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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The White Elephant

### 17: Timing



*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Ceilia**

Something smells nice.

**Gordon**

Ah, that will be my 'coq au vin' – I've created a superior dish to attract a better type of customer.

**Ceilia**

It's **about time** you did. I'm glad that we actually have got a customer tonight so **make it snappy** otherwise they'll escape.

**Gordon**

Ceilia, it can take **all the time in the world** to make something as special as this. Now, one for the pot... and one for me.

**Peter**

Customer on table four says they haven't got all day so hurry up.

**Ceilia**

Give them this to keep them sweet.

**Gordon**

I'll take that thank you... for the food of course.

**Ceilia**

Come on Gordon, **every second counts**. Oh, thank goodness you're here Mary. **Just in the nick of time**. I think I'm going to need your help.

**Gordon**

Ah, lovely Mary... did I ever tell you, I love those rubbery gloves?

**Ceilia**

There's a customer out there who's waiting for his food and Gordon is in no fit state to cook.

**Gordon**

Mary, have you tried my coq au vin?

**Mary**

Leave this to me.

**Peter**

The customer's not happy... he says he's only going to wait for 5 more minutes.

**Ceilia**

It's a race against time. Mary, can you do it?

**Gordon**

You smell lovely.

**Mary**

Made it – with seconds to spare!

**Peter**

Phew! That was a close one.

**Gordon**

Smells delicious... that's better!

## Vocabulary

### **it's about time**

you should have done this earlier

### **make it snappy**

be quick

### **all the time in the world**

lots of time available to do something

### **every second counts**

don't waste any time

### **in the nick of time**

at the last moment

### **it's a race against time**

there's a limited amount of time to finish something

### **with seconds to spare**

just in time

### **that was a close one**

we just managed to avoid something bad happening

## Questions

1. Why does Gordon want to cook his special 'coq au vin'?  
(HINT: Watch the episode again.)
  - a) To bring in lots more customers
  - b) To get a good review in the newspaper
  - c) To attract a better type of customer
  
2. What does Ceilia mean when she says 'keep them sweet'?  
(HINT: She gives them a free glass of wine)
  - a) Get the customers very drunk
  - b) Keep the customers happy
  - c) Give the customers a dessert
  
3. Why does Ceilia say 'it's a race against time'?  
(HINT: The customers aren't happy.)
  - a) The customers are going to leave in five minutes
  - b) Gordon is going to be sick very soon
  - c) The restaurant is closing soon

## Answers

1. Why does Gordon want to cook his special 'coq au vin'?
  - a) To bring in lots more customers
  - b) To get a good review in the newspaper
  - c) **To attract a better type of customer**
  
2. What does Ceilia mean when she says 'keep them sweet'?
  - a) Get the customers very drunk
  - b) **Keep the customers happy**
  - c) Give the customers a dessert
  
3. Why does Ceilia say 'it's a race against time'?
  - a) **The customers are going to leave in five minutes**
  - b) Gordon is going to be sick very soon
  - c) The restaurant is closing soon