



New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts Test

Listening Selection

Grade

7

April 26–28, 2010

This listening selection is to be used in administering Book 2 of the English Language Arts Test. The entire selection is to be read aloud twice to the students. For complete directions, please follow the instructions in the *Teacher's Directions*.

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Cooking with the Sun

by Jennifer Davidson

When Dr. Robert Metcalf first used a solar cooker, the future changed for thousands—maybe millions—of Africans.

“It was a transforming experience for me when I lifted the lid from my first solar-cooked food and watched the steam roll out,” he said.

He knew that billions of poor people around the world depend on the use of wood for cooking. And as they take more and more firewood from wild areas, they are destroying habitats around the world. Wood collection is one reason why many animals have become endangered and even extinct.

“But sunshine can be an alternative to fire,” Dr. Metcalf says.

Since his first solar-cooked meal, he has helped people around the world to use simple new technologies to cook their food and make their water safe to drink—without burning wood.

Each morning in villages across East Africa, small children and their mothers wake up and walk several miles to collect firewood to cook their food. Their journey takes much of the day, and the heavy bundles they carry home on their heads last only a few days.

This is why Dr. Metcalf spends each summer in Africa. He teaches women and children in villages and refugee camps how to cook with the sun.

He knows the importance of cooking to make food safe. He is a scientist who studies germs. He wanted to help answer an important question: How can more people cook without fire?

To find answers, he helped create Solar Cookers International. It’s an organization that introduces solar cookers to developing countries and teaches people how to use them.

Go On

In the district of Nyakach in Kenya, women use sunlight to cook their traditional meals of ground white corn, or *ugali*, which is mixed with rice, beans, and vegetables.

Instead of building a fire, they mix the food in a dark pot, put the pot into a clear plastic bag, and place the pot and bag in a solar cooker. The cooker is an open box, lined with aluminum foil and shaped to reflect sunlight onto the pot. The dark surface of the pot absorbs much of the light, turning the light energy into heat, which cooks the food.

“The women are very excited because it’s easy, it works, and the food tastes great,” says Dr. Metcalf.

So far, more than thirty thousand African families now have solar cookers, and new programs will introduce solar cookers to millions of families.

STOP



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