

CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter November, 2016

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Deciphering food labels is a tricky business. They're filled with lots of multisyllabic words that border on being impossible to pronounce, chemicals that sound like they could kill you just by touching them, and much, much worse. Do we really know very much at all about the food we consume on a daily basis – or is ignorance bliss?

Here's a few interesting food facts you might not have known about and may find interesting, if not off-putting in some cases:

Jellybeans, a deliciously sweet, oval candy that is hard to resist . . . but that might all change if you know what is used to make those little nuggets as shiny as they are. *Shellac* is used as a glaze on those sweet drops, in addition to being used as a polish component in wooden furniture and AK47 assault rifles. But what exactly is shellac? Well, it's a compound derived from the excretions of the *Kerria lacca* insect . . . so essentially, insect poo. That's nuts!

And speaking of nuts, here's an explosive fact. Peanuts, which aren't actually nuts by the way, are used in the production of dynamite. Peanut oil is extracted and used to make glycerol, the explosive component in dynamite. Another group of "nuts", pistachios, hazelnuts, walnuts and almonds aren't nuts either. They are actually seeds, or legumes.

And while we are on the subject of foods that are not what they seem to be

how about that

bright sweet

summer fruit we

all love so much –

strawberries – not actually

a berry! Similarly, raspberries and

blackberries are not berries either. Bananas

are though, as are avocados, kiwi,

pumpkins and watermelon. While we've

tended to define berries as any small edible

fruit, the official definition of a berry is "a

fleshy fruit produced from a single ovary."

By this definition, oranges, kumquats,

grapes, and even tomatoes can be

considered part of the berry family. And of

course . . . if you were all listening to your

teacher in first grade science class you'll be

fully aware that tomatoes, cucumbers,

eggplants, pumpkins etc. are not even

vegetables, but rather fruits.

Here is something pretty sweet. You

might already know that honey is one of the

only foods that never goes off. But did you

know that the reason for this is that the

honey has in fact

already been

partially digested

by the bee. That is

to say that honey is

. . . well . . . bee

vomit!

So what's for

dinner tonight? Ice-

cream with honey,

and eggplant and

cucumber on the

side? To make it just

a little more explosive why not sprinkle some peanuts on top?



Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

Follow the arrows on this page for some shocks about food: www.health.com/health/gallery/0,,20588763,00.html

Article by Mark

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: These are turning out to be strange days on the world's stage. Brexit, Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, political turmoil for South Korea's president, Park Geun-hye, China's expansions into the East and South China Seas, and now, to top it all off, Trump, U.S. President-elect! Politics is an area that usually holds very little interest for me, but recently I can't help wondering.... what's going on?

Junko Says: Recently I read an article "How to communicate with plants". It says it's actually easier to communicate with plants than it is to communicate with people because plants don't have defense mechanisms and agendas based on self-importance. To feel with plants means to recognize them as beings whose feelings are as important to them as your feelings are to you.



Mark Says: Recently the Eiken test has undergone a major overhaul in order to meet *CEFR* equivalency (along with TOEFL, IELTS and other widely recognized language tests). The result is a much improved test with a growing acceptance outside Japan. Previously the domain of school students, for those looking to "test" their English language ability it might be worth giving Eiken another look.

Matt Says: It seems to be slowly getting colder over the last few weeks. It's the same temperature as in England now so it all feels normal to me. However, I have friends from the south of America who feel like it's the coldest they have ever been and Canadian friends who tell me Japan is still very warm to them.



Danielle dit: En novembre, il y a deux événements importants en France : la Toussaint, le 1^{er} novembre, et la célébration de l'armistice de la première guerre mondiale. La Toussaint est censé être une commémoration religieuse (de « tous les saints ») mais maintenant, on a tendance à la confondre avec la fête des morts, supposée être le jour suivant. Je trouve que commémorer la fin d'une guerre le mois des morts est une coïncidence pleine d'ironie.

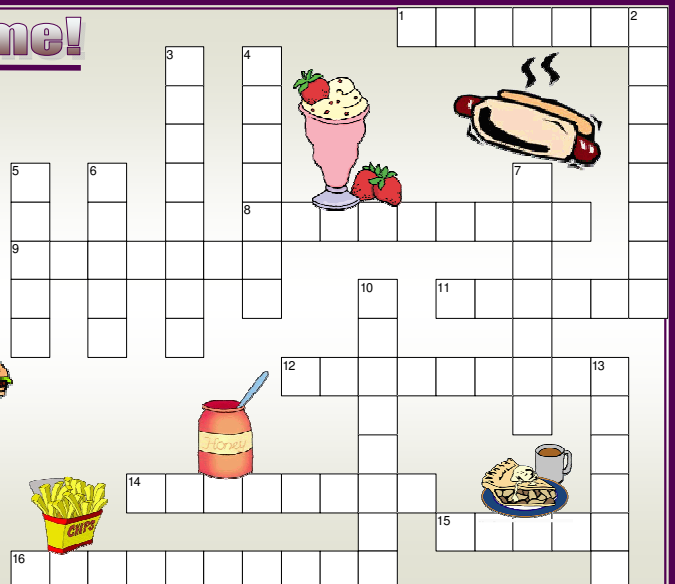
ACROSS

- 1 types of bean or peas
- 8 removed or taken out of
- 9 physical attack
- 11 suitable for eating
- 12 a part of something
- 14 a sweet, syrupy alcohol obtained from fat or oil
- 15 a shiny, thin coating
- 16 waste matter discharged from the body

DOWN

- 2 loosely scatter or distribute
- 3 put or add together
- 4 small lumps of (usually) precious metal
- 5 the part of a flower that produces fruit
- 6 foundation
- 7 come or develop from
- 10 fruit, not vegetables
- 13 inclined to do something ([print version here](#))

Play A Game!



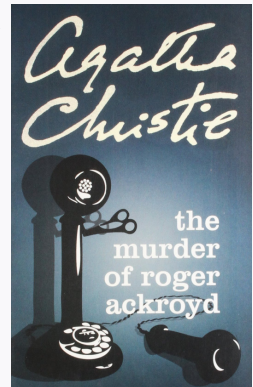


Critic's corner with S(a)3's Taro: - What does "Ackroyd" Mean?

Today, I will talk about one of the most famous detective novels of all time, "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" by Agatha Christie. This is the fourth book featuring Hercule Poirot, a Belgian private detective. Although Christie wrote many wonderful Poirot stories like "Murder on the Orient Express" and "Murder on the Nile", many fans regard "Ackroyd" as her best.

This novel is set during Poirot's retirement years. He had quit his profession in London and come to King's Abbot, a small village, to grow marrows. One autumn day, Mr. Roger Ackroyd, the richest gentleman in the village was murdered. He was stabbed with his own Tunisian dagger. Local police suspected his nephew, Mr. Ralph Paton as the culprit because he disappeared on the day of the murder. Furthermore, he had a strong motive to commit the crime. He had been struggling financially. He would be able to inherit a great amount of money as a result of his uncle's death. Nevertheless, Miss. Flora Ackroyd, the victim's niece, believed in his innocence and asked Poirot to help him.

Usually, when Poirot investigated cases, Mr. Arthur Hastings worked as his assistant. He was also the narrator of Poirot's stories. However, at that time, Hastings was in Argentina. Therefore, in this novel, Dr. James Sheppard was both the narrator and Poirot's assistant. He was a local doctor and a friend of the late Mr. Ackroyd. It was he who found the victim's body before anyone else. With Dr. Sheppard's help, Poirot tried to find the criminal by using his "little gray cells".

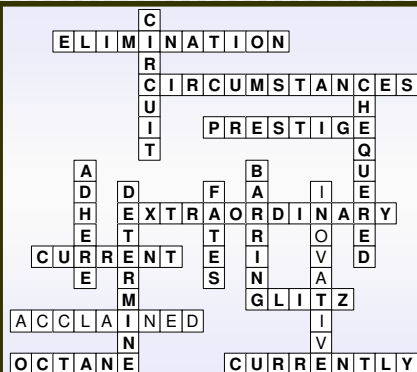


(Spoiler alert - If you want to enjoy reading this novel yourself, please stop here!)

At the climax of this novel, Poirot accused his assistant, Dr. Sheppard of being the culprit. The story ended with a confession by the narrator.

When this book was published for the first time, it was a sensation among readers. Traditionally, detective novels were written from the point of view of the protagonist's assistant. For example, Sherlock Holmes' stories were narrated by Dr. John Watson. "Watson-roll" means "the assistant and the storyteller" for book fans. But, in "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd", the "Watson-roll" character himself was the culprit. He deceived not only the other characters, but also the readers. Christie invented this tricky plot and fooled her readers in the process.

In this novel, "Ackroyd" is nothing but the name of the victim. However, many book connoisseurs have associated the word "Ackroyd" with "controversial plots" or "unreliable narrators".



ACROSS

- 2 removing or getting rid of something
- 3 overall conditions
- 5 a high recognition through success or wealth
- 11 beyond ordinary
- 12 belonging to the present
- 13 tasteless showiness
- 14 greatly praised and approved of
- 15 found in gasoline used as fuel
- 16 of this time, now

Last Month's puzzle Solution

DOWN

- 1 a route around a particular place
- 4 a pattern with alternating square colors
- 6 be in accordance or compatible with
- 7 the act of excluding someone
- 8 come to a clear decision
- 9 deities that determine the future events
- 10 ahead of the times



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