

Just my cup of tea by Zara Iles

Age:	Teenagers/Adults
Level:	Intermediate
Time:	120 minutes
Objectives:	To conduct a survey on tea-drinking habits; to write to a friend accepting an invitation
Key skills:	Speaking, reading, writing
Materials:	One copy of the worksheet per student

Procedure

1. Ask students if they know the meaning of the sentence *It's just my cup of tea* (= I like it and find it interesting). Tell them the following (change the sentence based on your own preferences): *Opera just isn't my cup of tea*. Ask them whether you like opera or not (*No*).

2. Hand out the worksheets. Students can work individually or in pairs to ask each other the warmer questions.

3. Students conduct the class survey in task 2 on the worksheet. They can then either discuss their findings whole class or make a poster or presentation to share their results.

4. In task 3, students match the headings to the paragraphs of the text on the next page.

Key: 1. B; 2. G; 3. not used; 4. E; 5. F; 6. C; 7. D; 8. A

5. Students answer the questions in task 4 according to the text.

Key: 1. A servant was boiling water for the Emperor under a tree, and some leaves fell into it.; 2. young leaves; 3. in the eighth century; 4. 36; 5. up to 24 hours; 6. the Dutch; 7. Anna (the Duke of Bedford's wife); 8. She was hungry, because of the long break between lunch and dinner (six hours); 9. It contains many vitamins and some minerals; 10. with milk

6. In task 5, students fill the gaps with one or two words from the text.

Key: 1. harvesting; 2. green; 3. missionaries; 4. the wealthy/rich people / Europeans; 5. health benefits; 6. import; 7. plants

7. Students read the message from a friend. Then they study the language on the worksheet (accepting an invitation, making suggestions, *going / go / to go*) before writing an informal response to their friend's invitation.

Key (to Going / Go / To go): 1. go; 2. going; 3. to go; 4. going; 5. going; 6. go; 7. go; 8. go; 9. to go

Just my cup of tea by Zara Iles

1 Warmer

- Do you drink tea or coffee? Which do you prefer?
- How do you like your tea or coffee?
 - loose leaf / tea bag
 - instant / freshly blended
 - with / without milk
 - with / without sugar
- How many cups do you drink a day?
- Have you ever wanted to cut down on the number of cups you drink? Why? Why not?

2 Class survey

Question	Response	
Do you drink tea?	Yes	No
Do you take milk with your tea?	Yes	No
Do you take sugar with your tea?	Yes	No
How many cups do you drink daily?	1–2	
	3–5	
	> 6	
Have you tried green tea?	Yes	No

3 Jigsaw reading activity

Match the headings to the correct paragraphs in the text below. There is one heading you won't need.

1. The history of tea in Asia
2. The health benefits of drinking tea
3. Unwanted side effects of drinking tea
4. The effects of very expensive tea
5. Keeping hunger away
6. Varieties of tea and methods of production
7. The arrival of tea in the West
8. How tea was discovered

Just my cup of tea by Zara Iles

A

According to legend, almost 5,000 years ago, a servant was boiling water under a tree for the Chinese Emperor. Some leaves from the tree fell into the water, but the emperor enjoyed the drink that the servant had accidentally produced. The tree was a *Camellia sinensis*. The drink was the first ever cup of tea. The *Camellia sinensis* is an evergreen that can grow up to 4.5 metres, but it is usually kept to the size of a bush because this encourages young leaves to grow and makes harvesting easier. The best tea is made from young leaves.

B

The drinking of tea has a very long history in China. Tea containers have been discovered in burial places that date from over 2,200 years ago. This suggests that tea was very important to the Ancient Chinese people. In the eighth century, the first book exclusively about tea was written by Lu Yu: the *Ch'a Ching* or *Tea Classic*. It was at this time that Buddhist monks who had travelled to China to study are thought to have brought tea to Japan. It would be many centuries before tea would arrive in the West.

C

The flavour of tea is influenced by the soil, altitude and climate where it is grown. Nowadays, there are approximately 1,500 different kinds of tea, which are grown in 36 countries. Tea is classified into six categories, which correspond to the method of processing the leaves. Green tea is unfermented, which means that the leaves have not been left out to dry in the air. Oolong tea is semi-fermented, which means that the tea leaves are left to dry in the shade for five hours. Black tea is fully-fermented, which means the leaves are allowed to dry for up to 24 hours.

D

The first records of tea in Europe were made by the Portuguese in the second half of the 16th century. At this time, some Portuguese were living in the East as traders and missionaries, and it is supposed that they brought tea back to their home country. However, the first people to ship tea back to Europe as a commercial import were the Dutch, in the early-17th century. The first delivery of tea was transported on the long journey by sea from China to Holland in 1606. It quickly became a fashionable drink for the Dutch and soon expanded into other countries in western Europe.

E

Tea arrived in Britain following the marriage of King Charles II to Catherine of Braganza in 1662. Catherine was a Portuguese princess, and she loved a good cup of tea. The East India Company began to import tea directly into Britain; the first order for tea was shipped from Indonesia in 1664. Tea was too expensive for most people because importers had to pay taxes, so there was a lot of tea smuggling. Also, there was no quality control and sometimes people added leaves of other plants.

F

Afternoon tea, still very popular in Britain today, probably began in the 17th century. One story is that afternoon tea was 'invented' by Anna, the wife of the Duke of Bedford. In 1841, she started drinking tea and having something to eat in the mid-afternoon because of the six-hour gap between lunch (eaten at about 1pm) and dinner (eaten at around 7pm). This quickly developed into a social occasion, and by the 1860s, afternoon tea was very fashionable.

G

Tea is not just a refreshing drink or something nice to do socially with friends; it has various health benefits because it contains many vitamins and some minerals, such as fluoride. When taken with milk, as 98% of the UK population today prefers, four cups of tea a day can provide you with significant amounts of the following nutrients: calcium, zinc, vitamin B2, folic acid, vitamins B1 and B6, potassium and manganese.

Just my cup of tea by Zara Iles

4 Comprehension check

1. How was tea discovered?
2. What makes the best tea?
3. When did the Chinese take tea to Japan?
4. How many countries produce tea?
5. How long are the leaves used for black tea fermented for?
6. Which nation was the first to sell tea commercially?
7. Who is said to have first made afternoon tea popular in Britain?
8. Why did this person need to have tea in the afternoon?
9. Why is tea healthy?
10. Do most tea drinkers in Britain today have their tea with or without milk?

5 Gap fill

Complete each sentence with one or two words from the text above.

1. The tea tree can grow to more than four metres, but it is cut to make _____ easier.
2. When leaves are not left to dry in the sun, _____ tea is produced.
3. As well as trading goods, the Portuguese were _____.
4. In the 17th century, tea was consumed by _____.
5. Because tea contains vitamins and minerals, it has _____.
6. The East India Company was the first company to _____ tea into Britain.
7. As tea was very expensive, people added leaves from different _____.

6 Writing an informal message

Are you free next Saturday afternoon? I'd like to invite you and some of our friends for an afternoon tea at my house. We haven't seen each other for ages, and I thought it would be a nice idea.

I really hope you can come. Do you think you could help me make something to eat? What do you think we should make? Get in touch soon, and let me know.

Jess xx

Yes, I can come.

- sandwiches, a cake, biscuits, ...
- buy ingredients from shop on Saturday morning

Just my cup of tea by Zara Iles

You are going to write a reply to your friend. First study the following language.

Accepting an invitation

- I'm so pleased you asked me to ... I'm free that day.
- Thanks for asking me to ... I'm thrilled to tell you ...
- Thank you for your invitation to ...
- How lovely of you to invite me to ...

Making suggestions

Are any of the phrases too formal? Can you think of any more ways to make a suggestion?

+ <i>-ing</i>	+ infinitive without <i>to</i>
I'd recommend ... Have you thought about ...? How about ...?	You should ... Why don't you ...? If I were you, I'd ... You absolutely must ...
	+ infinitive with <i>to</i>
	It would be a good idea ... The best idea is ...

Going / Go / To go

Complete the following with *going/go/to go*.

1. You absolutely must _____ shopping on Saturday morning.
2. I'd recommend _____ shopping on Saturday morning.
3. It would be a good idea _____ shopping on Saturday morning.
4. How about _____ shopping on Saturday morning?
5. Have you thought about _____ shopping on Saturday morning?
6. If I were you, I'd _____ shopping on Saturday morning.
7. You should _____ shopping on Saturday morning.
8. Why don't you _____ shopping on Saturday morning?
9. The best idea is _____ shopping on Saturday morning.

