
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The White Elephant

11: Success



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Peter

Table two weren't too keen on the soup. Ooh, what's that? A letter from a secret admirer?

Mary

no. Nothing like that – it's my exam results...

Peter

Exam results? I didn't know you'd been studying.

Mary

Yes – I've been studying for a PhD – and it says here, I'm a doctor!

Peter

Oh well done Mary – Doctor Marigold - another feather in your cap. You're so clever.

Gordon

What's that? You've qualified to be a 'doctor'. Well done... although personally I think the world needs more chefs than doctors – everybody needs to eat. But well done... you've had a lucky break.

Peter

Yes, you're going to be a real success, maybe you'll be my doctor...

Gordon

Of course, I know all about success. I've got a track record for creating world-class food and winning numerous awards – just ask Ceilia.

Mary

So what's the secret to your success Gordon?

Gordon

Well... errr... an appreciation for food... an eye for detail... and an excellent relationship with the customers.

Peter

Are you sure?

Gordon

Yes! Now I want you to take this to table two... it's one of my best recipes... it's always a roaring success.

Mary

Hmm... don't count your chickens before they've hatched.

Gordon

Don't worry Mary. I can taste success. You wouldn't find a doctor making something like this.

Peter

Well, they're certainly eating it.

Gordon

There you see... that's why I'm top dog in this kitchen.

[CUSTOMER CALLS FROM RESTAURANT: Waiter! Waiter! Come quickly!]

Peter

Oh no! One of the customers is lying on the floor being sick. I think he's got food poisoning!

Gordon

Oh typical! Well come on then, you're a doctor.

Mary

A Doctor of Philosophy, Gordon. But I'll see what I can do as per usual.

Vocabulary

feather in your cap

an achievement to feel pleased about

a lucky break

a piece of good luck / a good opportunity

a real success

very successful

a track record

a reputation based on performance or experience

the secret to your success

the main thing that lead to your success, that others don't know about

a roaring success

very successful

don't count your chickens before they've hatched

don't make plans based on something being successful until it actually proves to be a success

taste success

get a feeling of what success is like

top dog

best or most important person in a group

Questions

1. What has Mary qualified to be?
(Hint: She has got a PhD!)
 - a) A Doctor of Philosophy
 - b) A Doctor of Medicine
 - c) A chef

2. Which one of these reasons does Gordon NOT give as being the secret to his success?
(Hint: It something he doesn't actually own.)
 - a) An appreciation for food
 - b) An eye for detail
 - c) A big recipe book

3. What phrase did Mary use when Gordon thought his best recipe would be a big success with the customers?
(Hint: Look at the vocabulary reference.)
 - a) Count your chickens before they've hatched.
 - b) Don't count your chickens before they're hatching
 - c) Don't count your chickens before they've hatched

Answers

1. What has Mary qualified to be?
 - a) A Doctor of Philosophy (That's correct!)
 - b) A Doctor of Medicine (Wrong. Try again.)
 - c) A chef (Not correct. It's got nothing to do with cooking!)

2. Which one of these reasons does Gordon NOT give as being the secret to his success?
 - a) An appreciation for food (Not correct. He did say that.)
 - b) An eye for detail (Wrong. He did say that.)
 - c) A big recipe book (That's right. He didn't say this was a secret to his success.)

3. What phrase did Mary use when Gordon thought his best recipe would be a big success with the customers?
 - a) Count your chickens before they've hatched. (Wrong. It was the negative form of this.)
 - b) Don't count your chickens before they're hatching (Not quite the right phrase. Try again.)
 - c) Don't count your chickens before they've hatched (That's correct. Well done!)