

The most delicious smell filled the house yesterday. My son, Cass had made bread. He has made it successfully many times, and I have had to go to the supermarket on many occasions just to get more flour. Of course, when he first started making bread, there were a few disasters. It took a while(1) to teach him to clean up after cooking, and to use the right ingredients and the right method of cooking and baking. However, with practice he has become an expert, and we all look forward to sampling(2) his baked goods. There was something extra special about yesterday's bread though. Cass had actually(3) grown the wheat, harvested it, and made it into flour for the bread. He's a purist, and like me, an avid gardener. He planted the wheat in the autumn, and waited patiently for it to grow. So far this summer, he has been checking it every day. When he saw that it was ready to harvest, he cut it all down, threshed it, and put the grain in a large bag. We have a grinding machine which he used to crush the grain into flour. So he went through the process from the very beginning to the end. He even cleaned the kitchen! It was a labor of love.

1. 'A while', 'it took a while'. These phrases are commonly used in the same way as 'some time'. It's very non-specific, and good usage.

a. It'll take you a while to get used to those high heels.

b. It took me a while to learn French, several years actually.

c. He has been going to the gym for a while, ten years I think!

2. 'To sample' is to have a little bit of a larger item, often food. However, it can also be non-edible items like

perfume, detergent, creams. The verb and noun are also used in science, when tiny pieces of substances are taken to be examined.

- a. I sampled some unusual cheeses in the deli.
- b. The sunscreen company sent me a sample in the mail.
- c. The biologists took samples of the pond water and later examined them in the laboratory.

3. The use of 'actually'. It's a fabulous and common word. Here it's used as emphasis. We do this by putting it in front of the verb.

- a. I couldn't believe that the two-year-old actually read the novel!
- b. Everyone thought they would lose, but they actually won the race.
- c. His friends were supposed to help him, but he actually did all the work himself.