

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

### Level 2: Intermediate – 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. Note that *blank* and *bare* have very similar meanings but are used to describe different things. *Blank* is used for a sheet of paper and, in this case, for a wall with no writing or pictures on it, while *bare* is often used to describe a room with no furniture or fittings. 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.

**Key:**

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>decade</i>  | 6. <i>double whammy</i> |
| 2. <i>receipt</i> | 7. <i>overstretched</i> |
| 3. <i>memento</i> | 8. <i>bittersweet</i>   |
| 4. <i>blank</i>   | 9. <i>procession</i>    |
| 5. <i>bare</i>    |                         |

#### 3. Comprehension check

- a. Students say whether the statements are True or False and then correct the false statements.

**Key:**

1. *False. She was going to start looking for a new job the next day.*
2. *False. It had become more and more popular.*
3. *True*
4. *False. They are \$65 billion lower.*
5. *True*
6. *False. It's one of the fastest-growing cities.*
7. *False. He had worked almost every day.*
8. *True*
9. *False. Its last day was slow.*
10. *True*

#### 4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. Encourage them to check their answers by looking in the text.

**Key:**

1. *almost every day for the past five years*
2. *a hot Sunday morning in June*
3. *despite becoming increasingly popular*
4. *a family business from the start*
5. *a sense of loss in the air*
6. *this was more than a business for me*

#### 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 menus to the class. You can make this task as creative as you want, from naming their restaurants, to physically creating a menu to allow for some creativity to take place. Students can vote for their favourite one.