



## Pre-Reading Activities

### A: Short Discussion

In pairs, look at this picture of a screwcap.

Make a list of different types of bottles you think this cap would be good for and those it wouldn't be.



Good	Bad
	e.g. perfume bottle

### B: Prediction

The wine industry is looking at using screwcaps on wine bottles. In groups of three, think of three reasons why it might be better to use screwcaps than corks and write them below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Activities

### A: Skimming

1. Skim today's article and see if any of your answers were the same as the wine industry's. Why are screwcaps being recommended?
2. Write in the missing word in the headline from today's article. (Be careful with the word form!)

## Unsightly Screwcap a Winner in \_\_\_\_\_ Wine

SYDNEY Friday July 13 (Reuters) - They may not be as aesthetically pleasing as corks to wine connoisseurs, but researchers in Australia say metal screwcaps appear to be the best way to preserve the quality of white wine.

The industry-funded Australian Wine Research Institute said on Friday that metal screwcaps had outperformed natural or synthetic corks in helping white wine to retain **sulfur dioxide**, an important element in protecting against **oxidation**.

Its study had only been conducted for 24 months, said Peter Godden, the institute's wine maker and industry services manager.

But "up to this point in retaining freshness and overall aroma, a screwcap has performed better," Godden told Reuters.

The institute plans to continue the study of comparative bottle closures for up to 10 years, using a good quality white wine from the Clare Valley in South Australia as its **guinea pig**.

Godden said the principles of storage would be similar for red wines but it might be adventurous to automatically assume screwcaps would be just as good with reds.

He said the only downside to the metal screwcap was that the wine was beginning to get a "slightly rubber-like" quality after 24 months and that would have to be taken into account and dealt with by the industry.

Words:

*unsightly* - ugly oxidation - If wine has been exposed too much to the air, it becomes oxidized

*sulfur dioxide* - SO2

*guinea pig* - something used in an experiment or trial

ARTICLE © 2001 REUTERS LIMITED. LESSON © 2001 WWW.ENGLISH-TO-GO.COM



## B: Vocabulary

Find a word in today's article that means the same as:

1. relating to beauty or art, people's appreciation of beautiful things
2. to keep something the same; stop it from being damaged
3. to continue to keep something
4. smell; scent; perfume
5. carry out; do something
6. to think that something is likely to be true, although you have no proof

## C: True, False or Not Given

Read the text again and decide if the following statements are True, False, or Not Given. Write T, F or NG.

1. Wine experts feel corks look as nice as screwcaps.
2. The wine industry has also tried using corks that are not made of wood.
3. Corks allow sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) to escape.
4. Sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) stops wine from oxidizing.
5. The study has been going for two years.
6. Only white wines have been used in the study.
7. The study may finish in less than 10 years.
8. They are going to continue the study using red wines.
9. Wines with screwcaps will probably not sell as well as wines with corks.
10. The wines in the test did develop a slightly strange taste.

## D: Descriptive Language

*If a wine has been exposed too much to the air it becomes oxidized and turns a slightly brownish color. The wine tastes unpleasant with little or no fruit flavors. Winemakers use sulfur dioxide to stop this happening but too much sulfur dioxide can cause another chemical change. This can result in compounds developing (mercaptans) which also appear in onion, rubber, garlic and old cabbage and give them their unpleasant, sour smell.*

When wine connoisseurs are describing wine they often compare the aroma or taste of a particular wine with something else. Here are a couple of examples:

*This wine has a bouquet of citrus and lime blossoms.*

*The palate is off-dry with fruit and strong citrus characteristics, finishing with racy crisp apple acidity.*

*This is a wine with sweet ripe berryfruit flavors.*

Again, if someone were describing an unpleasant wine, they would still compare it to something:

*'The wine was beginning to get a "slightly rubber-like" quality...'*

*The wine smells like garlic.*

*The wine was as smelly as old cabbage.*

### Part One

The items below are often used to describe wine flavors.

1. Match the words to the pictures. **rubber; rotten eggs; asparagus; canned peas; vinegar; berry; citrus (e.g. lemons; limes); stone fruit (e.g. plums, peaches); mushrooms; spicy (e.g. cloves).**



2. Which of the words above would be used with pleasant wines? Which of the words would be used to describe wines that did not impress the drinkers?

## Part Two

Read these sentences describing people's impressions of different wines. Which sentences contain mistakes? Correct all the mistakes you find. (Use your dictionary to check any words you don't know.)

1. I like this wine it smells likes peaches.
2. This wine is off. It smell like rotten eggs.
3. This wine is very pleasant. It is as crisp like a citrus drink.
4. I think this wine is corked. It has gone off because it tastes like mushrooms.
5. This is a nice red wine. It is spicy.
6. This white wine tastes as asparagus. Yuk.
7. What a nice wine. It is fruity and full of berry flavors.
8. This bottle of wine is a can of peas. It smell terrible.
9. This wine has an unpleasant rubbery-like smell.
10. Oh no! This stuff are vinegar. Throw it away. It is so sour!

## Part Three

Below are a number of adjectives used to describe wine. Decide if they are **positive** or **negative**. You may use your dictionary or if you have access to the Internet, you can check here: <http://www.wineloverspage.com/lexicon/>

crisp, rough, coarse, smooth, rich, fresh, lively, bitter, unbalanced, harmonious, thick, full-bodied, musty, sour

Positive

Negative

## Part Four

Work in small groups and imagine that you have created a new beverage for consumers. You are trying to write a description of the beverage for consumers. Write two or three sentences using some of the words from Parts One and Three of this activity to describe your product.

The product could be:    - **tea**   - **coffee**   - **fruit juice**   - **wine or some other kind of alcohol**

## Post-Reading Activities

You may do one or more of these.

### A: Persuade someone!

1. Work in groups of three. Your teacher will assign you one of the following tasks.

**Student A:** Imagine that you have been given the job of promoting two new wines which have metal screwcaps. Product A is a still white wine (a chardonnay) and Product B is a champagne. You are going to talk to people who are looking round a wine shop on a Friday night. Your job is to try and persuade them to buy your products.

Do the following:

- think of names for Product A and B.
- think of brief descriptions for them.
- think of the reasons why people might want to buy them.
- think of how you are going to persuade people to buy them.

When you have done the things above, talk to Students B and C. They have stopped in the wine shop on their way home from work. Persuade them to buy your products. continued on next page...



**Students B and C:** Imagine that you have stopped at a wine shop on a Friday night after work. You want to buy a bottle of wine to have with your dinner. You are tired and want to get home. Student A is a salesperson promoting two new products in the wine shop. Student A will try to persuade you to buy their products.

Discuss the following:

- what kind of wine you will be looking for (cheap or expensive?, red or white? etc.)
- what kinds of things you would consider if you were choosing a bottle of wine you are unfamiliar with.
- what kinds of questions you would ask a salesperson if you were choosing a bottle of wine.
- how someone could persuade you to try something new.

When you have done the things above, talk to Student A. Remember you are tired and want to get home to relax!

## B: Brainstorming

What positive and negative effects could the introduction of screwcaps have on the wine industry and others related to it?

In pairs, make predictions about what could happen. Your teacher will set a time limit.

**Example:** *The price of wine could be lower because screwcaps may be cheaper to produce.*

## C: Play on Words

Today's lesson is called "**Corking row over sour grapes**". This is a pun or a play on words.

Fill the gaps in this sentence:

Sour grapes in today's lesson refer to grapes or wine that have \_\_\_\_\_ and taste \_\_\_\_\_; they are sour.

This expression comes from a very old fable called "The fox and the grapes". Go to this site:

<http://www.umass.edu/aesop/foxgrapes/index.html> and find out what the original expression means.

Teachers' Notes and Answer Key on next page.



# TEACHERS' NOTES AND ANSWER KEY

## Pre-Reading Activities

### B: Prediction - Suggested answers

1. easier to open bottles
2. don't have to drink a whole bottle
3. easier to close
4. preserves the wine better

## Reading Activities

### A: Skimming - Answers

1. The wine is preserved better. (The freshness and aroma of the wine is retained more effectively.)
2. **Unightly Screwcap a Winner in Preserving Wine** (Note **preserve** is in the -ing form as it follows a preposition.)

### B: Vocabulary - Answers

1. aesthetically 2. preserve 3. retain 4. aroma 5. conduct 6. assume

### C: True, False or Not Given- Answers

1. F (not as aesthetically pleasing as corks to wine connoisseurs)
2. T (synthetic corks)
3. T (screwcaps have outperformed corks in helping white wine to retain sulfur dioxide)
4. T (It protects against oxidation.)
5. T (24 months)
6. T (It might be adventurous to automatically assume screwcaps would be just as good with reds.)
7. T (for up to 10 years)
8. F (using a good quality white wine)
9. NG
10. T (the wine was beginning to get a "slightly rubber-like" quality).

### D: Language: Simile and metaphors - Notes

The following sites may be of use if students are wanting to find out more about wine and winemaking.

<http://www.foodmad.com/wine/bytes/faults.html>

<http://www.leskincaid.com/wine/Wine%20Vocabulary.html>

<http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/Spectator/Faqs/GlossaryFAQ.html>

### D: Language - Notes

Students may of course disagree on answers for Part 2. If a student really likes tinned peas, for example, they may argue that this is a pleasant taste!

### D: Language - Answers

#### Part One

1. The pictures are in this order: mushroom; vinegar; asparagus; rubber; citrus (e.g. lemons; limes); rotten eggs; canned peas; stone fruit (e.g. plums; peaches); berry; spicy (e.g. cloves).
2. **Unpleasant:** rubber, rotten eggs, canned peas, vinegar, **Pleasant:** asparagus, berry, citrus, stone fruit, mushroom, spicy

#### Part Two

1. Incorrect: I like this wine it smells **like** peaches.
2. Incorrect: This wine is off. It **smells** like rotten eggs.
3. Incorrect: This wine is very pleasant. It is **as** crisp as a citrus drink.
4. Correct
5. Correct
6. Incorrect: This white wine tastes **like** asparagus. Yuk.
7. Correct
8. Incorrect: This bottle of wine is a can of peas. It **smells** terrible.
9. Correct
10. Incorrect: Oh no! This stuff **is** vinegar. Throw it away. It is so sour!

#### Part Three

**Positive:** smooth, rich, fresh, lively, crisp, harmonious, thick, full-bodied

**Negative:** rough, coarse, bitter, unbalanced, musty, sour

## Post-Reading Activities

### A: Persuade Someone! - Notes

Students work separately to prepare for their roles (Student A works alone and Students B and C work together.) The three students then do the role play together. If you wish to shorten the first part of the role play, provide names and descriptions of Products A and B for Student A. You can of course also alter the role play by deleting one of the two products but the combination raises some interesting questions. (Would consumers be happy with champagne in a bottle with a screw cap or is the 'pop' produced by a cork an important part of the process). You can also make it a pair work activity by removing either the B or C roles.

You may like to give Students B and C a little more background information. They can be a) two separate individuals buying wine in the shop (i.e. they could then prepare for the role play separately), or b) flat mates or good friends planning to have dinner together, c) a couple both tired after busy days who are arguing about who is going to cook etc.

Students can of course swap roles after they have done the role play once. They could also discuss how effective Student A was at selling the idea of the screwcap and how they usually behave when confronted by salespeople who want them to try a new product.

### B: Brainstorming - Notes

Set a time limit to encourage students to think under pressure.

### B: Brainstorming - Suggested Answers

corkscrews would no longer be needed, many companies making them will suffer a loss of business; corks will no longer be needed, farmers who grow cork trees and people who make the corks will need to look for other markets; Champagne will lose its "pop"; people may not buy as many bottles of wine because bottles will last longer; some of the 'romance' of serving a wine may be lost (taking the cork out of the bottle is often seen as part of an enjoyable ritual).

### C: Play on Words - Answers

Sour grapes in today's lesson refer to grapes or wine that have **gone off/spoilt** and taste **bad/bitter**; they are sour.

It's easy to despise what you cannot have. Things are despised because they are beyond our reach.

**Please Note:** This lesson also has further exercises for your students to do online at [www.instantworkbook.com](http://www.instantworkbook.com). To get a username and password for your students, click on the blue icon next to this lesson description in the teachers' room at [www.english-to-go.com](http://www.english-to-go.com).