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**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**

**The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

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## **McDonald's pulls out of Iceland**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0910/091031-mcdonalds.html>

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# THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091031-mcdonalds.html>

McDonald's restaurants in Iceland sold their last hamburgers on Saturday night as the fast-food giant pulled out of the country. Rising food costs forced executives to pull the plug on operations in Iceland. Thousands of people lined up at the fast-food giant's three Icelandic restaurants. The world's biggest restaurant chain announced its outlets were packed in the last few days of business. Managers said they were selling 10,000 burgers a day. A customer called Siggi told the Reuters news agency: "It's my last chance for a while to have a real Big Mac. With the economy as it is, I won't be traveling abroad any time soon." He added: "It's not that I'm a big fan of McDonald's, but a Big Mac now and then adds to variety."

A combination of things led to MacDonalD's closing its doors in Iceland. The country was hit particularly hard by the global financial crisis. Many of its banks collapsed, causing a lack of confidence and a sharp decrease in the value of Iceland's currency. This greatly increased the cost of importing food from abroad. Another factor that caused McDonald's to close was a global trading rule that it must buy ingredients from Germany. The 'Iceland Review' newspaper reported: "The low exchange rate in addition to high tariffs have doubled the company's expenses for meat, cheese, vegetables and other products and challenged its profitability." The paper said a new burger restaurant would start using Icelandic produce.

# WARM-UPS

**1. MCDONALD'S:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about McDonald's. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Iceland / hamburgers / food costs / fast food / restaurant chains / economy / variety / combination / financial crisis / lack of confidence / ingredients / exchange rate / meat*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. CHAINS:** What do you think of these places? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you heard. Change and share again.

	Good things	Bad things
McDonald's		
KFC		
Starbucks		
Baskin Robins		
Pizza Hut		
Dunkin' Donuts		

**4. BANNED:** Students A **strongly** believe fast food should be banned because it's bad for us; Students B **strongly** believe there's nothing wrong with fast food. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. FAST FOOD:** Which country has the best fast food? Write the fast food in the spaces. Rate them and share your ratings with your partner: 10 = so delicious; 1 = don't want to eat it. Change partners and share your ratings again.

- American \_\_\_\_\_
- British \_\_\_\_\_
- Indian \_\_\_\_\_
- Mexican \_\_\_\_\_
- Chinese \_\_\_\_\_
- Arab \_\_\_\_\_
- French \_\_\_\_\_
- Italian \_\_\_\_\_

**6. BURGER:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'burger'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091031-mcdonalds.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. Iceland's government asked McDonald's to leave the country.          | T / F |
| b. The price of food in Iceland forced McDonald's to quit the country.  | T / F |
| c. McDonald's restaurants in Iceland usually sell 10,000 burgers a day. | T / F |
| d. A customer said he would leave Iceland soon to eat a Big Mac.        | T / F |
| e. Iceland suffered very badly in the global financial crisis.          | T / F |
| f. The value of Iceland's currency increased a lot.                     | T / F |
| g. McDonald's in Iceland had to buy its food from Germany.              | T / F |
| h. A paper said there would be no more burger restaurants in Iceland.   | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. pulled out    | a. food               |
| 2. pull the plug | b. crowded            |
| 3. lined up      | c. especially         |
| 4. packed        | d. quit               |
| 5. any time soon | e. fall               |
| 6. combination   | f. in the near future |
| 7. particularly  | g. exited             |
| 8. decrease      | h. taxes              |
| 9. tariffs       | i. queued             |
| 10. produce      | j. mix                |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. the fast food giant pulled out             | a. last few days          |
| 2. pull the plug                              | b. Icelandic produce      |
| 3. its outlets were packed in the             | c. fan of McDonald's      |
| 4. It's my last                               | d. particularly hard      |
| 5. I'm a big                                  | e. on operations          |
| 6. A combination of things led                | f. importing food         |
| 7. The country was hit                        | g. of the country         |
| 8. greatly increased the cost of              | h. exchange rate          |
| 9. The low                                    | i. chance for a while     |
| 10. a new burger restaurant would start using | j. to MacDonald's closing |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091031-mcdonalds.html>

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

McDonald's restaurants in Iceland sold their \_\_\_\_\_ hamburgers on Saturday night as the fast-food giant \_\_\_\_\_ out of the country. Rising food costs forced executives to \_\_\_\_\_ the plug on operations in Iceland. Thousands of people lined up at the fast-food giant's three Icelandic restaurants. The world's biggest restaurant \_\_\_\_\_ announced its outlets were \_\_\_\_\_ in the last few days of business. Managers said they were selling 10,000 burgers a day. A customer called Siggí told the Reuters news agency: "It's my last \_\_\_\_\_ for a while to have a real Big Mac. With the economy as it is, I won't be traveling abroad any time \_\_\_\_\_." He added: "It's not that I'm a big fan of McDonald's, but a Big Mac now and then adds to \_\_\_\_\_."

*packed*

*pull*

*soon*

*last*

*variety*

*chain*

*pulled*

*chance*

A combination of \_\_\_\_\_ led to MacDonald's closing its doors in Iceland. The country was hit particularly \_\_\_\_\_ by the global financial crisis. Many of its banks collapsed, causing a lack of confidence and a \_\_\_\_\_ decrease in the value of Iceland's currency. This greatly increased the cost of \_\_\_\_\_ food from abroad. Another factor that caused McDonald's to close was a global trading rule that it \_\_\_\_\_ buy ingredients from Germany. The 'Iceland Review' newspaper reported: "The low exchange \_\_\_\_\_ in addition to high tariffs have \_\_\_\_\_ the company's expenses for meat, cheese, vegetables and other products and challenged its profitability." The paper said a new burger restaurant would start using Icelandic \_\_\_\_\_.

*importing*

*produce*

*sharp*

*must*

*things*

*doubled*

*rate*

*hard*

McDonald's pulls out of Iceland - 31st October, 2009

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## LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091031-mcdonalds.html>

McDonald's restaurants in Iceland \_\_\_\_\_ hamburgers on Saturday night as the fast-food giant \_\_\_\_\_ country. Rising food costs forced executives to \_\_\_\_\_ operations in Iceland. Thousands of people \_\_\_\_\_ fast-food giant's three Icelandic restaurants. The world's biggest restaurant chain announced its outlets were \_\_\_\_\_ few days of business. Managers said they were selling 10,000 burgers a day. A customer called Siggı told the Reuters news agency: "It's my last chance \_\_\_\_\_ have a real Big Mac. With the economy as it is, I won't be traveling abroad \_\_\_\_\_." He added: "It's not that I'm a big fan of McDonald's, but a Big Mac now and \_\_\_\_\_."

A combination of things led to MacDonalď's \_\_\_\_\_ in Iceland. The country was hit particularly \_\_\_\_\_ financial crisis. Many of its banks collapsed, causing a lack of confidence and a sharp decrease \_\_\_\_\_ Iceland's currency. This greatly increased the cost of importing food from abroad. Another \_\_\_\_\_ MacDonalď's to close was a global trading \_\_\_\_\_ buy ingredients from Germany. The 'Iceland Review' newspaper reported: "The low exchange rate \_\_\_\_\_ tariffs have doubled the company's expenses for meat, cheese, vegetables \_\_\_\_\_ challenged its profitability." The paper said a new burger restaurant would \_\_\_\_\_ produce.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091031-mcdonalds.html>

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'fast' and 'food'.

fast	food

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• last</li><li>• plug</li><li>• packed</li><li>• 10,000</li><li>• chance</li><li>• variety</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• things</li><li>• lack</li><li>• abroad</li><li>• rule</li><li>• doubled</li><li>• start</li></ul>
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# STUDENT MCDONALD'S SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091031-mcdonalds.html>

Write five GOOD questions about McDonald's in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# MCDONALD'S DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'fast food'?
- c) What do you think of McDonald's pulling out of Iceland?
- d) What three adjectives would you use to describe McDonald's?
- e) Why do you think McDonald's is so successful?
- f) What's your earliest memory of McDonald's?
- g) What's your favourite fast food restaurant chain?
- h) Who is the biggest fan of McDonald's that you know?
- i) What do you know about the history of McDonald's?
- j) Would you line up for one last Big Mac? What food would you line up for?

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# MCDONALD'S DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What happened for McDonald's to close its doors?
- c) What happened after Iceland's banks collapsed?
- d) How did the global financial crisis affect your country?
- e) How much and what kind of food does your country import?
- f) Do you think it's fair that McDonald's in Iceland had to buy its ingredients from Germany?
- g) How successful do you think McDonald's will be 50 years from now?
- h) How often do you go to fast food restaurants?
- i) What would life be like without McDonald's?
- j) What questions would you like to ask the boss of McDonald's?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091031-mcdonalds.html>

McDonald's restaurants in Iceland sold their (1) \_\_\_\_ hamburgers on Saturday night as the fast-food giant pulled out of the country. Rising food costs forced executives to (2) \_\_\_\_ the plug on operations in Iceland. Thousands of people lined (3) \_\_\_\_ at the fast-food giant's three Icelandic restaurants. The world's biggest restaurant chain announced its outlets were (4) \_\_\_\_ in the last few days of business. Managers said they were selling 10,000 burgers a day. A customer called Siggí told the Reuters news agency: "It's my last chance for a (5) \_\_\_\_ to have a real Big Mac. With the economy as it is, I won't be traveling abroad any time soon." He added: "It's not that I'm a big fan of McDonald's, but a Big Mac (6) \_\_\_\_ and then adds to variety."

A combination of (7) \_\_\_\_ led to MacDonal'd's closing its doors in Iceland. The country was hit particularly hard by the global financial crisis. Many of its banks collapsed, causing a (8) \_\_\_\_ of confidence and a sharp decrease in the value of Iceland's currency. This greatly increased the cost of importing food from abroad. Another (9) \_\_\_\_ that caused McDonald's to close was a global trading rule that it must buy ingredients from Germany. The 'Iceland Review' newspaper reported: "The low exchange rate in addition (10) \_\_\_\_ high tariffs have doubled the company's expenses for meat, cheese, vegetables and other products and (11) \_\_\_\_ its profitability." The paper said a new burger restaurant would start using Icelandic (12) \_\_\_\_.

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |               |                 |                |                 |
|-----|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | (a) last      | (b) past        | (c) fast       | (d) vast        |
| 2.  | (a) tug       | (b) pull        | (c) nudge      | (d) push        |
| 3.  | (a) on        | (b) in          | (c) up         | (d) down        |
| 4.  | (a) packing   | (b) pack        | (c) packs      | (d) packed      |
| 5.  | (a) whiling   | (b) whilst      | (c) whirl      | (d) while       |
| 6.  | (a) new       | (b) know        | (c) now        | (d) newly       |
| 7.  | (a) things    | (b) thing       | (c) thingy     | (d) thingamajig |
| 8.  | (a) slack     | (b) lack        | (c) lacked     | (d) flack       |
| 9.  | (a) factored  | (b) factory     | (c) factor     | (d) factors     |
| 10. | (a) to        | (b) on          | (c) at         | (d) by          |
| 11. | (a) challenge | (b) challenging | (c) challenger | (d) challenged  |
| 12. | (a) producing | (b) produce     | (c) producer   | (d) product     |

McDonald's pulls out of Iceland – 31st October, 2009



# HOMEWORK

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about McDonald's. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. FAST FOOD CHAINS:** Make a poster about fast food. Compare different international chains. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. MCDONALD'S:** Write a magazine article about McDonald's. Include imaginary interviews with a health expert and the McDonald's CEO.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to the boss of McDonald's. Ask him/her three questions about the company. Give him/her three ideas on how they can make the company better. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. T      c. F      d. F      e. T      f. F      g. T      h. F

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. pulled out    | a. exited             |
| 2. pull the plug | b. quit               |
| 3. lined up      | c. queued             |
| 4. packed        | d. crowded            |
| 5. any time soon | e. in the near future |
| 6. combination   | f. mix                |
| 7. particularly  | g. especially         |
| 8. decrease      | h. fall               |
| 9. tariffs       | i. taxes              |
| 10. produce      | j. food               |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. the fast food giant pulled out             | a. of the country         |
| 2. pull the plug                              | b. on operations          |
| 3. its outlets were packed in the             | c. last few days          |
| 4. It's my last                               | d. chance for a while     |
| 5. I'm a big                                  | e. fan of McDonald's      |
| 6. A combination of things led                | f. to MacDonald's closing |
| 7. The country was hit                        | g. particularly hard      |
| 8. greatly increased the cost of              | h. importing food         |
| 9. The low                                    | i. exchange rate          |
| 10. a new burger restaurant would start using | j. Icelandic produce      |

## GAP FILL:

### McDonald's pulls out of Iceland

McDonald's restaurants in Iceland sold their **last** hamburgers on Saturday night as the fast-food giant **pulled** out of the country. Rising food costs forced executives to **pull** the plug on operations in Iceland. Thousands of people lined up at the fast-food giant's three Icelandic restaurants. The world's biggest restaurant **chain** announced its outlets were **packed** in the last few days of business. Managers said they were selling 10,000 burgers a day. A customer called Siggi told the Reuters news agency: "It's my last **chance** for a while to have a real Big Mac. With the economy as it is, I won't be traveling abroad any time **soon**." He added: "It's not that I'm a big fan of McDonald's, but a Big Mac now and then adds to **variety**."

A combination of **things** led to MacDonald's closing its doors in Iceland. The country was hit particularly **hard** by the global financial crisis. Many of its banks collapsed, causing a lack of confidence and a **sharp** decrease in the value of Iceland's currency. This greatly increased the cost of **importing** food from abroad. Another factor that caused McDonald's to close was a global trading rule that it **must** buy ingredients from Germany. The 'Iceland Review' newspaper reported: "The low exchange **rate** in addition to high tariffs have **doubled** the company's expenses for meat, cheese, vegetables and other products and challenged its profitability." The paper said a new burger restaurant would start using Icelandic **produce**.

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - a    2 - b    3 - c    4 - d    5 - d    6 - c    7 - a    8 - b    9 - c    10 - a    11 - d    12 - b