

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Arts and Leisure

1. Sealing with Approval / 5

11. A Controversial Restoration / 65

Culture and History

2. Superstitions about Birds / 11

12. The Flood / 71

Environment

3. Alaska is Melting! / 17

13. Naturally Better Homes / 77

Health

4. Music that Heals / 23

14. Eat Better, Look Better / 83

Science Facts

5. Smart Exercise / 29

15. The Best Medicine / 89

People Profiles

6. Bill Gates: Good Businessman or Bad? / 35

16. Madonna's Downloads / 95

Social Science

7. The Educational Benefits of TV / 41

17. Remembering Memories / 101

Sports and Hobbies

8. Back to the Future / 47

18. The Famous Cup / 107

Technology

9. A Better Robot / 53

19. No Phishing Allowed / 113

Weird and Bizarre

10. A Piano in the Jungle / 59

20. Take a Ghost Tour / 119

1

Sealing with Approval



Pre-reading

Discuss the following questions.

1. Do you know anyone who drinks wine?
2. How are wines different?
3. How would you choose a good wine?

Vocabulary Preview

Write the letter of the word or phrase with the same meaning as the underlined word.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. close tightly | e. correct |
| b. go through | f. happen; come up |
| c. looking around while shopping | g. medium; not extreme |
| d. problem; difficulty | h. stay with; not depart from |

1. ___ These wines are in the moderate price range of \$10 to \$20. They are not expensive.
2. ___ I have a dilemma. I don't know which wine to serve with dinner.
3. ___ He used a cork to seal the bottle.
4. ___ She saw a very good wine on sale while she was browsing in the store.
5. ___ The proper way to pour wine is to only fill a glass one-third full.
6. ___ It's boring to always stick to the same brand every time.
Let's try something new.
7. ___ There are lots of tiny holes in a piece of cork, so air can penetrate it.
8. ___ If you don't follow the correct steps, problems will arise.

🎧 Sealing with Approval

Wine can be made with red grapes or white grapes, and, especially in the case of red wines, a number of doctors have reported that a moderate amount of wine has certain health benefits. This may be one of the reasons why the number of people drinking wine has risen over the past years. As new wine-shoppers browse the shelves of their local markets, they face a tough decision. Should they buy a wine with a **cork** or a **screw top**? And shoppers are not alone in their dilemma. **Wineries** are also facing tough choices in the best way to seal their products.

The root of the problem lies in “cork **taint**.” Cork taint refers to a problem with wine that has been sealed with a bad cork. Traditionally, all corks are made from a special oak tree that grows around the Mediterranean. In the process of making the corks and sealing wine bottles, a certain type of **mold** may start to grow on some corks. Over time, this mold can produce a chemical that makes the wine inside the bottle taste **musty**. In fact, the human tongue is so sensitive to this particular compound that people can taste it even diluted up to six parts per **trillion**!

How big is the problem of cork taint? Some experts from the wine industry claim cork taint affects one out of every ten bottles of wine. And as one spokesperson for an American winery says, “No other packaging industry in the world would put up with that kind of failure rate.”

Some wine makers see a possible solution to the problem of cork taint through adopting the tried and true method of sealing bottles with screw tops. However, many wineries are still playing it safe and sticking to corks for two reasons. First, there is the old belief among cork users that small amounts of oxygen are able to penetrate corks. This oxygen, they say, is necessary for the proper aging of fine wines, especially those aged 10 years or more. Screw tops do not allow for any oxygen to get into the bottles after they are sealed.

Another problem arises from the image screw tops have with the public. In most people’s minds, screw tops are only found on cheap, low-quality wines. It will take a lot of effort from wineries to re-educate the public if they want to change the image of screw tops. In addition, there is the problem of losing the romantic, elegant mood produced by the ceremonial popping of the cork. Consumers don’t seem to feel the same thrill when unscrewing a top.



⁶ *cork*: a special wood used to seal bottles

⁶ *screw top*: a lid that must be twisted to remove or close

⁷ *wineries*: places that make wine

⁹ *taint*: a small amount of contamination; spoilage

¹³ *mold*: fungus

¹⁵ *musty*: stale, old, and moldy

¹⁷ *trillion*: 1×10^{12}

Reading Comprehension

Choose the best answer.

- Which question does this reading focus on?
 - How can you choose a good wine?
 - Where do the best wines come from?
 - How should wineries seal wine?
 - Why are some wines very expensive?
- What does “cork taint” affect?
 - The age of wine
 - The air in wine
 - The color of wine
 - The taste of wine
- Out of 100 wines sealed with corks, how many might be affected by cork taint?
 - One
 - Five
 - Ten
 - Half
- Why do some wineries hesitate to use screw tops to seal wine bottles?
 - Screw tops are too expensive.
 - Screw tops are difficult to open.
 - Screw tops can't seal in air.
 - Screw tops give wine a bad image.
- According to the reading, which of the following statements may NOT be true?
 - Small amounts of oxygen are able to penetrate corks.
 - “Cork taint” may affect wine that has been sealed with a bad cork.
 - Corks are traditionally made from a special oak tree that grows around the Mediterranean.
 - Most people think screw tops are only found on low-quality wines.

Idiomatic Expressions

Find these idioms in the reading.

- play it safe** [not try something new or daring]
He **played it safe** and bought the same brand he always buys.
- tried and true** [proven useful; known to work correctly]
This is my grandmother's **tried and true** home remedy for colds.
- put up with** [allow; endure]
I tried to **put up with** her behavior at first, but she was rude.

Fill in the blanks. Use each of the above idioms once. Change the form of the words if needed.

- The book says it can explain five _____ ways to make a million dollars.
- We don't know how expensive things will be in London. Let's _____ and take some extra cash with us.
- You don't have to _____ high prices any longer! Shop at Save-More!

Summary

Fill in the blanks with the correct words.

taint
screw tops

dilemma
seal

stick to
penetrate

mold
proper

The wine industry is facing a 1. _____. What is the best way to 2. _____ wine bottles? Many people think that it is only 3. _____ for wine bottles to be sealed with corks. They think that oxygen needs to be able to 4. _____ the cork. Other experts, however, suggest that wineries change to 5. _____. Using corks can lead to cork 6. _____, a bad taste in the wine caused by 7. _____. However, it is unlikely that the public will accept this solution. They will most likely 8. _____ buying wine with corks for the romantic image.



Listening

 A Good Price?

Listen to the dialog and choose the best answer.

- How much does the wine cost?
 - About \$600
 - Almost \$1,600
 - Nearly \$6,000
 - Around \$60,000
- Which of the following is true?
 - It's a French wine.
 - The wine is over two hundred years old.
 - Bordeaux is an area in southwest France.
 - All of the above
- What does the man think about the wine?
 - It's very special.
 - It's too expensive.
 - It's better than buying a house.
 - It was Washington's favorite.

Discussion

Discuss the following questions.

1. Is wine popular in your country? Why or why not?
2. How much would you pay for a “good” bottle of wine/alcohol/etc.?
3. What is a traditional drink in your country? Do you know anything about its history? What is it made from?

Writing

Write your own short paragraph by answering the questions below.

A Traditional Drink

(1) What is a traditional drink in your country? (2) When do you drink this? (3) What is this drink made from? (4) What does it taste like? (5) Are there any benefits to drinking this?

Example

A traditional drink in Canada is eggnog. We usually drink this at Christmas time. This drink is made from eggs, milk and sugar. Eggnog is very thick and tastes sweet. This drink makes people feel like they are celebrating.

Vocabulary Review

A. Choose the best word to fill in the blank.

1. I don't know which to choose. What a _____!
a. taint b. benefit c. reason d. dilemma
2. The _____ way is to do this first.
a. proper b. trillion c. image d. seal
3. Trouble may _____ if we don't prepare well enough in advance.
a. put up with b. arise c. stick to d. decide
4. Can you help me open the _____ on this soda bottle?
a. screw top b. winery c. cork d. oxygen
5. I think this wine is bad. It tastes _____.
a. moderate b. proper c. musty d. mold
6. Jane likes to _____ in bookstores.
a. re-educate b. seal c. browse d. tried and true
7. How can you _____ John? He's so annoying!
a. stick to b. tried and true c. penetrate d. put up with

B. Choose the correct form of the word to fill in the blank.

8. Nothing can _____ this new material.
a. penetrate b. penetration c. penetrating
9. Please drink wine in _____. Don't drink too much.
a. moderation b. moderate c. moderately
10. To _____ this bottle, you must remove the cork with a corkscrew.
a. sealed b. sealing c. unseal