

In episode 13, Robert and Mei have dinner together. What do you think they talk about?

Before listening

Do the preparation task first. Then listen to the audio and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. salmon
2. to take someone seriously
3. a deal
4. progress
5. to give someone the sack
6. to fancy
7. dried
8. to ignore someone

Definition

- a. to want to have or do something
- b. a type of fish
- c. to end a worker's employment in your company, often because the worker was not doing well
- d. to give someone your attention and respect
- e. to not listen or pay attention to someone
- f. having all the water taken out of it (especially for food, e.g. fish, fruit, mushrooms)
- g. improvement; getting better
- h. an agreement; one person will do something if the other person also does something

Tasks

Task 1

Circle the five correct answers.

1. What do Robert and Mei talk about?
 - a. What to choose on the menu
 - b. Food in Britain
 - c. Chinese food
 - d. Mei's problems at work
 - e. Robert's problems at work
 - f. Robert's progress with learning Portuguese
 - g. A deal
 - h. *Game of Thrones*

Task 2

Match the phrases (a–j) with the person (1 or 2).

Person

1. Robert

.....

2. Mei

.....

Phrases

- a. feels busy and tired at work
- b. needs to be stronger about speaking a new language
- c. feels ignored at work
- d. chooses the salmon
- e. will talk to his/her manager
- f. misses Milton
- g. will go to another part of London
- h. needs to be stronger at work
- i. chooses the beef
- j. suggests how to practise a language

Discussion

What have you encouraged your friends to do?

Transcript

Robert: Hi, Jessie. How are you and the boys? I hope everything's OK with you all. I'm really sorry I haven't been able to come and visit. I've just been too busy with work. I'm getting really tired of it all, to tell you the truth. I live at the hotel – that means I work at the hotel, I eat at the hotel, I sleep at the hotel. It's too much. I can't wait to get away and make a new start in Brazil. My Portuguese is improving very slowly, but now Milton's away in Belfast doing *Game of Thrones*, so I haven't got a teacher. I miss him, actually. We have a good time together. I hope you'll meet him soon – you'd like him. And you'd like Mei too – Milton's neighbour, the Chinese woman, she works in IT – I told you about her I think. I had dinner with her last week. I invited her to the hotel after work.

Robert: So, what do you fancy, Mei?

Mei: Well, you work here, Robert. What's good?

Robert: What do you like? Do you eat meat? Fish? Are you vegetarian? Vegan?

Mei: No, I eat most things. I like fish – hmm, maybe the grilled salmon. I like salmon.

Robert: What do you think of British food?

Mei: I don't know, really – it's all pizza and burgers and curry.

Robert: That's not true! We've got the famous fish and chips.

Mei: Yes, that's OK. I don't *dislike* the food, but it just seems really simple – not very many flavours. And you British *really* love your potatoes.

Waitress: Good evening, Mr MacLachlan.

Robert: Good evening, Elsie. Um, I think we're ready to order – Mei?

Mei: Oh, yes. I'd like the grilled salmon, please, with ...

Robert: Is the salmon good?

Mei: Delicious, thanks. How's the beef?

Robert: A bit cold actually. I'll have to have a word with the kitchen staff ...

Mei: Well, you're the manager.

Robert: Assistant manager.

Mei: Assistant manager. You can still give them all – what's the word? When you send someone away from their job?

Robert: The sack. You give someone the sack. Which I'm not going to do!

Robert: Talking about jobs – and getting the sack! – how are things going in your job?

Mei: Oh, it's OK. It's the same. People are friendly but I don't think they take me seriously as a colleague, maybe because I'm a woman or because I'm Chinese – I don't know. They talk to each other and make plans and decisions but they ignore me.

Robert: You know, Mei, you should start pushing yourself forward a bit. Be stronger. You have to speak for yourself – don't wait to be asked.

Mei: That's easy to say. But it isn't so easy for me to do. I *am* a strong person – I always tell you and Milton what I think ...

Robert: You certainly do.

Mei: But not at work. I think you should show respect to your bosses at work, not disagree with them.

Robert: Of course! You should show respect to everyone! But you can disagree with someone and still be respectful. Like when they talk about 'the guys' and you don't like it. You need to say something.

Mei: I know. I know, Robert. How's your Portuguese now you've lost your teacher?

Robert: Awful. I miss Milton. I'm not really doing any Portuguese now he's gone to Belfast.

Mei: You're not doing any? And what will happen when you get the job in Brazil and you fail the language test? You'll be sorry then, Mr Robert MacLachlan, hotel manager – ex-hotel manager.

Robert: But I don't know anyone else who can teach me.

Mei: So look online. Get an app. Watch films with subtitles. Read a magazine.

Robert: Hmm.

Mei: Is there an area of London where there are a lot of Brazilians – or Portuguese?

Robert: Yes. Milton goes there to buy dried fish and other stuff for cooking.

Mei: Solution! You go there to the little shops – not the supermarket – and you buy dried fish and you speak Portuguese to everybody.

Robert: I can't just speak Portuguese to people. I feel embarrassed. I don't know them.

Mei: Robert MacLachlan, you have to be stronger. Push yourself forward a bit! Stand up straight! Look people in the eye! Speak to them!

Robert: OK, Mei. I get the point. Let's make a deal. We'll both do something to be stronger – you at work, me with Portuguese. I'll go to 'Little Portugal' and you say something to your boss. We'll meet here on Friday and see what progress we've made. Is it a deal?

Mei: It's a deal.

Robert: Mei certainly isn't shy with me. But she's right, I do need to push myself with Portuguese if I want to get a job in Brazil – and start trying to find Chico. And I really do want to be manager of my own hotel. So I'll be buying dried cod fish tomorrow. I don't know how to cook it though. I'll let you know how I get on.

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. d
3. h
4. g
5. c
6. a
7. f
8. e

Task 1

1. a, b, d, f, g

Task 2

1. a, b, f, g, i
2. c, d, e, h, j