

Would you take your mother for a meal to McDonald's?

Would you take your mother for a meal to McDonald's? That is the question. Well, would you? I ask it, as I took my 87-year-old mother to McDonald's recently. What an eye opener that was! Why? Because it was her first visit to a McDonald's in about 40 years! It will probably be her last! She is slightly disabled and I push her around in a wheelchair. This particular McDonald's was in Asda, a British supermarket, on the edge of Norwich, England. It was a late lunch, around 3.30pm. We thought Asda's might have their own restaurant. Horror! There was only a McDonald's. We decided to try it, as we were on a tight schedule, with little time to hunt elsewhere for lunch. Going to the counter I ordered two strawberry shakes. The machine wasn't working. My mother had to settle for a coffee. I had an orange drink. My mother liked the chicken burger 'on display' but wanted a smaller chicken burger with a small portion of chips. I must have mis-ordered, as she got the 'ordinary' one, which apparently was awful. I ordered a '¼ pounder', (this I believe is called a 'McRoyal' in Slovakia where I live) i.e. a beef burger.

Surprisingly, the place, which wasn't huge, was virtually full. It was however rather noisy. We found the only empty table between two groups of teenagers, aged, I guess, between 14-16. They were playing with some giveaway gifts meant for 5-10 year olds! Do McDonald's really need to offer these to kids to get them to eat in their restaurants? This is extremely sad, but I suppose is a good marketing idea. Other customers were mainly mothers and babies. According to my mother the place appeared popular with poor and poorly dressed people. The food then arrived on a tray. "Where's the knives and forks? What, no plate?" said my mother. She was not impressed! Eating her meal on a tray with her hands in a restaurant she believed was 'primitive'! (People could have dirty hands. Hygiene!) The 'deep fried' apple pie was, according to my mother, 'different'. Eating it with her fingers was 'common'. She might be a bit of a snob!

This meal was 'fast food', yet it was no faster than any self-service restaurant with cutlery. In fact, we had to wait five minutes for it. The staff members were friendly and helpful. One of them asked did my mother enjoy her meal? She gave a polite answer but the lady got the idea!

**Category: Food / Restaurants / McDonald's**  
**Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate**

Would you take your mother for a meal to McDonald's? – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2011

## EXERCISES

**1. McDonald's:** Think of three things you know about McDonald's? Go round the room swapping details with others.

**2. Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

**3. Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

**4. Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

**5. The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) Would you take your mother for a meal to McDonald's?

**6. McDonald's:** In pairs think of five meals you can buy in McDonald's. Then add five things you will see in one of their restaurants. Write them below. Discuss together. What are your conclusions?

Meals in McDonald's	What you will see in McDonald's
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

**7. Fast food:** In pairs think of five types of fast food. Then add five different fast food restaurant chains. Write them below. Discuss together. Which is best? Why? Which is worst? Why?

Fast food	Fast food restaurant chains
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

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**8. Let's think!** In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **McDonald's**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

**9. Let's roleplay 1: Radio Norwich:** In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Radio Norwich* studio. Today's interview is about: *Would you take your mother to eat in a McDonald's restaurant?*

1	Yourself	3	Head of McDonald's
2	Your mother	4	A person who hates eating in McDonald's

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

**10. Let's roleplay 2:** In pairs. You are in a McDonald's restaurant. One of you is ordering. The other is taking the order. Between you - you get talking. Discuss the special offers and 'this month's special'! The milkshake machine is broken! *5-minutes*.

**11. Let's do 'The Article Quiz':** Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

**Student A**

- 1) Name the city.
- 2) Who mainly is being discussed?
- 3) Describe the lady.
- 4) What was ordered?
- 5) Who was in the restaurant?

**Student B**

- 1) What was primitive?
- 2) What was late and how late?
- 3) What was missing?
- 4) According to the author what is a McRoyal?
- 5) What is Asda?

**12. Let's think!** Think of three advantages and then three disadvantages of the food in McDonald's. Write them below. Discuss together with your partner.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1	1
2	2
3	3

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

**13. Let's write an e-mail:** Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: *Would you take your mother for a meal to McDonald's?* Your e-mail can be read out in class.

**14. Sentence starters:** Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

a) McDonald's \_\_\_\_\_

b) The meal was \_\_\_\_\_

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## DISCUSSION

### Student A questions

- 1) What type of people visit McDonald's? Does this vary according to countries/regions?
- 2) What do you think of McDonald's marketing?
- 3) What is your favourite McDonald's meal?
- 4) Why is McDonald's so popular?
- 5) Would you work or have you worked in McDonald's? Why? Why not?
- 6) Is working for McDonald's a good career move?
- 7) Why does McDonald's need to entice small children into their restaurants with free gifts? Is their food not good enough without the free gifts?
- 8) What three bits of advice would you give the Head of McDonald's?
- 9) What do you think of the American phrase 'Have a nice day'? Do the people who say it actually mean it?
- 10) Would you eat a meal to McDonald's? Why? Why not?

### Student B questions

- 1) When did you last visit McDonald's? What did you eat?
- 2) Is fast food good for you? Explain.
- 3) Would you take your mother for a meal to McDonald's? Why? Why not?
- 4) What three things do you like about McDonald's?
- 5) What three things do you dislike about McDonald's?
- 6) Is a Big Mac the same size in every country? Explain.
- 7) Do you go to McDonald's for the food or for the free gifts?
- 8) What do you think of the McCafe's McDonald's have introduced across Europe? Why have they done this? Explain.
- 9) Has McDonald's Empire grown, peaked or shrunk recently? Explain.
- 10) What is McDonald's catchphrase? Are you?

### Student C questions

- 1) Why is McDonald's coke so expensive?
- 2) When you visit McDonald's in your country do you pay for ketchup and mayonnaise or is it free? Should it be free?
- 3) What is McDonald's business strategy? Explain
- 4) Who works in McDonald's? Why?
- 5) Why do McDonald's insist people eat off trays when most restaurants offer a knife, fork and plate?
- 6) Is waiting five minutes acceptable in a fast food restaurant?
- 7) Do you believe eating off a tray in a restaurant is primitive?
- 8) Is eating with your fingers in a restaurant common? Explain. Would you?
- 9) Would you celebrate your birthday party in McDonald's? Explain.
- 10) Do you think the mother of the author enjoyed her meal? Explain.

## SPEAKING

Let's discuss! McDonald's

(The teacher can moderate the session)

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

<b>20 things you know about McDonald's</b>
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Would you take your mother for a meal to McDonald's? – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2011

## GAP FILL: READING:

*Put the words into the gaps in the text.*

Would you take your (1)\_\_\_\_\_ for a meal to McDonald's? That is the question. Well, would you? I ask it, as I took my 87-year-old mother to McDonald's recently. What an eye opener that was! Why? Because it was her first visit to a McDonald's in about 40 years! It will probably be her last! She is slightly (3)\_\_\_\_\_ and I push her around in a (3)\_\_\_\_\_. This particular McDonald's was in Asda, a British supermarket, on the edge of Norwich, England. It was a late lunch, around 3.30pm. We thought Asda's might have their own restaurant. (4)\_\_\_\_\_! There was only a McDonald's. We decided to try it, as we were on a (5)\_\_\_\_\_ schedule, with little time to hunt elsewhere for lunch. Going to the counter I ordered two (6)\_\_\_\_\_ shakes. The machine wasn't working. My mother had to settle for a coffee. I had an orange drink. My mother liked the chicken burger 'on display' but wanted smaller chicken burger with a small (7)\_\_\_\_\_ of chips. I must have mis-ordered, as she got the 'ordinary' one, which (8)\_\_\_\_\_ was awful. I ordered a '¼ pounder', (this I believe is called a 'McRoyal' in Slovakia where I live) i.e. a beef burger.

*mother*

*portion*

*tight*

*apparently*

*strawberry*

*wheelchair*

*disabled*

*horror*

Surprisingly, the place, which wasn't huge, was (1)\_\_\_\_\_ full. It was however (2)\_\_\_\_\_ noisy. We found the only empty table between two groups of teenagers, aged, I guess, between 14-16. They were playing with some giveaway gifts meant for 5-10 year olds! Do McDonald's really need to offer these to kids to get them to eat in their restaurants? This is (3)\_\_\_\_\_ sad, but I suppose is a good marketing idea. Other customers were mainly mothers and babies. According to my mother the place appeared (4)\_\_\_\_\_ with poor and poorly dressed people. The food then arrived on a tray. "Where's the (5)\_\_\_\_\_ and forks? What, no plate?" said my mother. She was not impressed! Eating her meal on a (6)\_\_\_\_\_ with her hands in a restaurant she believed was '(7)\_\_\_\_\_!' (People could have dirty hands. Hygiene!) The 'deep fried' apple pie was, according to my mother, 'different'. Eating it with her fingers was 'common'. She might be a bit of a (8)\_\_\_\_\_!

*primitive*

*extremely*

*knives*

*virtually*

*rather*

*snob*

*tray*

*popular*

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## GAP FILL: LISTENING

*Listen and fill in the spaces.*

Would you take your mother for a meal to McDonald's?

Would you \_\_\_\_\_ a meal to McDonald's? That is the question. Well, would you? I ask it, as I took my 87-year-old mother to McDonald's recently. What \_\_\_\_\_ was! Why? Because it was her first visit to a McDonald's in about 40 years! It will \_\_\_\_\_! She is slightly disabled and I push her around in a wheelchair. This particular McDonald's was in Asda, a British supermarket, on the edge of Norwich, England. It was a late lunch, around 3.30pm. We thought Asda's might have their own restaurant. Horror! There was only a McDonald's. We decided to try it, as we were on a tight schedule, with little time to hunt elsewhere for lunch. Going to the counter I ordered \_\_\_\_\_. The machine wasn't working. My mother had to settle for a coffee. I had an orange drink. My mother liked the chicken burger 'on display' but wanted smaller chicken burger with a small portion of chips. I must have mis-ordered, as she got the 'ordinary' one, which apparently was awful. I ordered a '¼ pounder', (this I believe is called a 'McRoyal' in Slovakia where I live) i.e. a beef burger.

Surprisingly, the place, \_\_\_\_\_, was virtually full. It was however rather noisy. We found the only empty table between two groups of teenagers, aged, I guess, between 14-16. They were playing with some giveaway gifts meant for 5-10 year olds! Do McDonald's really need to offer these to kids to get them to eat in their restaurants? This is extremely sad, but I suppose is \_\_\_\_\_. Other customers were mainly mothers and babies. According to my mother the place appeared popular with \_\_\_\_\_ people. The food then arrived on a tray. "Where's \_\_\_\_\_? What, no plate?" said my mother. She was not impressed! Eating her meal on a tray with her hands in a restaurant she believed was 'primitive'! (People \_\_\_\_\_. Hygiene!) The 'deep fried' apple pie was, according to my mother, 'different'. Eating it \_\_\_\_\_ 'common'. She might be \_\_\_\_\_!

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## GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Would you take (1)\_\_\_ mother for a meal to McDonald's? (2)\_\_\_ is the question. Well, (3)\_\_\_ you? I ask it, as I took my 87-year-old mother to McDonald's recently. (4)\_\_\_ an eye opener that was! Why? Because it was her first visit to a McDonald's in about 40 years! It will probably be her last! She is slightly disabled and I push her around in a wheelchair. This particular McDonald's was in Asda, a British supermarket, on the edge of Norwich, England. It was a late lunch, around 3.30pm. We thought Asda's might have (5)\_\_\_ own restaurant. Horror! There was only a McDonald's. We decided to try it, as we were on a tight schedule, with little time to hunt elsewhere for lunch. Going to the counter I ordered two strawberry shakes. The machine wasn't working. My mother had to settle for a coffee. I had an orange drink. My mother liked the chicken burger 'on display' but wanted smaller chicken burger with a small portion of chips. I (6)\_\_\_ have mis-ordered, as she got the 'ordinary' one, (7)\_\_\_ apparently was awful. I ordered a '¼ pounder', ((8)\_\_\_ I believe is called a 'McRoyal' in Slovakia where I live) i.e. a beef burger.

**would**

**this**

**which**

**their**

**what**

**must**

**that**

**your**

Surprisingly, the place, which wasn't huge, was virtually full. It was however rather noisy. (1)\_\_\_ found the only empty table between two groups of teenagers, aged, I guess, between 14-16. They were playing with some giveaway gifts meant (2)\_\_\_ 5-10 year olds! Do McDonald's really need to offer these to kids to get them to eat in their restaurants? This is extremely sad, (3)\_\_\_ I suppose is a good marketing idea. Other customers were mainly mothers (4)\_\_\_ babies. According to (5)\_\_\_ mother the place appeared popular with poor and poorly dressed people. (6)\_\_\_ food then arrived on a tray. "Where's the knives and forks? What, no plate?" said my mother. (7)\_\_\_ was not impressed! Eating (8)\_\_\_ meal on a tray with her hands in a restaurant she believed was 'primitive'! (People could have dirty hands. Hygiene!) The 'deep fried' apple pie was, according to my mother, 'different'. Eating it with her fingers was 'common'. She might be a bit of a snob!

**We**

**and**

**but**

**her**

**my**

**for**

**the**

**she**

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## SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings:  
**Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	schedule	11	supermarket
2	wheelchair	12	slightly
3	virtually	13	tight
4	mainly	14	settle
5	particular	15	extremely
6	thought	16	cutlery
7	elsewhere	17	hygiene
8	snob	18	primitive
9	strawberry	19	impressed
10	apparently	20	surprisingly

## LINKS

<http://www.McDonald's.com/us/en/home.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McDonald%27s\\_products\\_%28international%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McDonald%27s_products_%28international%29)

<http://www.aboutMcDonald's.com/mcd>

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/10041619/Mcdonalds>

<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=mcdonalds>

**[www.newsflashenglish.com](http://www.newsflashenglish.com)**

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