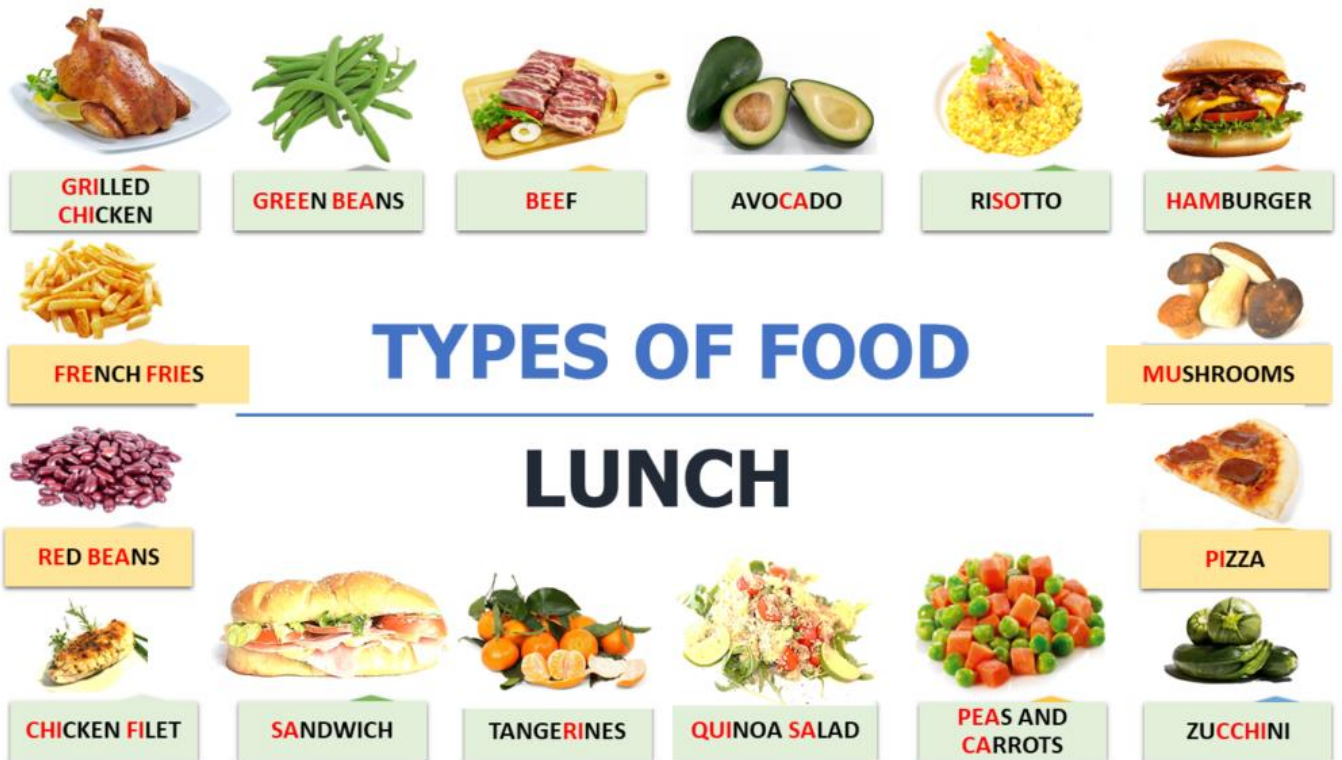


Short Story: The Last Piece of Chicken

Level: A2-B1



I love chicken.

In my home, we eat chicken with rice once a week. Our mother prepares the meal before we go to church on Sundays. We are very happy when we get back home because we know that the food is already on the table. All we have to do is sit down and enjoy the delicious feast.

The problem is that everyone in our family loves chicken.

My father does; my mother does; and even my three year-old-brother does. What I cannot stand is when we fight for the chicken with my elder brother.

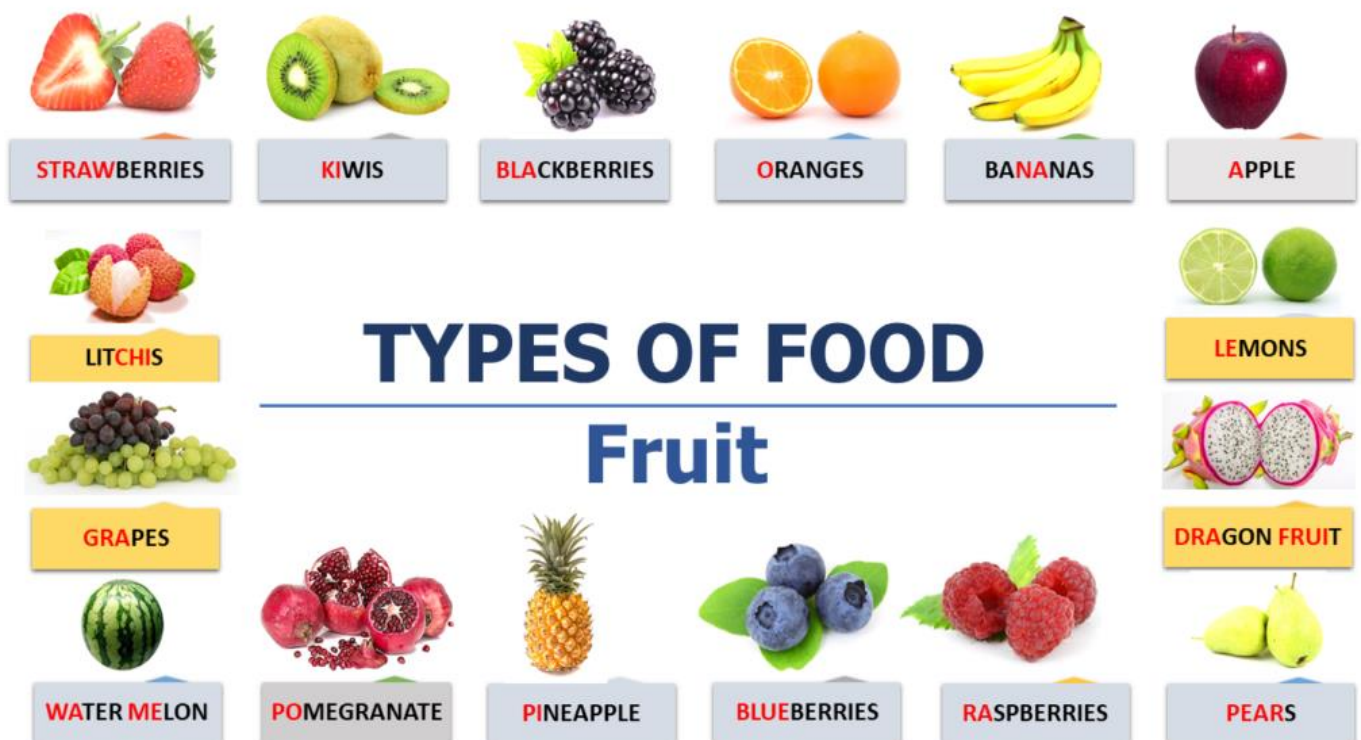
He is quicker than I and he often gets the last piece of chicken.

Today is Sunday and I want to outwit him.

First, let me tell you about our daily routine on Sundays. We wake up two hours later than usual. This means that the alarm sounds at eight. My brother and I head straight to the bathroom where we wash our faces and brush our teeth. Then we go back to the bedroom to change into working clothes. These are usually run-down shorts and t-shirts that we are not afraid of soiling. Then, we go to the garden in our plastic slippers and start sweeping the yard.

We make sure that every nook and cranny of the garden is swept carefully because my father always comes to inspect our work afterwards. When we finish, we go to the bathroom once again to wash ourselves. On Sundays, we have the luxury of hot water so we enjoy each and every second of it.

Later, we put on our best clothes. We want to look nice because we meet a lot of people at church and everyone always looks their best. My favourite attire is a grey suit that my father bought in South Africa when he went there for a business trip. My friends say that I look very elegant in that suit and when it is paired with my black leather shoes, it is difficult to recognise me.



Today, I decide to wear this suit because I want to get the last piece of chicken. My father says that when you go for an interview or an important meeting, you should always look the part because you do not want to spoil your chances of getting a job or a contract.

Chuma, my elder brother, does not know that today is my day. Today, I am going to get the contract. I have a plan and this plan will help me get the last piece of chicken.

After church, we arrive home at 1.00 p.m. My mother puts the food on the table. Today we are having a full roasted chicken. There are French fries too! The food smells so good and I cannot wait to get my hands on it. My father takes a knife and cuts the chicken into half.

Pleasant aromas fill the room and I know at that moment that my plan *should* work because I want that last piece of chicken.

We start eating. Once again, I can say that my mother knows how to cook. The meat is not too soft and it is not too hard either. It is just right. The seasoning is nice and I do not even have to add extra salt.

The rice and chicken are very good friends. The French fries are crispy and soft at the same time. The salad is divine. Oh God, the food is so tasty and yummy I almost forget about my plan.

I wake up from my slumber and decide to act on my plan to get the last piece of chicken.

“I have something important to tell you.”

Everybody is annoyed because we cannot speak while eating. It is forbidden because no one wants to see what is in our mouths. I apologise very quickly before continuing.

“We can do a quiz at the end of the meal. The one who wins gets the last piece of chicken.”

My father stares at me as if I am trying to give him the bad end of a deal. My mother does not need to say anything but there is disapproval on her face. My younger brother keeps on smiling —he is enjoying his food. Chuma stops eating; he is thinking.



“Father will ask the questions. Any type of questions to test our knowledge on what we know about our world.” My father smiles and he is followed by my mother. Knowledge is the key to my parents’ hearts. Chuma is not happy. My youngest brother grins —he is still enjoying his food.

Chuma senses something.

“Kevin, you're up to something.”

My name is Kevin if you don't know me. Well, it is clear to me at this moment that the fight is between Chuma and me. We are both very good at school so this quiz will be a piece of cake for either of us.

“Come on Chuma. Don't chicken out! Just think of the prize. You'll get the last piece of chicken!”

A few seconds go by and Chuma finally decides to do the quiz. My father says that we should wait until there is only one piece of chicken in the plate. He will not participate in the game since he is the umpire. We agree.

When we are finally ready to start, my father stands up. Oh, he likes the drama of dishing out the questions and seeing us stammer with hesitation when we do not know the right answers.

He speaks with a deep voice like his favourite TV presenter.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Sunday Quiz. I am your host, Chuma Senior Kumwenda. Our contestants today are Chuma Junior, Kevin, Mary and a three-year-old boy called Trevor because he is clever, ha, ha.”

My father likes laughing at his own jokes but we are in no mood to laugh. We want to start the game!

Next, he tells us the rules of the game. We have to raise our right hand when we know the answer. Shouting is prohibited. We should not curse each other, especially since it's our Lord's Day. The person who gets five answers before anyone else is the lucky winner.

Fair enough. We all agree with the rules. Ready, steady, go!

After three minutes, my mother is leading. She knows a lot of things like the exact dates of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of World War II. Well... Chuma and I are mad of course. How can we know all those things? We are not that old! My mother says that we should pay more attention in class.

Then my mother answers the next three questions easily and wins the game! She wins the game!

How can Chuma and I know, let alone young Trevor even though he is clever, how can we know where our current president was born and where he studied at university for the first time. The last question was even worse. “What is the capital city of Chile?” Why father? Why? I don't even know where Chile is!

My father hands the last piece of chicken to my mother. She is beaming with joy and there is the smile of victory on her face. Chuma and I get up from the table but my father tells us to sit down.

“Kevin, this was your idea, wasn’t it?” he asks me with concern.

“Yes, it was,” I mumble a reply.

“Well, congratulate your mother then. She won fairly.”

I tell her what a great person she is, no wonder her children are intelligent too. My mother smiles and starts removing the flesh from the chicken.



“Trevor, do you want some chicken?”

Trevor nods his head and my mother hands him the meat. He is smiling as his fork finds the first piece of chicken. He eats joyfully until there is only one piece left.

“Kevin, do you want some?” Trevor asks me and I smile.

“Of course I do, you little one.”

He gives me the last piece of chicken and I pop it into my mouth.

It is as tasty as I'd imagined it.

It is the last piece of chicken after all!

THE SIMPLE PRESENT

AFFIRMATIVE FORM (+)

I	begin
<hr/>	
You	begin
<hr/>	
He	} begins
She	
It	
<hr/>	
We	} begin
You	
They	

NEGATIVE FORM (-)

FULL FORM		SHORT FORM	
I	do not begin	I	don't begin
<hr/>			
You	do not begin	You	don't begin
<hr/>			
He	} does not begin	He	} doesn't begin
She			
It			
<hr/>			
We	} do not begin	We	} don't begin
You			
They			

EXAMPLES (Eg.)

- *I have a dental appointment this afternoon.*
- *Our lessons start late this morning.*
- *Your bus leaves in an hour's time.*
- *Their plane arrives at ten o'clock.*
- *Our favourite TV programme starts at 4.*
- *We sail at noon.*

INTERROGATIVE FORM

Do **I** begin ...?

Do **we** begin...?

Do **you** begin ...?

Do **you** begin...?

Does **he/she/it** begin?

Do **they** begin...?



BREAD



HUMMUS



COFFEE



FRUIT SALAD



TEA



FRIED EGG



MILK



BACON



PEANUTS



OATMEAL PORRIDGE



BOILED EGGS



FRIED SAUSAGES



MUESLI



BISCUITS



SCONE



BAKED BEANS

TYPES OF FOOD

Breakfast



ONIONS



PEPPER



CUCUMBERS



ARTICHOKE



BROCCOLI



CARROTS



LETTUCE



PEAS



LEEKS



ASPARAGUS



SPINACH



CHINESE CABBAGE



CAULIFLOWER



CELERY



EGGPLANTS



POTATOES

TYPES OF FOOD

Vegetables