

## WORD BANK 1

What are these words in your language?



china cup (n)



mug (n)



spices (pl) (n)



tea break (n)

I usually stop work at 11 o'clock and have a **tea break**.

antioxidant (n)

**Antioxidants** protect the body from illness.

brand (n)

I always buy the same **brand** of soap.

connoisseur (n)

My uncle knows all about wine – he is a wine **connoisseur**.

custom (n)

It's a British **custom** to shake hands when you first meet someone.

drug (n)

He went to prison for selling **drugs**.

dung (n)

Don't step in the cow **dung** when you cross the field!

expert (n)

An **expert** knows a lot about his or her subject.

manners (n)

It's bad **manners** to talk when you have food in your mouth.

smuggler / smuggling (n)

**Smugglers** bring things into a country against the law.

tax (n)

The **tax** on petrol has gone up again this year.

# Introduction

If you ask people to name one thing that is very British, many of them will say 'Tea!' And they are right. Tea is very important to the British. Many people start their day with a cup of tea and have tea breaks at work and at home. Today in the UK, 165 million cups of tea are drunk every day, compared with only 70 million cups of coffee.

Policemen take a tea break



However, drinking tea hasn't always been a British custom. Tea comes from a plant which isn't grown in Britain and it travels a long way to reach the UK. The first tea came to Britain from China. It was very expensive and only rich people could buy it.

These days everyone can enjoy tea. It is good for our health too. Tea has antioxidants which are very good for your heart and help protect against illness.

Many people in Britain couldn't imagine life without tea. Barry McGuigan is one of them. Barry wants to find out more about the drink that is such a big part of his life. He goes on a journey to discover where tea comes from, what different types of tea there are and different ways of drinking it.

# CHAPTER 1 From East to West

Barry McGuigan is a famous boxer from Ireland. He was once one of the best in the world and is now a boxing trainer and writer. Barry loves boxing – he also loves tea! He drinks at least ten cups of tea a day and he couldn't start his day without a cup. In Barry's house everyone drinks tea, including the dog!

Barry started drinking tea when he was about twelve years old. His father was a musician and there were always a lot of people in the house. They had a big pot on the cooker that was full of tea. It stayed there all day and people had a cup when they wanted.

'Tea played a huge part in my life,' says Barry. 'It still does. I love my cuppa!'



Barry and his wife, Sandra, have different ideas about the perfect cup of tea. Barry drinks a popular brand of tea. He likes to drink it with milk

\* Conversational Language. See page 48.

and sugar. He also likes to drink it from his favourite mug. Sandra thinks that tea is better without milk or sugar and in a china cup!

'My wife thinks that drinking tea from a mug with tea and sugar is bad manners!' says Barry.

## TEA FROM CHINA

No one is sure who first discovered tea, but it was certainly in China. There is a Chinese story about the Emperor Shen Nung in 2737 BC. He was sitting under a tree and some leaves from the tree fell into his drink of hot water. Was that the first cup of tea? Perhaps it was.

The drink was very popular in China and soon afterwards it was taken to Japan by Chinese students. People in Europe didn't know about tea until European explorers reached China in the 1500s. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to try the drink and Dutch sailors first brought back tea to sell in the West.



Drinking tea in China,  
around 750



So what is the best way to drink tea? Barry's going on a journey to learn more about his favourite drink. Barry goes to meet Madeleine Marsh, a tea expert. She meets Barry in London by the River Thames.



'The Thames was like a busy road in the 1660s,' Madeleine says. 'It was full of boats from China and other countries in the East. These boats carried a lot of wonderful things like unusual spices and, of course, tea. Everyone wanted to buy these things so the river was very busy. The journey to bring the tea from China took two years!'

'Two years? Wow!' Barry is very surprised.



'The boats took one year to reach China and another year to come back,' Madeleine explains. 'They were slow and heavy.'

'Tea was very expensive then, wasn't it?' asks Barry.

'Oh yes!' says Madeleine. 'The tax on tea was very high and only rich people could buy it. So smuggling became very big business. There were a lot of police on the Thames then. It was like drug smuggling today. Criminals could make a lot of money if they had tea.'

Criminals also mixed tea with other cheaper leaves so they could make more money from it. Sometimes they even added sheep's dung to the tea!



**Now watch Clips 2 and 3 and answer the questions on pages 14–15.**

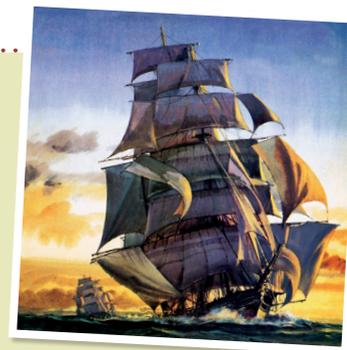
## TEA CLIPPERS

At first the ships that brought tea from China were big and slow. The journey back from China took a year.

In the 1850s American boats started to call at Britain on their way back from China to the USA. The Americans had a new type of boat, the clipper. These boats were beautiful with high masts and lots of sails. More importantly, they were fast. The first American clipper to arrive in London took just 97 days from Hong Kong.

### Clipper races

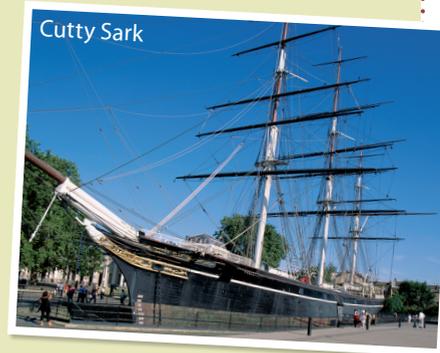
The British decided to build their own clippers. Races started between the American and the British boats. The races were very exciting and people bet a lot of money on the winners. Sometimes the finish of the race was very close – only minutes between the boats!



### The end of the clippers

The clippers only sailed for a few years. In November 1869 the Suez Canal opened in Egypt. It was a shorter journey, but clippers could not use the Canal. Now steamships brought tea from China.

There is only one tea clipper left in the world – Cutty Sark. People can still see her in Greenwich, London.



*What do these words mean? You can use a dictionary.*

*mast bet steamship*

 CLIP 2

1 Watch the clip. Are these sentences true or false? Correct the false sentences.

- |   | True                     | False                    |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Barry's dog drinks tea from a bowl.              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Barry drank tea when he was a baby.              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) There were seven children in Barry's family.     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Barry's father was a boxer too.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Barry puts milk in his tea.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Barry always travels with his favourite tea pot. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2 Watch the clip again and tick the correct answers.

- a) Which of these do Barry and Sandra disagree about?
- i) when to drink tea  ii) what sort of tea to drink
- iii) how to drink tea
- b) Barry likes his tea in
- i) a china cup  ii) a mug  iii) a bowl
- c) Sandra thinks he should try
- i) tea with a little sugar  ii) green tea
- iii) tea without sugar and milk

3 What do you drink in the morning? Does everyone in your family drink the same?

 CLIP 3

1 Watch the clip and circle the correct answers.

- a) Three hundred years ago, the River Thames was very *busy* / *quiet*.
- b) At that time, tea was very *cheap* / *expensive*.
- c) The government tax on tea was very *low* / *high*.
- d) There was a lot of *cocaine* / *tea* smuggling then.

2 Watch the clip again. Now answer the questions.

- a) When did tea first come to Britain?
- b) Where did tea come from?
- c) How long was the journey? Why?
- d) How much did tea cost then?

3 Focus on language. Look at these sentences from the clip. Match the words in bold with their meanings.

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| a) 'The reason I've <b>dragged you out</b>      | i) you could make a    |
| into this horrible, cold weather ...'           | lot of money from it   |
| b) 'It was a <b>vast</b> journey.'              | ii) have had policemen |
| c) 'Tea smuggling was <b>big business</b> .'    | iii) made you come out |
| d) 'Would they <b>have policed</b> the Thames?' | iv) lots of criminals  |
| e) 'Where there's a lot of money to             | v) very long           |
| be made, you get a <b>load of crims</b> .'      |                        |