

# Attack of the Leftovers

by ReadWorks



"We have too many mashed potatoes," said Caroline.

"I know!" said her brother, Stewart. "I am sick of them."

"We've had mashed potatoes for lunch."

"We've had mashed potatoes for dinner."

"We've even," said Caroline with a grimace, "had them for breakfast."

"Thanksgiving is over," said her brother, crossing his arms. "We want new food."

Thanksgiving had happened five days earlier. Everyone came over to their house: aunts and uncles and cousins. Even a long-lost aunt from Alabama. They ate turkey and mashed potatoes and stuffing and gravy. Lots and lots of gravy. It was great. It made everyone sleepy.

But when everyone left, the food was still there. Turkey. Mashed potatoes. Stuffing. Gravy. Everywhere! The counters were covered. Food invaded the fridge. It sat on Caroline and Stewart's plates for days and days. Eventually, it got boring.

"Pleeeeeeeeeeease," said Stewart. "Make us something else!"

"Not mashed potatoes."

"Anything but that!"

"Hmm," said Mom. She was quiet for what seemed like a long time. Her finger tapped against her mouth. "I think I have an idea."

She took out a container. Stewart's mouth fell open.

"Mom!" he shouted. "Are you crazy? Those are the mashed potatoes."

"They sure are," said Mom. "I think I just remembered something my grandmother used to do."

Mom pulled out a frying pan and a jug of vegetable oil. She poured the oil in the pan. It went *glug, glug, glug*. She turned on the heat. Stewart and Caroline backed away. They are not allowed near the stove when hot oil is in the pan.

While the oil got hot, Mom fixed the potatoes. She turned the container upside down. "Plop!" went the potatoes. They fell onto the counter in a cold, hard block. With her sharpest knife, Mom sliced the potatoes into squares. She dusted them with flour. She sprinkled them with salt. She covered them with pepper.

And then she slid them into the oil.

*Sizzle!* went the oil. *Sizzle, sizzle, sizzle!*

"Whoa, Mom," said Caroline. "What are you doing?"

"I'm frying the potatoes. The same way you would make French fries. It's a good way to get rid of leftovers."

When the potatoes stopped sizzling, they were done. Mom lifted them from the oil and let them dry. Once they were cool, Caroline picked one up in her hands.

"Don't you want one, Stewart?"

"No!" he said. "I told you. No more mashed potatoes."

Caroline lifted the block of crisp, brown potato to her mouth. She took a tiny bite-the tiniest bite in the world.

"Oh boy," she said. "Oh boy, Stewart. These are good."

He took a bite, too. She was right. The potatoes didn't taste like mashed potatoes at all. They were crisp and brown on the outside. They were creamy and fluffy on the inside. It was like eating a crispy cloud.

"See?" said Mom. "Leftovers aren't the end of the world."

**grimace**

grim · ace

**Advanced Definition****noun**

1. a contorted facial expression that shows pain, disgust, or contempt.

**intransitive verb**

1. to make a grimace.
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**These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:**

1. "That wasn't very nice," said Angelica, pursing her lips into a **grimace**.
2. To one side were whole chickens, plucked bare and sad-looking. It made her skin lurch to look at them. She picked up the least disgusting one, and **grimaced** when it squelched through the plastic.
3. She screwed her eyes shut and took a big bite. As she chewed, her face twisted into a **grimace**. Dad was shocked-she really hated them!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What have Caroline and Stewart eaten for lunch, dinner, and breakfast?
  - A. turkey
  - B. mashed potatoes
  - C. stuffing
  - D. gravy
  
2. What main problem do Caroline and Stewart face at the beginning of the story?
  - A. They have run out of mashed potatoes.
  - B. Thanksgiving is over and they are sad.
  - C. They do not like turkey and mashed potatoes.
  - D. They are sick of eating Thanksgiving leftovers.
  
3. Caroline and Stewart normally like Thanksgiving food. What evidence from the story supports this conclusion?
  - A. "They ate turkey and mashed potatoes and stuffing and gravy. Lots and lots of gravy. It was great."
  - B. "Thanksgiving had happened five days earlier. Everyone came over to their house: aunts and uncles and cousins."
  - C. "But when everyone left, the food was still there. Turkey. Mashed potatoes. Stuffing. Gravy. Everywhere!"
  - D. "Food invaded the fridge. It sat on Caroline and Stewart's plates for days and days. Eventually, it got boring."
  
4. Why does Stewart yell, "Are you crazy? Those are the mashed potatoes," when his mother takes out a container of mashed potatoes?
  - A. He is excited to eat the mashed potatoes.
  - B. He knows that Mom will prepare potatoes in a new way.
  - C. He thinks Mom plans to serve them more mashed potatoes.
  - D. He does not want Mom to eat the mashed potatoes.

5. What is this story mostly about?

- A. two children who discover a new way to eat leftovers
- B. two children who do not like Thanksgiving
- C. one family's Thanksgiving dinner
- D. how to cook mashed potatoes for breakfast, lunch, and dinner

6. Read the following sentences:

"We have too many mashed potatoes," said Caroline.

"I know!" said her brother, Stewart. "I am sick of them."

"We've had mashed potatoes for lunch."

"We've had mashed potatoes for dinner."

"We've even," said Caroline with a **grimace**, "had them for breakfast."

As used in this sentence, what does the word "**grimace**" mean?

- A. smile
- B. frown
- C. laugh
- D. sigh

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mom fried the mashed potatoes, they became crisp and brown on the outside.

- A. But
- B. Thus
- C. Such as
- D. After

**8.** What do Caroline and Stewart want Mom to do?

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**9.** Explain how Mom fixes the leftover mashed potatoes.

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**10.** Explain how Caroline and Stewart's feelings about leftover mashed potatoes change throughout the story and what causes the change.

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