

Reading Passage (259 words): Dangers of Fast Food

Fast food restaurants contribute to obesity and are dangerous to people's health in the United States. With films like Morgan Spurlock's *Supersize Me* exposing the dangers of fast food chains like McDonald's, we see that one of the biggest fast food chains causes spikes in blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Fast food restaurants contribute negatively to the health and diet of American citizens for three reasons: they cause obesity, create an unhealthy society, and promote gluttony.

Although fast food restaurant chains provide fast and cheap food, the long term effects of obesity are a result of the food. Many children and adults consume fast food on a daily basis. Hamburger, tacos, and chicken are prepared with hundreds of calories and large amounts of fat. Busy schedules and harsh economic times contribute to the consumption of fast food. Sit-down dinners are becoming a tradition of the past.

Fast food also contributes to an unhealthy society that is plagued with high cholesterol, diabetes, and heart disease. Society is unhealthy because the options for fast food are limited, although street food in countries like China and Mexico provide options with vegetables and fruit. Fast food advertisements have unfortunately helped unhealthy food become a staple of the American diet.

Fast food restaurants encourage gluttony. A simpler definition for gluttony is over consumption. Years ago, at a customer received one soda or drink at a time. Today, customers at fast food chains have unlimited free refills and consume much larger amounts of soda and sweetened drinks like lemonade. Furthermore, the large portions have even spilled over into sit down restaurants.

Writing Prompt: How do the main points of the listening passage conflict with the main points of the reading passage?

Lecture (363 words):

The topic of today's lecture is the misconception of fast food restaurants, and the lack of responsibility consumers take for their obesity, unhealthy lifestyle, and gluttonous ways. What is fast food exactly? Well, it can be pre-made food that has been frozen or it can be food that is already made to order but was made that same day, so, when it is ordered, it is on the plate and on your table fast.

In American society, we have fast food chains like McDonald's, Burger King, Taco Bell, and Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). Let's discuss the causes of obesity before we blame it fast food chains. If you are not active and sit down in front of a TV or play video games, you will gain weight. Obesity is caused by an inactive lifestyle along with consuming more calories than are needed in a day.

The concept of "healthy" is a continued concept that is argued with each year or decade. What is healthy today may be considered unhealthy tomorrow. What is more important is a healthy lifestyle with a healthy diet. Fast food chains do serve mostly fat and cholesterol driven food, but we have now created options like apples or fruit for kids and more salad options. Also, in states like California and New York, the calorie count of each menu item must be on the menu, so the consumer is more informed.

When you turn eighteen, you can smoke cigarettes, and, when you turn twenty-one, you can drink alcohol. Fast food chains are a part of American society, as are movie theatres and Starbucks and do not necessarily promote gluttony. One can overcome gluttony simply by not eating and drinking large amounts from fast food chains every day. We can still enjoy a burger, fries, and a milkshake, but we do not have to consume them in such large amounts.

The point of today's lecture is not to ask people to go to fast food restaurants. The point is to take control of our fast food consumption, and by doing so, we can think about how our own choices have contributed to unhealthy lifestyles, and not solely blame fast food chains.