

Università degli Studi di Brescia

Centro Linguistico di Ateneo

Prova di Lingua Inglese Livello B1

## READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following text and then say if the sentences below are true or false.

### **Bust the myth that “real” men eat meat**

*From plan-eating bodybuilders to role models like Lewis Hamilton, male vegans are turning gender stereotypes on their head*

It was a Sunday afternoon in the late 1980s and the house was filled with the scent of roast lamb. When I asked my brother about the origins of our lunch, he pointed at the sheep in the field near our house. I was a five-year-old boy, and I decided on the spot to become the first vegetarian in my family. My parents were generally supportive, but they were also – understandably – confused and concerned. Especially my lack of dietary protein was a constant worry. I personally didn’t know anyone else, male or female, who was veggie. From the years I was at school until my 20s, I was constantly teased and shamed about my diet. Particularly guys seemed offended by my decision not to eat dead things, and started to call me “gay”, using that word as an insult. I hated ordering food when I was out with my friends, because I knew there would be comments about my masculinity. As a result, for many years I hid the real reason for my diet – claiming it was simply “habit”, rather than sensitivity to animal welfare.

Thankfully, nowadays non-animal diets are no longer a niche concern. Even McDonald’s has got a McPlant burger now; moreover, vegan celebrities and Netflix documentaries are helping to normalise the concept of reducing or avoiding meat in your diet. According to a 2019 survey by the Vegan Society, the number of UK vegans quadrupled between 2014 and 2019. And according to a 2021 study in The Lancet’s Planetary Health Journal, Britons have reduced their meat intake by almost 17% in a decade. However, not everything has changed: the percentage of vegan men is still low. Ed Winters, a British vegan activist and author with more than 400,000 YouTube subscribers, says:

“Vegan men challenge what people traditionally perceive to be manly. But what we perceive to be masculine is also a social construct, created by advertising, by media and by peer pressure.” The demonisation of plant-based, non-animal diets can be traced back to the idea that protein is the key to strength, and that meat is its primary source. However, research has continually debunked the idea that a non-animal diet cannot provide enough protein. Additionally, veganism’s image is also changing: for example, Netflix’s 2018 documentary *The Game Changers* investigates the benefits of a plant-based diet for professional athletes, and it was produced by Arnold Schwarzenegger, the “prototype” of the strong man. Lewis Hamilton, the Formula One champion, also co-produced the documentary and started following a plant-based diet in 2018.

Confronting gender stereotypes is important, because meat and dairy consumption has become an environmental issue, and research last year, published in the journal *PlosOne*, found out that the diet of the average British male produces 40% more carbon emissions than that of females, and this is largely because of their higher meat consumption. Fortunately, among my male peers, the environmental arguments for meat reduction seem to be gaining traction. At restaurants, they are curious, and they say that my food looks tasty. Meeting another male vegetarian or vegan used to be like finding a stranger in a bar who loves your favourite band; nowadays, it’s like everyone in the bar knows and loves your band.

*Adapted from David Hillier, The Guardian, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2022*

1. The author decided to become a vegetarian when he was very young. T/F
2. At first, he was interested in animal welfare, but after some time it simply became a habit. T/F
3. The author’s male friends thought that a veggie diet was not appropriate for a male. T/F
4. Between 2014 and 2019 the number of people following a vegan diet in the UK diminished. T/F
5. In the last ten years, the amount of meat consumed by British people diminished. T/F
6. Plant-based diets are unhealthy because they don’t provide the right amount of proteins. T/F
7. In 2018 a documentary was released on Netflix talking about the benefits of a meat-based diet for athletes. T/F
8. Many professional athletes, like Lewis Hamilton, are starting to become vegetarian or vegan. T/F
9. According to the text, meat consumption can be problematic for the environment. T/F
10. Nowadays, it is easier to find people who follow, or are interested in, a plant-based diet than it was in the past. T/F

## GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY

For each of the following sentences, choose a suitable alternative to fill in the gap. Only one option is correct.

1. I \_\_\_\_\_ to Paris. I would really like to go.
  - a. have never been
  - b. never was
  - c. have never gone
  - d. am not going
2. That film is really \_\_\_\_\_. I didn't like it at all.
  - a. bored
  - b. interesting
  - c. boring
  - d. interested
3. That man is not looking at where he's going and now he \_\_\_\_\_ the wall.
  - a. will hit
  - b. hits
  - c. is going to hit
  - d. is hitting
4. The teacher gave me \_\_\_\_\_ on how to prepare for the test
  - a. some advice
  - b. an advice
  - c. advices
  - d. one advice
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I was very hungry, I didn't eat anything.
  - a. Because
  - b. Since
  - c. However
  - d. Although
6. You \_\_\_\_\_ buy any milk, because there is plenty in the fridge.
  - a. should
  - b. don't need to
  - c. mustn't

- d. can't
7. The murderer \_\_\_\_\_ yesterday after a very long investigation.
- a. has been arrested
  - b. had been arrested
  - c. was arrested
  - d. arrested
8. \_\_\_\_\_ helping me with the housework?
- a. Do you mind
  - b. Can you
  - c. Are you able to
  - d. Could you
9. The train to London \_\_\_\_\_ at 9:15 from platform 7.
- a. will leave
  - b. is leaving
  - c. is going to leave
  - d. leaves
10. This landscape \_\_\_\_\_ of my motherland.
- a. reminds me
  - b. remembers me
  - c. recalls me
  - d. memories me
11. My little sister really relies \_\_\_\_\_ me for everything.
- a. of
  - b. about
  - c. in
  - d. on
12. Mrs Smith is not here. She's \_\_\_\_\_ to a meeting in Berlin.
- a. Been
  - b. Left
  - c. Gone
  - d. Arrived
13. Phew! We arrived just \_\_\_\_\_ time to catch the train.
- a. in
  - b. on

c. about

d. at

14. This new pullover is not \_\_\_\_\_ the older one.

a. More comfortable

b. As comfortable as

c. Less comfortable

d. Comfortable

15. Who is \_\_\_\_\_ student in your class?

a. as good as

b. the better

c. better than

d. the best