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Storm in a teacup: The US embassy in London responded to Franci's controversial remarks.

Is this a diplomatic incident? Britain is in uproar after an American scientist revealed a recipe for the best possible cup of tea... with salt and lemon juice.

What's happening?

"Would you like an adventure now, or shall we have our tea first?"

So goes a famous line from the book *Peter Pan*. Today, more than 100 years on, Britons love tea as much as ever.

Now, one American scientist has angered many in the UK: by suggesting that the perfect cup of tea would have salt and lemon in it.

Find out more

The British drink more than 60 billion cups of tea a year — that is more than 900 cups a year for every person.

After the American scientist made headlines, even the **US embassy** in London stepped in. As a joke, they released a statement saying that adding salt "is not official United States **policy**".

Tea did not actually start out in Britain. In fact, the oldest tea we know about was made in China thousands of years ago.

According to **legend**, in 2737BC the Chinese **Emperor** Shen Nung was thinking under a tree when a leaf fell from the sky into his **servant's** cup of hot water. Shen Nung decided to taste the mixture, found he rather liked it, and the rest is history.

Today, Britons spend less time making their tea than in the past. A survey found that some people only put their teabag into the cup for less than 30 seconds. So do Brits still have the right to complain about bad tea?

Is this a **diplomatic** incident?

Some say

Some people say

"You can't get a cup of tea big enough or a book long enough to suit me."

CS Lewis (1898 – 1963), British writer

What do you think?

Six steps to discovery

1. **Connect**

How do you feel about this story? - Do you enjoy a cup of tea?

2. **Wonder**

What questions do you have? - For example: Did we always drink tea with milk?

3. **Investigate**

What are the facts? - Pick out one thing we know for certain from this story and one thing we cannot say for sure.

4. **Construct**

What is your point of view? - Do you think adding salt to tea could make it better?

5. **Express**

What do others believe? - What is the best drink? Discuss as a class.

6. **Reflect**

What might happen next? - Design your own new tea brand. Draw a logo for your brand and a description of why it is the best tea.

Yes! A good cup of tea is a British national treasure. It must be defended from salt and lemons.

Others think

No! The US embassy was just taking part in a light-hearted joke. It is always good to have something to laugh at — and maybe a bit of salt does make tea better.

Glossary

US - Short for United States (of America).

Embassy - The workplace of a group of government officials who represent their country in another country.

Policy - Set of ideas or plan of action.

Legend - A traditional story told over years and years, but which cannot be proved.

emperor - Ruler of an empire.

Servant - Somebody who works serving others — especially people who work looking after others houses.

Diplomatic - Non-violent peacekeeping. Diplomatic means keeping good relations between the governments of different countries.