



Learn English Through Stories

T Series

Upper - Intermediate

Adapted and modified by

Kulwant Singh Sandhu

<https://learn-by-reading.co.uk>

Banta learning Quantifiers by K S Sandhu

A Hungry Evening and a Science Worry

One rainy Saturday, Sufeena and her housemate Gurmeet wanted to cook something nice for dinner. They checked the kitchen.

“There’s only a little rice left,” Sufeena said. “Just one small portion each.” Gurmeet opened another bag. “Actually, there’s quite a lot if we’re clever. We can make fried rice.”

They looked in the vegetable drawer. “How many potatoes do we have?” Gurmeet asked.

Sufeena counted. “Very few – only three. Not enough for proper roast potatoes.”

“And carrots?” Gurmeet continued.

“Not many,” she replied. “A few, but they’re quite old.”

Next, they checked the fridge. “There’s very little broccoli,” Gurmeet noticed. “Almost none.”

Sufeena sighed. “And not much milk either. We can’t make a creamy sauce. We’ll have to keep it simple.”

They decided on vegetable stir-fry with noodles. “We don’t have much time anyway,” Sufeena said. “And there isn’t much soy sauce left, so we’ll use what we’ve got.”

While chopping, they talked about university. Gurmeet studied physics, but his class felt empty.

“You know,” he said, “there’s a real shortage of students choosing science subjects now, especially physics. Companies complain there aren’t enough graduates.”

Sufeena nodded. “I saw an interview with Professor Cousins. She said very few students pick science because there are so many easier options, like media studies or business. There’s too much competition for jobs, so students ‘play safe’ and choose subjects they feel confident in.”

Gurmeet agreed. “Exactly. Science looks difficult and boring to most people. There’s little incentive to choose it. We need a little more excitement in school lessons – fun experiments, maybe virtual reality!”

Sufeena laughed. "You're right. At the moment students have very little reason to pick hard subjects."

The stir-fry was ready. "It's not bad," Gurmeet said, tasting it. "We used a lot of garlic and ginger because we didn't have much else!"

Just then their friend Jez knocked on the door. "Hi! I'm starving. Are there many good restaurants near here?"

Gurmeet smiled. "Quite a lot, but not much variety. Mostly pizza and Chinese."

Jez pulled a face. "I eat too much junk food already. Are there many British places?"

"Not many," Sufeena answered. "Only two, and they're expensive."

"What about Indian?" Jez asked.

Sufeena's flatmate Ali, who had just come home, looked excited, but Jez shook his head. "I've tried a little Indian food before, but I'm not very keen on it – sorry, Ali!"

Everyone laughed. "No problem," Ali said. "There are so many Italian restaurants here that we'll never get bored. Let's go to Bella Italia. Their pasta is amazing!"

They left the flat feeling happy. Even though there was very little food left at home and very few fresh ingredients, they had enjoyed cooking, talking, and planning a fun meal out with friends.

Questions:

Question 1: How much rice did Sofia and Liam think they had at first, and what did they decide to do with it later?

Question 2: Why did Liam say there was "very little incentive" for students to choose science subjects?

Question 3: What did Professor Cousins suggest was needed to make more students interested in science?

Question 4: How many British restaurants did Sofia say were near their flat, and what did she say about them?

Question 5: Why did Jez not want to eat Indian food, even though Ali loves it?

Answers:

Answer 1: At first Sofia thought there was only a little rice left (just one small portion each), but later Liam said there was quite a lot if they were clever, so they decided to make fried rice (though they ended up doing vegetable stir-fry with noodles).

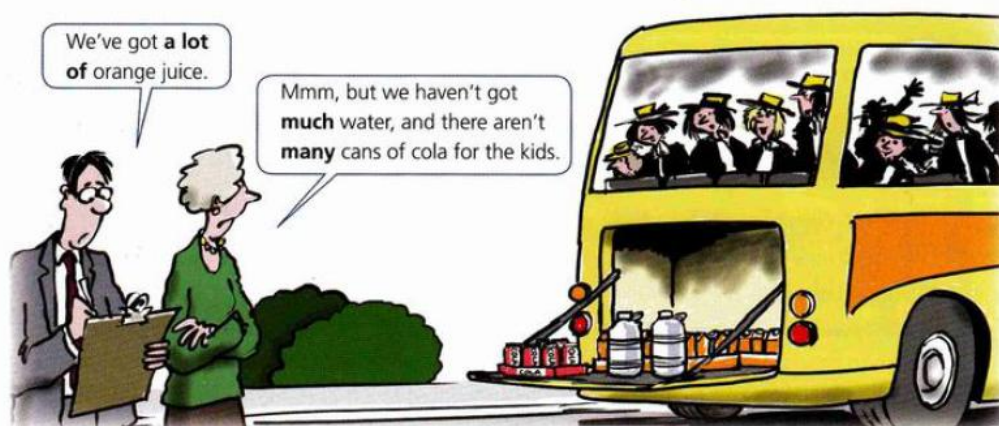
Answer 2: Liam said there was very little incentive because science subjects look difficult and boring, there is too much competition for jobs, and students prefer to “play safe” and choose easier subjects they feel more confident in.

Answer 3: Professor Cousins suggested they need to introduce a little more excitement into science in schools (for example, fun experiments or virtual reality) to make students more interested.

Answer 4: Sofia said there were not many British restaurants near the flat – only two – and they were expensive.

Answer 5: Jez said he had tried a little Indian food before but he was not very keen on it (he did not like it very much), even though he knew Ali loved it.

12 much, many, a lot of, (a) little, (a) few



1 much, many, a lot of (lots of)

We use *much*, *many* and *a lot of* to talk about a large amount; we don't know the exact amount.

- We usually use *much* and *many* in negative sentences and questions:

+ UNCOUNTABLE NOUN *We haven't got much water.*

+ COUNTABLE NOUN *There aren't many cans of cola.*

- We use *a lot of* or *lots of* in positive and negative sentences and questions:

We've got a lot of orange juice.

Hurry up! We haven't got a lot of time.

Were there lots of people at the swimming pool?

We can use these words without a noun, when it is clear what we are talking about:

I've got some money with me but not much. I've got a lot to do today. (X a lot of to do)

FORMALITY CHECK *Much* and *many* in positive sentences are formal. We prefer *a lot of* or *lots of* for informal use:

Many of the experiments produced useful results. (formal)

Come on. We've got a lot of work to do. (informal)

2 too much, too many, not enough

Too much and *too many* have a negative meaning. They mean 'more than we want':

We've got too many pizzas for only three people. We can't walk here – there's too much snow.

Not enough is the opposite of *too much/many*. It means 'less/fewer than we want':

We haven't got enough cola for the children. We didn't have enough people to play football.

3 (a) little, (a) few

We use *a little* instead of *some* to talk about a small amount; we use *a few* instead of *some* to talk about a small number; we don't know the exact amount or number:

+ UNCOUNTABLE NOUN *Add a little butter to the potatoes.*

+ COUNTABLE NOUN *There are a few good restaurants near here.*

When we use *little* (without *a*), it means 'not much/not enough': *You will have little difficulty in finding my house. There's little hope of finishing this today.*

When we use *few* (without *a*), it means 'not many/not enough': *Few tourists come to the island. There are few good hotels near here.*

FORMALITY CHECK *Little* and *few* can sound quite formal on their own. In everyday English, we prefer to use *very little/very few* or *not much/not many*:

There are very few good restaurants near here. There aren't many good restaurants near here.

Practice

1 Match the beginning of each sentence with the correct ending, A or B.

- 0 There was a little rice left, so ...
A we couldn't have any with our curry. B we had a spoonful each with our curry.
- 1 There was a lot of rice left, so ...
A we made a really big salad with it. B we had to have potatoes with our curry.
- 2 There was very little rice left, so ...
A we all had a lot with our curry. B we had to have potatoes instead.
- 3 There were a few potatoes left, so ...
A we had one each with our meal. B we had to have rice with our meal.
- 4 There were very few potatoes left, so ...
A we had to have rice with our meal. B we had two or three each with our meal.

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Read the article and choose the correct words in *italics>*.

2.23 Listen and check.

Crisis in science education

Companies are complaining there aren't (0) *enough* / *much* students taking science subjects now, especially physics. The problem, it seems, is that (1) *few* / *many* students see science subjects as too difficult, when there are (2) *a lot* / *a lot of* easier options, such as media studies. Professor Jennifer Cousins of Exmouth University comments: "This is becoming a serious problem. (3) *Very few* / *A few* students are choosing to study science subjects these days, which means that there (4) *are enough* / *aren't enough* graduates applying for jobs in the industrial sector. The way I see it, there are (5) *too many* / *too much* new courses at university level, and there's so (6) *much* / *many*

competition between graduates that most students 'play safe' and take courses they feel more confident in. At present they have (7) *a little* / *little* incentive to choose scientific subjects because science is seen as both difficult and boring. We must introduce (8) *a little* / *a few* more excitement into science in schools."



3 GRAMMAR IN USE Complete the conversation with the words and phrases from the box.

2.24 Listen and check.

a little a lot not much ~~many~~ much many not many

- JEZ Let's get something to eat. Are there (0) *many* restaurants here?
- ALI Yes, there are quite (1), but there's (2) variety. What kinds of food do you like?
- JEZ Well, I eat too (3) junk food so I'd prefer something different. Are there any British restaurants here?
- ALI Yes, but (4) There are only two, I think, and they're expensive. Do you eat much Indian food?
- JEZ Well, I have tried (5) Indian food before, but I'm not very keen on it – sorry, Ali. I know you love it. What about Chinese?
- ALI Oh, there are so (6) Chinese restaurants here that everyone gets bored with Chinese food! I know – we both like Italian. Let's go to Giovanni's.

Answers

UNIT 12

1 1 A 2 B 3 A 4 A

2 1 many 2 a lot of 3 Very few 4 aren't enough
5 too many 6 much 7 little 8 a little

3 1 a lot 2 not much 3 much 4 very few
5 a little 6 many