Feifei
Welcome to The English We Speak. It’s Feifei here with Rob.

Rob
Hi everyone.

Feifei
So Rob, help yourself to a biscuit. I know how much you love them, so I bought some for us to share today.

Rob
Oh right. That’s very kind, Feifei, but very odd. You don’t normally buy me things. Are you feeling guilty? Have you done something wrong?

Feifei
Of course not! Well… sort of. I hope you don’t mind, but I used up all your coffee when I made drinks for the team this morning.

Rob
What?! You used up all my coffee and you didn’t make me one? That really takes the biscuit!

Feifei
I haven’t taken any biscuits – just your coffee.

Rob
No, Feifei! When I say someone really takes the biscuit, I mean ‘what you have done is really surprising, annoying or sometimes just silly.’

Feifei
Oh dear. You’re not happy? Sorry, Rob. Let’s hear some examples while you calm down…

Examples
I can't believe she copied my work and pretended it was her own – now that really takes the biscuit.
You're really taking the biscuit if you're expecting me to take you to the match and wait outside until it's finished!

Your plan to turn the spare bedroom into a snooker room really takes the biscuit!

Feifei
This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're finding out about the phrase 'to take', or 'to really take the biscuit', which means we are 'surprised or annoyed by someone's actions.' Oh Rob, I'll buy you some more coffee.

Rob
I hope so. By the way, we can say 'something' as well as 'someone' takes the biscuit. So you take the biscuit by using up my coffee but there is something that really takes the biscuit.

Feifei
Oh yes? What's that?

Rob
These biscuits you bought are ginger nuts – I hate ginger biscuits. Didn't you know? Oh that really takes the biscuit!

Feifei
OK, Rob. You are really taking this badly. Pass them over here then and I'll eat them.

Rob
Oh crumbs, I've dropped them. Sorry!

Feifei
It looks like I won't be taking any of my biscuits today! Come on, Rob. I'll buy you a coffee.

Rob
Thanks. Bye.

Feifei
Bye.