweden in the Middle Ages.

Sam OK, let's recap the vocabulary we've learned, starting with the expression, eyes bigger than your belly, or eyes bigger than your stomach, used when someone has taken more food than they can eat.

Neil If you pile up your plate, you gather a large quantity of food together into a pile.

Sam The phrase to get your money's worth means to get good value for the money you have spent.

Neil A vicious circle is a problematic situation, having the effect of creating new problems which then make the first situation even worse.

Sam The idiom to knock your socks off means to wow, amaze or impress someone.

Neil And finally, a caterer is a person or company which provides food and drink for special social occasions. Once again, our six minutes are up. Bye for now!

Sam Bye!

Glossary:

- 1. Buffet:** A meal set out on a table where guests serve themselves.
The hotel offers a breakfast buffet with a variety of options.
- 2. Eyes bigger than your belly/stomach:** A phrase describing someone who has taken more food than they can eat.
I took three servings, but I couldn't finish them. My eyes were bigger than my belly.
- 3. Value for money:** Getting good worth for the amount you pay.
The buffet was expensive, but the variety of dishes meant it was good value for money.
- 4. Pile up:** To gather a large amount of something into one place.
She began to pile up her plate with different dishes from the buffet.
- 5. Caterer:** A person or company that provides food and drink for events.
The wedding caterer prepared a lavish spread for the guests.
- 6. Vicious circle:** A difficult situation that causes more problems, making the original situation worse.
Overeating at buffets and then feeling guilty is a vicious circle.
- 7. Knock your socks off:** An idiom meaning to amaze or impress someone.
The dessert at the buffet will knock your socks off.
- 8. Wedding:** A ceremony where two people get married.
The wedding buffet was the highlight of the event.
- 9. Extravagant:** Exceeding what is reasonable or appropriate; fancy or lavish.
The extravagant buffet had dishes from ten different cuisines.
- 10. Middle Ages:** The period in European history from about A.D. 500 to about 1500.
Buffets are thought to have originated in Sweden during the Middle Ages.

Word Matching Activity:

Glossary Item	Definition/Phrase
Vicious circle	a) A period in European history from about A.D. 500 to about 1500.
Middle Ages	b) A meal set out on a table where guests serve themselves.
Buffet	c) A person or company that provides food and drink for events.
Caterer	d) Exceeding what is reasonable or appropriate; fancy or lavish.
Extravagant	e) A difficult situation that causes more problems, making the original situation worse.

Word Matching Activity:

Glossary Item	Definition/Phrase
Pile up	a) The buffet was expensive, but the variety of dishes meant it was good worth for the amount paid.
Knock your socks off	b) She began to gather a large amount of food on her plate.
Wedding	c) The ceremony where two people get married.
Eyes bigger than your belly	d) I took three servings, but I couldn't finish them.
Value for money	e) The dessert at the buffet will amaze you.

True/False Comprehension Questions

1. Sam went to an Indian buffet and ate more than five plates of food.
True / False
2. The phrase "eyes bigger than your belly" means someone has taken less food than they can eat. *True / False*
3. Buffets are especially popular in Middle Eastern and Asian countries because of the variety of foods. *True / False*
4. The word 'buffet' comes from the French name for the table on which food was served.
True / False
5. John Wood used to run a breakfast buffet at a hotel in Dubai.
True / False
6. Buffets in India are often a part of wedding celebrations, and the richer the couple, the bigger the buffet. *True / False*

Find the right question

1. Which question is Sam answering?
"Yes, I went to an Indian buffet once. I didn't eat all day before the meal, but I only managed to finish three or four plates...well, maybe five!"
 - a. Have you ever been to a restaurant?
 - b. What did you eat yesterday?
 - c. Have you ever been to an all-you-can-eat buffet?
2. Which question is Neil referring to?
"It sounds like your eyes were bigger than your belly, or stomach – a phrase describing someone who has taken more food than they can eat."
 - a. Why did you eat so much?
 - b. Did you enjoy the buffet?
 - c. Why couldn't you finish your food?

3. Which question is Neil asking?

"So, in which country did buffets begin?"

- a. Where did the word 'buffet' come from?
- b. Which country is famous for its buffets?
- c. Where did the concept of buffets originate?

4. Which question is Sam responding to?

"Well, the US is famous for supersizing food, so I'll guess

- a. America." a. Which country has the largest portion sizes?
- b. Where do you think buffets are most popular?
- c. In which country did buffets begin?

Questions for you ...

1. Have you ever been to an all-you-can-eat buffet? If so, what was your experience like?
2. Do you think buffets are a good value for money? Why or why not?
3. Have you ever attended a wedding or event with a large buffet? What was the most impressive dish you saw or tried?
4. How do you feel about the idea of "eyes bigger than your belly"? Have you ever taken more food than you could eat? How did you feel afterward?

Unit 8



The dialogue revolves around the concept of artificial intelligence (AI) and whether machines, like chatbots, can possess consciousness similar to humans. The conversation delves into the story of a Google software engineer, Blake Lemoine, who believed that the chatbot LaMDA had human-like consciousness. The dialogue also touches upon the language we use to describe technology and how it might give a misleading impression of what computers are capable of. It's crucial to remember that they operate based on data patterns and do not possess human emotions or consciousness.

Sam Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Sam.

Neil And I'm Neil.

Sam In the autumn of 2021, something strange happened at the Google headquarters in California's Silicon Valley. A software engineer called, Blake Lemoine, was working on the artificial intelligence project, 'Language Models for Dialogue Applications', or LaMDA for short. LaMDA is a chatbot – a computer programme designed to have conversations with humans over the internet.

Neil After months talking with LaMDA on topics ranging from movies to the meaning of life, Blake came to a surprising conclusion: the chatbot was an intelligent person with wishes and rights that should be respected. For Blake, LaMDA was a Google employee, not a machine. He also called it his 'friend'.

Sam Google quickly reassigned Blake from the project, announcing that his ideas were not supported by the evidence. But what exactly was going on?

Neil In this programme, we'll be discussing whether artificial intelligence is capable of consciousness. We'll hear from one expert who thinks AI is not as intelligent as we sometimes think, and as usual, we'll be learning some new vocabulary as well.

Sam But before that, I have a question for you, Neil. What happened to Blake Lemoine is strangely similar to the 2013 Hollywood movie, *Her*, starring Joaquin Phoenix as a lonely writer who talks with his computer, voiced by Scarlett Johansson. But what happens at the end of the movie? Is it: a) the computer comes to life? b) the computer dreams about the writer? or, c) the writer falls in love with the computer?

Neil ... c) the writer falls in love with the computer.

Sam OK, Neil, I'll reveal the answer at the end of the programme. Although Hollywood is full of movies about robots coming to life, Emily Bender, professor of linguistics and computing at the University of Washington, thinks AI isn't that smart. She thinks the words we use to talk about technology, phrases like 'machine learning', give a false impression about what computers can and can't do.

Sam Here is Professor Bender discussing another misleading phrase, 'speech recognition', with BBC World Service programme, *The Inquiry*:

Professor Emily Bender If you talk about 'automatic speech recognition', the term 'recognition' suggests that there's something cognitive going on, where I think a better term would be automatic transcription. That just describes the input-output relation, and not any theory or wishful thinking about what the computer is doing to be able to achieve that.

Sam Using words like ‘recognition’ in relation to computers gives the idea that something cognitive is happening – something related to the mental processes of thinking, knowing, learning and understanding.

Neil But thinking and knowing are human, not machine, activities. Professor Benders says that talking about them in connection with computers is wishful thinking – something which is unlikely to happen.

Sam The problem with using words in this way is that it reinforces what Professor Bender calls, technical bias – the assumption that the computer is always right. When we encounter language that sounds natural, but is coming from a computer, humans can’t help but imagine a mind behind the language, even when there isn’t one.

Neil In other words, we anthropomorphise computers – we treat them as if they were human. Here’s Professor Bender again, discussing this idea with Charmaine Cozier, presenter of BBC World Service’s, the Inquiry.

Professor Emily Bender So ‘ism’ means system, ‘anthro’ or ‘anthropo’ means human, and ‘morph’ means shape... And so this is a system that puts the shape of a human on something, and in this case the something is a computer. We anthropomorphise animals all the time, but we also anthropomorphise action figures, or dolls, or companies when we talk about companies having intentions and so on. We very much are in the habit of seeing ourselves in the world around us.

Charmaine Cozier And while we’re busy seeing ourselves by assigning human traits to things that are not, we risk being blindsided.

Emily Bender The more fluent that text is, the more different topics it can converse on, the more chances there are to get taken in.

Sam If we treat computers as if they could think, we might get blindsided, or unpleasantly surprised. Artificial intelligence works by finding patterns in massive amounts of data, so it can seem like we’re talking with a human, instead of a machine doing data analysis. As a result, we get taken in – we’re tricked or deceived into thinking we’re dealing with a human, or with something intelligent.

Neil Powerful AI can make machines appear conscious, but even tech giants like Google are years away from building computers that can dream or fall in love. Speaking of which, Sam, what was the answer to your question?

Sam I asked what happened in the 2013 movie, Her. Neil thought that the main character falls in love with his computer, which was the correct answer!

Neil OK. Right, it’s time to recap the vocabulary we’ve learned from this programme about AI, including chatbots - computer programmes designed to interact with humans over the internet.

Sam The adjective cognitive describes anything connected with the mental processes of knowing, learning and understanding.

Neil Wishful thinking means thinking that something which is very unlikely to happen might happen one day in the future.

Sam To anthropomorphise an object means to treat it as if it were human, even though it’s not.

Neil When you’re blindsided, you’re surprised in a negative way.

Sam And finally, to get taken in by someone means to be deceived or tricked by them. My computer tells me that our six minutes are up! Join us again soon, for now it’s goodbye from us.

Glossary:

- 1. Silicon Valley:** A region in California known for its technology companies and innovation.
Many tech startups dream of establishing themselves in Silicon Valley.
- 2. Artificial Intelligence (AI):** The capability of a machine to imitate intelligent human behavior.
Researchers are constantly working to improve the capabilities of artificial intelligence.
- 3. Chatbot:** A computer program designed to simulate conversation with human users over the internet.
Many companies use chatbots for customer service on their websites.
- 4. Machine Learning:** A type of artificial intelligence where computers learn and improve from experience without being explicitly programmed.
Machine learning algorithms can predict outcomes based on historical data.
- 5. Cognitive:** Related to the mental processes of thinking, knowing, learning, and understanding.
Cognitive skills are crucial for problem-solving and decision-making.
- 6. Anthropomorphise:** To attribute human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human entities.
People often anthropomorphise their pets by believing they have human emotions.
- 7. Technical Bias:** The assumption that a computer or technology is always correct.
Relying solely on GPS without checking the route can be a result of technical bias.
- 8. Blindsided:** To be caught off guard or surprised in a negative way.
She was blindsided by the sudden change in plans.
- 9. Data Analysis:** The process of inspecting, cleaning, and modeling data to discover useful information.
Data analysis helps businesses make informed decisions.
- 10. Wishful Thinking:** Believing that something is true or will happen, even if it's unlikely.
Thinking that ice cream is calorie-free is just wishful thinking.

Word Matching Activity:

Glossary Item	Definition
Silicon Valley	a) Related to the mental processes of thinking, knowing, learning, and understanding.
Chatbot	b) To be caught off guard or surprised in a negative way.
Cognitive	c) A computer program designed to simulate conversation with human users over the internet.
Anthropomorphise	d) A region in California known for its technology companies and innovation.
Blindsided	e) To attribute human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human entities.

Glossary Item	Definition
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	a) A type of artificial intelligence where computers learn and improve from experience without being explicitly programmed.
Machine Learning	b) Believing that something is true or will happen, even if it's unlikely.
Technical Bias	c) The process of inspecting, cleaning, and modeling data to discover useful information.
Data Analysis	d) The assumption that a computer or technology is always correct.
Wishful Thinking	e) The capability of a machine to imitate intelligent human behavior.

True/False Comprehension Questions

1. Blake Lemoine was working on a project called LaMDA at Google's headquarters in Silicon Valley in the autumn of 2021. *True / False*
2. According to Blake, LaMDA was just a machine without any rights or wishes. *True / False*
3. In the 2013 Hollywood movie, "Her", the main character's computer comes to life at the end. *True / False*
4. Emily Bender believes that the term 'automatic speech recognition' accurately describes the cognitive processes happening within a computer. *True / False*
5. Professor Bender suggests that humans tend to anthropomorphise only computers and not other entities like animals or dolls. *True / False*
6. Google has already developed computers that can dream and fall in love. *True / False*

Find the right question

1. Which question is Neil answering?
"the writer falls in love with the computer."
 - a. What is the main theme of the movie "Her"?
 - b. Who is the main actor in the movie "Her"?
 - c. What happens at the end of the movie "Her"?
2. Which statement is Professor Emily Bender making?
"If you talk about 'automatic speech recognition', the term 'recognition' suggests that there's something cognitive going on."
 - a. How does automatic speech recognition work?
 - b. Why is the term 'recognition' misleading in 'automatic speech recognition'?
 - c. What are the benefits of automatic speech recognition?

3. Which idea is Professor Benders expressing?

"But thinking and knowing are human, not machine, activities."

- a. Can machines think and know like humans?
- b. Are machines better thinkers than humans?
- c. How can machines improve their thinking abilities?

4. Which concept is Sam explaining?

"Artificial intelligence works by finding patterns in massive amounts of data, so it can seem like we're talking with a human, instead of a machine doing data analysis."

- a. How do humans communicate with machines?
- b. Why is artificial intelligence not perfect?
- c. How does artificial intelligence simulate human conversation?

Questions for you ...

1. Have you ever had an experience where you felt a strong connection or emotion towards a piece of technology or an object? What was it and why do you think you felt that way?
2. In the era of chatbots and AI, have you ever found yourself having a meaningful or surprisingly deep conversation with a computer program or virtual assistant? Share the experience.
3. The movie "Her" revolves around a man falling in love with an AI. Do you think it's possible for humans to develop such deep emotions for artificial entities in the future? Why or why not?
4. Have you ever used technology to communicate that made you feel like you were talking to a real person? How did it impact your interaction with that technology?

Unit 9



In this dialogue, Sam and Neil discuss the topic of procrastination which refers to the act of delaying tasks that need to be done. They explore the reasons behind why people procrastinate, touching upon both emotional and evolutionary perspectives. An interesting point is that procrastination might be an emotional response rooted in human evolution, where our ancestors acted impulsively without considering the consequences. The

dialogue also emphasizes the importance of time management and the benefits of breaking tasks into smaller stages to reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed. The educational message is that understanding and addressing the reasons behind procrastination can lead to better productivity and well-being.

Sam Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Sam.

Neil And I'm Neil.

Sam

Come on, Neil, let's make a start! I've got a deadline to meet today, and I haven't finished my work yet!

Neil Let me guess, it's because you delayed, and delayed, and put your work off until the last minute - as usual! You're a real procrastinator, Sam – someone who keeps delaying things that need to be done.

Sam What can I say? I work better when a deadline is approaching.

Neil I see, but did you know that that people who procrastinate have higher levels of stress and lower wellbeing? Procrastination is also linked with lower financial and career success, so there's a lot of reasons not to do it.

Sam In this programme, we're discussing procrastination – the act of delaying things that must be done until later, often because they're difficult, boring or unpleasant. And, as usual, we'll be learning some new vocabulary along the way.

Neil So, without wasting any more time, I have a question for you, Sam. The fact that procrastinating, or putting things off, is bad for us doesn't stop people doing it.

According to recent research by DePaul University in Chicago, what percentage of people procrastinate so much that it interferes with their day-to-day life? Is it:

a) 10 percent? b) 20 percent? or c) 30 percent?

Sam I'll guess that around 10 percent of people have a serious procrastination problem.

Neil OK, Sam. We'll find out the answer later in the programme. Sam is certainly not alone in putting things off until the last minute. Here's Ella al-Shamahi, presenter of BBC Radio 4's, *Why Do We Do That?* talking to the comedian, Eshaan Akbar, about his procrastination habit:

Ella al-Shamahi Would you say, Eshaan, that you're a procrastinator?

Eshaan Akbar I am a serial procrastinator without a shadow of a doubt.

Ella al-Shamahi Why? Why do you think you procrastinate?

Eshaan Akbar Over the years, I've told myself that I procrastinate because I work better under pressure. That's what I've told myself.

Sam Eshaan thinks that he is a procrastinator without a shadow of a doubt, a phrase which is used to emphasise that you are completely certain of something.

Neil Eshaan also says that, like Sam, he works better under pressure, when he feels stressed or anxious because of having too much to do. But maybe, also like Sam, Eshaan has a problem organising his workload and managing his time.

Sam Hang on, Neil, my time management skills are OK, thank you! With me, it's more of an emotional response – I see a mountain of work, feel threatened, and think, 'how on earth will I finish all that?!'

Neil What Sam says is supported by a theory of human evolution which explains how putting things off is an emotional response. Back when we were living in caves, life was dangerous and short, and our ancestors were impulsive – they acted suddenly, on instinct, without thinking about the consequences of what they were doing. Back then, being impulsive was a good thing, but in modern life, with work goals and deadlines, when we are impulsive and get distracted, we procrastinate. So rather than being a problem with time management, Sam should blame her caveman ancestors who acted on impulse.

Sam Hmm, an interesting idea, but it's not going to help me meet my deadline! Let's listen again to comedian Eshaan Akbar talking how he feels when he procrastinates:

Eshaan Akbar A lot of stuff you read about procrastination focuses on the time management element of it... I probably got a better sense that for me it seems very squarely around the emotional aspect of it. Perhaps I get more emotional gratification from doing it last minute. And, I need to understand why I prefer that over the calm serenity of getting things done with oodles of time on my hands.

Neil In the same way that our ancestors felt good living on impulse, Eshaan thinks he gets gratification - a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction – from doing things at the last minute. What he doesn't understand is why he prefers to work under pressure, instead of finishing calmly with oodles, or lots of, time.

Sam Unlike Eshaan, I'd rather finish my work feeling relaxed, but there never seems to be enough time.

Neil Well, breaking down the task into smaller stages also breaks down the level of threat you feel from your workload. Also, forgiving yourself for procrastinating in the past seems helpful in avoiding procrastinating in the future. So, forgive yourself and start making changes, Sam, before you end up like the timewasters in my question: what percentage of people procrastinate so much that it interferes with day-to-day life.

Sam Well, I guessed it was 10 percent.

Neil Which was... the wrong answer, I'm afraid. In fact around 20 percent of us have a procrastination habit so strong it makes life difficult. Okay, let's recap the vocabulary we've learned from this programme on procrastination – delaying, or putting off, doing things until later, often because they're difficult, unpleasant or boring.

Sam The phrase without a shadow of a doubt is used to emphasise that you are completely certain of something.

Neil If you're under pressure, you feel stressed or anxious because of having too much to do.

Sam Impulsive behaviour is sudden and spontaneous, done without thinking about the consequences.

Neil Gratification means a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction.

Sam And finally, when you have oodles of something, you have a lot of a very large amount of something pleasant... like time, which once again we've run out of. I'm rushing off to finish my work, Neil, but remember to make time to join us again soon, here at 6 Minute English. Bye for now!

Neil Bye!

Glossary:

1. **Procrastinator:** Someone who delays or postpones tasks that need to be done.
I realized I was a procrastinator when I kept pushing my tasks to the next day.
2. **Deadline:** A set time or date by which something must be finished.
She had a tight deadline to meet for her project submission.
3. **Pressure:** The feeling of stress or urgency caused by the demands and anxieties of everyday life.
He often works better under pressure.
4. **Impulsive:** Acting suddenly without thinking about the consequences.
Buying that expensive dress was an impulsive decision.
5. **Gratification:** A feeling of pleasure or satisfaction from achieving something.
He felt a deep sense of gratification after helping the needy.
6. **Emotional Response:** A reaction that involves the feelings or emotions.
Seeing the old photographs triggered an emotional response in her.
7. **Time Management:** The ability to use one's time effectively or productively.
Good time management skills can help reduce stress.
8. **Evolution:** The process by which different living organisms are believed to have developed from earlier forms.
The theory of evolution explains the diversity of life on Earth.
9. **Oodles:** A very great number or amount of something.
She has oodles of toys in her room.
10. **Serenity:** The state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled.
He found serenity in the quiet countryside.

Match the glossary item with its definition:

Glossary Item	Definition
Procrastinator	a) The process by which different living organisms are believed to have developed from earlier forms.
Serenity	b) Acting suddenly without thinking about the consequences.
Gratification	c) Someone who delays or postpones tasks that need to be done.
Impulsive	d) The state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled.
Evolution	e) A feeling of pleasure or satisfaction from achieving something.

Match the glossary item with its definition:

Glossary Item	Definition
Deadline	a) A very great number or amount of something.
Time Management	b) A reaction that involves the feelings or emotions.
Oodles	c) The feeling of stress or urgency caused by the demands and anxieties of everyday life.
Pressure	d) A set time or date by which something must be finished.
Emotional Response	e) The ability to use one's time effectively or productively.

True/False Comprehension Questions:

1. Sam has already finished her work for the day. *True / False*
2. Neil believes that Sam is a person who often delays tasks. *True / False*
3. The main topic of the programme is about the benefits of procrastination. *True / False*
4. Eshaan Akbar believes he works better when he's not under pressure. *True / False*
5. Neil suggests that procrastination is linked to human evolution and our ancestors' impulsive behaviours. *True / False*
6. According to the research mentioned, 10 percent of people have a strong procrastination habit that affects their daily life. *True / False*

Find the right question:

1. Which question is Sam answering?
"I work better when a deadline is approaching."
 - a. Why did you delay your work?
 - b. Why do you always finish your work on time?
 - c. Why do you think you procrastinate?
2. Which question is Neil referring to?
"Procrastination is also linked with lower financial and career success."
 - a. What are the benefits of procrastination?
 - b. Why do people procrastinate?
 - c. What are the consequences of procrastination?

3. Which question is Eshaan Akbar answering?

"I am a serial procrastinator without a shadow of a doubt."

- a. Are you always punctual?
- b. Do you think procrastination is good?
- c. Would you say you're a procrastinator?

4. Which question is Neil addressing?

"In fact around 20 percent of us have a procrastination habit so strong it makes life difficult."

- a. How many people don't procrastinate?
- b. What percentage of people have a mild procrastination habit?
- c. What percentage of people have a severe procrastination problem?

Questions for you ...

1. Have you ever found yourself procrastinating on important tasks? What were the reasons behind it?
2. Some people say they work better under pressure. Do you feel the same way? Why or why not?
3. How do you manage your time when you have a lot of tasks or assignments? Do you have any strategies or tools you use to avoid procrastination?
4. Are there any tasks or activities that you never procrastinate on? Why do you think that is