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## insipid

Listen to this poem and decide if you would like to be insipid.

*Dull and tasteless, lacking flavor,  
Was our man, Insidid Taylor.  
Never lively, never sparkling—  
Couldn't even get the dogs to barking.  
Insipid Taylor simply sat—  
Twiddling his thumbs was where it was at.*

*Insipid* means dull and tasteless. An insipid book is one that puts you to sleep. You may find a particular movie insipid, while other people enjoy it immensely.

Think back to the poem. The poem was perhaps as insipid as the man it described. Could the poem have been a little bit less insipid, or dull, if instead of twiddling two thumbs Taylor twiddled sixteen? Sixteen thumbs would have made you think, what type of creature was Taylor? Was he human or was he an alien from a different galaxy? Sixteen thumbs would have made the poem less boring and dull, or insipid.

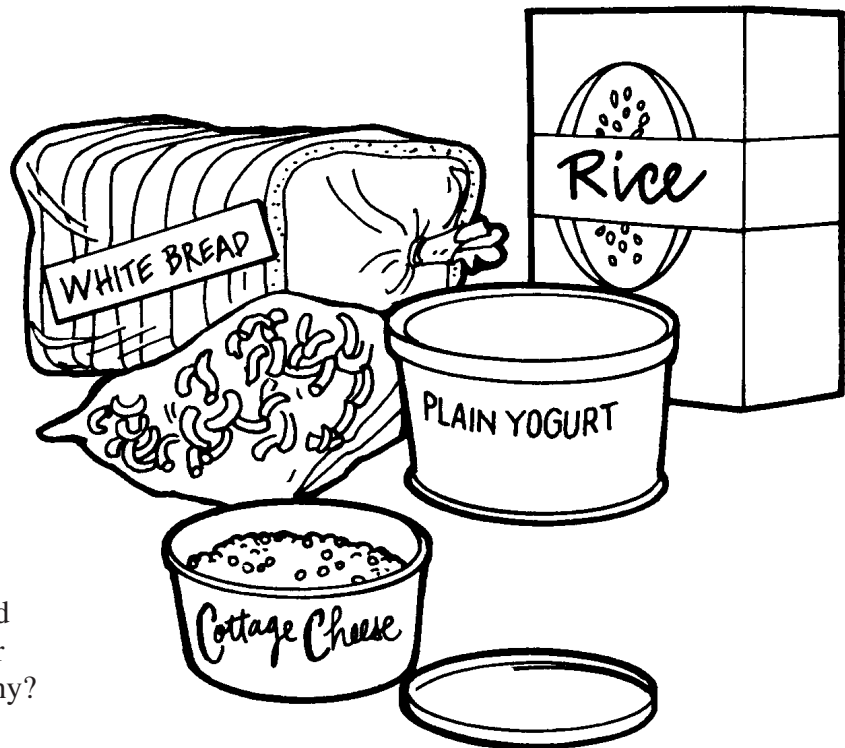
You may be wearing an insipid outfit, but with the right shoes or the right jacket, the insipidness may disappear, and the outfit might become downright dapper.

Food can be insipid. Ever had plain noodles? Plain yogurt? Pizza that had no zip?

An insipid explanation for lost homework might be, "My dog ate it." Can you think of an excuse for lost homework which is not as insipid?

Many people are bothered by the music they hear on elevators and in grocery stores. They think the music is insipid or too sweet. Would country or classical be better? How about no music at all?

Would you like to sit next to someone with a scintillating personality or one who has an insipid personality? Do some people appear insipid, when in truth they are just shy?





## din

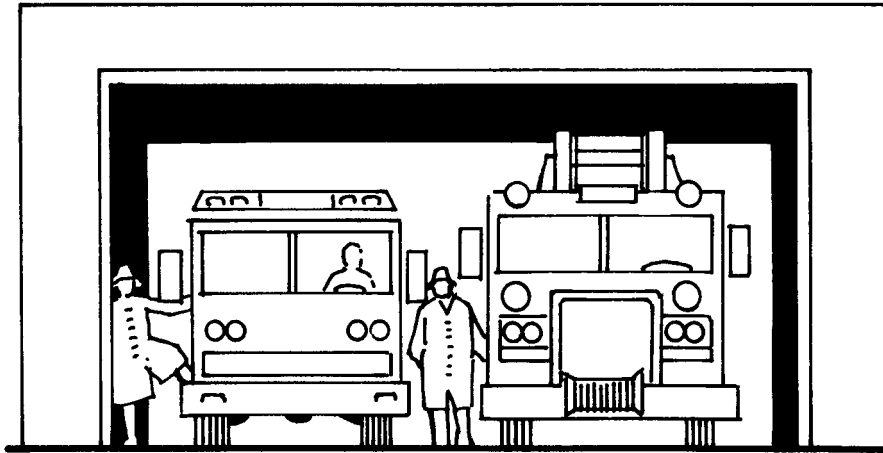
Listen to the following rhyme to see if you can figure out the meaning of the word *din*. Also, think about whether or not the character in this poem would make a good firefighter.

*Screaming, yelling, crashing, banging!  
Horrendous, horrible, terrible clanging!  
Despite this cacophonous, ear-splitting din,  
Oblivious Jacob always slept in.*

A *din* is a loud, continuous noise, a cacophony of harsh and discordant sounds. There is a racket or din in the school cafeteria when it is filled with hundreds of students. There are voices all raised up in different conversations, the noise of chairs scraping on the floor as students sit and stand, the clatter of silverware knocking against each other and falling to the ground, and trays clanging together—all at the same time. The noise is loud and continuous. It is a din.

In many factories there is a constant din of machinery, the noise from the machines being loud and constant. People who guide airplanes to their landing places must wear earphones to protect their ears from the constant din.

What did you decide about Jacob being a firefighter? At first thought, the answer would be that Jacob would make a terrible firefighter. If Jacob could sleep through a din, how could he ever be awakened to respond to a fire? Many people train themselves to sleep through anything (think of all the activity that goes in a firehouse) but can immediately wake up to a particular sound. Jacob may actually be an excellent candidate for a firefighter if he can sleep through the din, responding only to the alarm call.



Many parents can sleep through the din of traffic outside or the din of the television set, and they do not seem to be bothered at all by the noise. Yet when their child makes a sound, they wake up immediately. Somehow their brain filters out the din and focuses on what is important.

Have you ever created a din on New Year's Eve, banging pots and pans together to welcome in the New Year?