



STORY TIME

The Story of Food

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What is your favourite dish that always makes your mouth water?





Kuku jumps from her bed the moment doorbell rings. Today is her birthday and she is excitedly waiting to meet her friends in the evening.





She opens the door and sees a delivery man carrying a big gift. He smiles at Kuku and hands her the package. Kuku looks at it and screams, “Ma! grandpa’s gift has arrived!”

She thanks him and closes the door and runs back to her room. “Ma, I will be in my room.”





Kuku opens the package and finds an old rustic book inside. She opens the book and sees her grandpa's familiar handwriting.

“Happy Birthday, my dear Kuku. With this book, I am sending you lots of love and some *magic* on your birthday.”



Let's Put on our Thinking Hats!

What could the 'magic' be about?



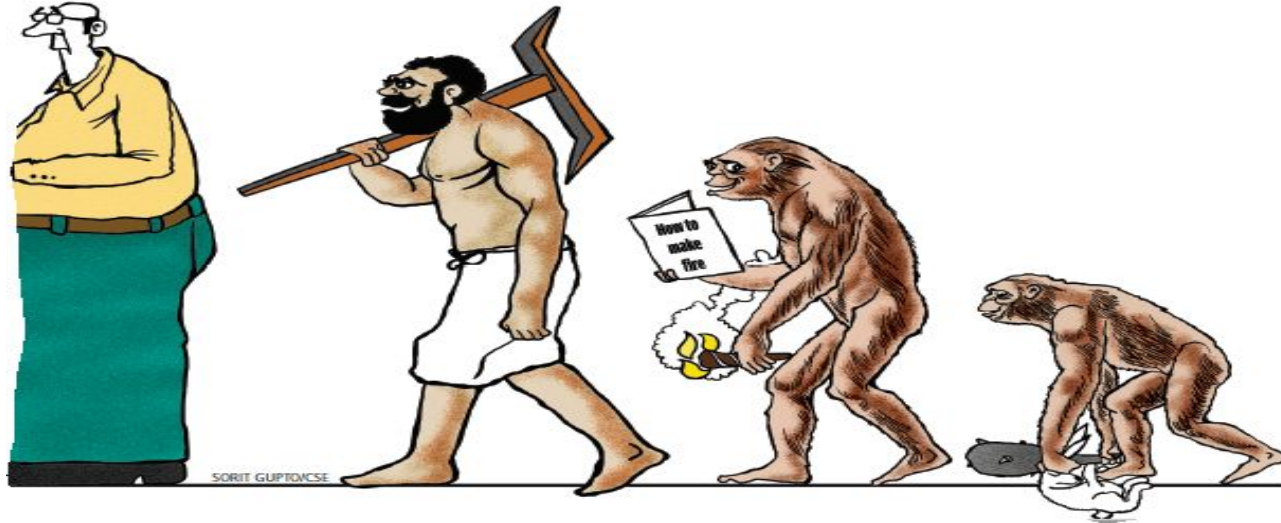
Kuku smiles and runs her hands over the words. Then, she reads the title of the book: ***The Story of Food***. Her excitement knows no bounds now! She had always been curious about the delicacies on her table.

“Grandpa is the best!” She thinks and settles in her bed to begin reading.





“Long ago, humanity took a giant leap with the discovery of fire. Almost two million years ago, humans learnt to control fire and it changed how they lived. Humans started to disassociate themselves from the rest of the animal kingdom as they were doing something very different—eating cooked food! And with this began the art of COOKING.”



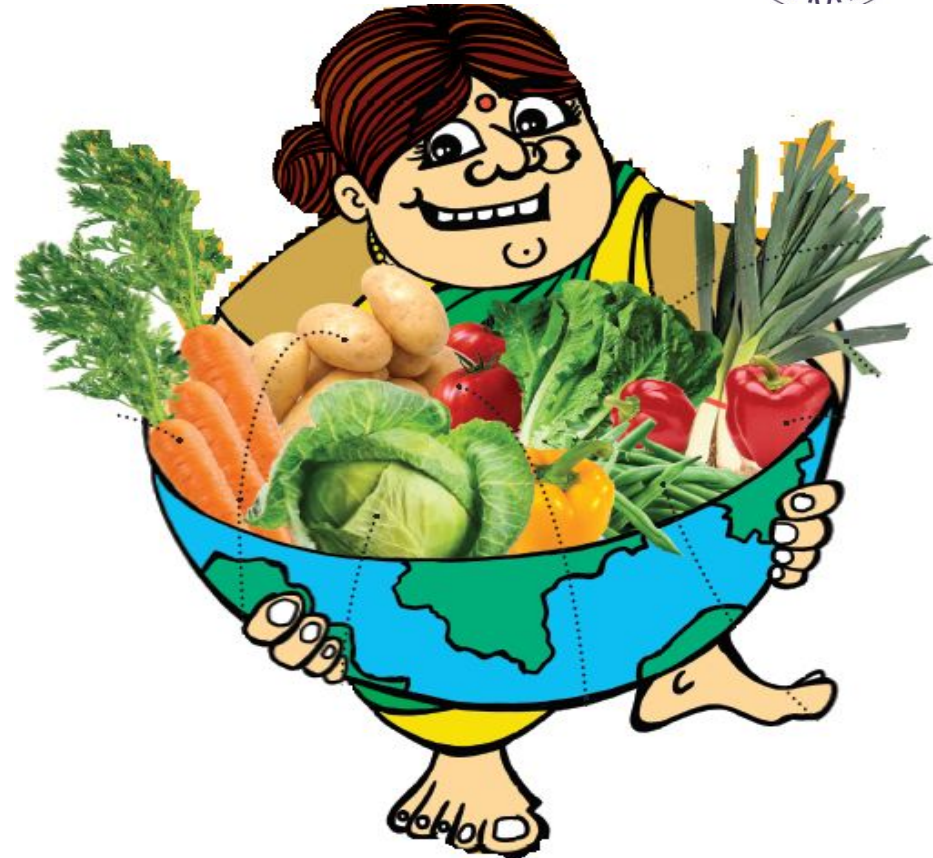


“Now, humans had efficient digestive tracts that freed up more energy. When our ancestors mastered the art of cooking, they became discerning about what and how to eat. This led them to select plants and their parts which were edible.”





“Since climatic and other conditions such as soil type had a prominent impact on the whole process, one couldn’t produce tropical plants of southern hemisphere in the northern hemisphere and vice-versa. This gave us our distinct food habits.”





“Climate change too had a direct impact on food production, which triggered humans to migrate.

While migrating, humans took with them domesticated animals. This affected their food habits as well. Humans were forced to incorporate new local foods into their diets and had to let go some of their old food habits.”





Kuku looked up from her book. She was appalled at the new things she was learning. Kuku was very happy to read this book. It was indeed full of love and *magic*, but she had to get ready for her birthday party. Kuku didn't feel like letting go off the book and thought reading another chapter couldn't hurt. With this, she turned the pages to find out more...





“The second major impetus in human civilisation came with the advent of **TRADE**. Our ancestors realised that they did not have to change their place of residence according to the availability or non-availability of particular food.

They realised that anything from a food item to daily essentials could be traded. Common salt was one of those items.

Fruits and vegetables taste sweet, bitter, sour but none are naturally salty. That’s why we depend solely on the natural availability of salt to enhance the taste of our food and to meet the requirements of our body.”



“Trade eventually led to the discovery of trade routes. Later, this led to the 'discovery' of the new World. With the discovery of a new country, people came to know about new food items.”

Do you know what India became famous for?



“**SPICES!!** For Europeans, spices were simply magic herbs because they didn’t have any substantial nutritional value, but enhanced the taste and aroma of the food. Fierce battles were fought among the Dutch, English, Spanish and Portuguese traders to get a hold over the trade of Indian produce.”





“Today, food habits are global and so is the way we buy vegetables and cook. In the course of civilisation, humans have rediscovered and reinterpreted the very notion of food. Today, **food is not just a basic need but also a class symbol.**

A section of affluent people in our society prefer to buy imported foods even though they may not have any substantial added benefits.”





“Ironically, foods which originated in our country are valued more in foreign countries. **Turmeric** originated in India but today it is trending across menus abroad in shakes and smoothies. With burgers, noodles, momos, rice and many other items adorning our dinner table, our food has made us global citizens in a true sense.”





“But today our food faces a lot of challenges:

Food loss and food wastage.

Food loss is due to the farming process like storage and transportation or natural calamities. Extreme weather events have now become frequent because of climate change. Locust attacks, floods, droughts all affect biodiversity hugely.

And can you guess how much **food is wasted globally** every day?

One-third of what is produced! Sadly, much of it is perfectly edible.”





“For every glass of milk poured down the drain, we also waste at least a thousand litres of water and the fuel that go into getting it at the doorstep. Waste food releases carbon dioxide and methane in great quantities.

It is important to get only as much as you can consume and not shop aspirationally.”





Kuku paused for a while. She had never thought this way about food wastage. She wanted to read more but she was running late for her party. She picked up the phone to call her grandfather and thanked him for the wonderful gift . Kuku got ready for her birthday party and joined her parents in the kitchen.





Her father was lining up the glasses and filling them with fresh juice. Her mother was stirring the kheer over the gas stove while her sister was taking out hamburgers on a plate and placing it on the table. The collection looked nothing less than a fancy feast.





Kuku looked at all the food items laid out on the table for the party. It was the first time it struck her that these delicacies came from different places and require so many resources. She had never seen her plate of food the way she did today. **“We will make sure that no food gets wasted today and we make as much as we can eat,”** asserted Kuku! Her parents smiled and gave a friendly nod.



Let's Rate our Practices

- For each question, choose the **answer that best describes your practice**
- Give yourself **points** for every answer.
For A: 1 point
For B: 2 points
For C: 3 points
- **Add points** to get final score!



- 1. How often do you throw out food that you are not able to finish?**
 - A. Rarely**
 - B. Sometimes**
 - C. Most times**

- 2. How often do you or your parents go grocery shopping?**
 - A. When there is a need**
 - B. Not a lot but we buy what we want**
 - C. Whenever we want anything**



- 3. How often do you get leftovers packed from restaurants?**
- A. There are rarely any leftovers
 - B. Sometimes when we can't finish
 - C. Every time we go
- 4. How do you manage your household waste?**
- A. Recycling and composting
 - B. Reusing some of it
 - C. Throw all waste in the dustbin



Check Your Scores!

- **3-6 Points:** Your practices are environmentally sustainable to a GREAT extent! Continue to use the resources minimally.
- **7-9 Points:** Your practices are environmentally sustainable to SOME extent. Reduce wastage by recycling more and using only as per the need.
- **10-12 Points:** Your practices are affecting the environment. You need to start making judicious use of resources and avoid wastage.