

What's lost when a family-owned diner closes for good?

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes how the effects of the Covid pandemic, and associated economic factors, are causing many diners in the US to close down.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of eating out and to get students thinking about why they like certain types of venues and dislike others. At this stage, you could establish that *diner* has two meanings: it can mean a person who eats in a restaurant, and it is also the American term for a small restaurant where you can eat a relatively cheap meal.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. The word *whammy* is rarely used without the preceding adjectives *double* or *triple*, which is used when three bad things happen more or less simultaneously. If a person is *overstretched* (as in the text), it means that they have more work than they are normally able to do so they are exhausted and under pressure. The word *regular* is normally an adjective, but it can also apply as a noun to a full-time soldier or to someone who attends a bar, café, restaurant, or even a shop on a regular basis.

Key:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>stroke</i> | 6. <i>overstretched</i> |
| 2. <i>receipt</i> | 7. <i>bittersweet</i> |
| 3. <i>regular</i> | 8. <i>procession</i> |
| 4. <i>whammy</i> | 9. <i>legendary</i> |
| 5. <i>prohibitive</i> | 10. <i>freelance</i> |

3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers and students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in item 3, they may say 'find another job' or similar.

Key:

1. *to play golf with his sons and have breakfast at DeDe's diner*
2. *because she had had a stroke*
3. *start looking for a new job*
4. *a million*
5. *supply-chain problems and high fuel prices*
6. *because the population has been growing so fast*
7. *their idea of the American dream*
8. *a recipe*
9. *He looks for family-owned restaurants.*
10. *their gathering place*

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. The answers given are the phrases used in the text.

Key:

1. *f*
2. *d*
3. *a*
4. *e*
5. *b*
6. *c*

5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

6. In your own words

- a. The task could also be done as homework and students could then present their reports to the class.