Fast food is any food that is quick, convenient, and usually inexpensive. Nowadays you can buy fast food just about anywhere that sells food and snacks. Why has it become so popular? What are your opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of fast food? Illustrate with your own experience.

Sociologist George Ritzer sees the thousands of McDonald’s restaurants that dot the U.S. landscape - and increasingly, the world - as having much greater significance than the convenience of fast hamburgers and milk shakes. “The McDonaldization of society,” a term he coined to refer to the increasing rationalization of the routine tasks of everyday life, stresses that “McDonaldization” does not refer just to the robot like assembly of food. Rather, this process, occurring throughout society, is transforming our lives. For instance, shopping malls are controlled environments of approved design, logo, colors, and opening and closing hours. Travel agencies transport middle-class Americans to ten European capitals in fourteen days, each visitor experiencing exactly the same hotels, restaurants, and other predictable settings. Another illustration of the process is USA Today that produces the same bland, instant news - in short, unanalytic pieces that can be read between gulps of the McShake or the Mc Burger.

Is all this bad? Not necessarily. Efficiency does bring reduced prices. But at a cost, a loss of something difficult to define, a quality of life washed away by rationalization. In my own travels, for example, had I taken packaged tours, I never would have had the enjoyable, eye-opening experiences that have added to my appreciation of human diversity.

Why has the McDonald's model proven so irresistible? Four alluring dimensions lie at the heart of the success of this model and, more generally, of McDonaldization. In short, McDonald's has succeeded because it offers consumers, workers, and managers efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control.

First, McDonald's provides efficiency, or the optimum method for getting from one point to another. For consumers, this means that McDonald's offers the best available way to get from being hungry to being full. [...] Other institutions, fashioned on the McDonald's model, offer similar efficiency in losing weight, lubricating cars, getting new glasses or contacts, or completing income-tax forms.

Second, McDonald's offers calculability, that is, an emphasis on the quantitative aspects of products sold (portion size, cost) and service offered (the time it takes to get the product). Quantity has become equivalent to quality; a lot of something, or the quick delivery of it, means it must be good. Many agree that in contemporary American culture “we tend to believe deeply that in general ‘bigger is better.’” By way of illustration, people order the Quarter Pounder, the Big Mac, the large fries. […]

Third, McDonald's offers predictability, the assurance that their products and services will be the same over time and in all locales. The Egg McMuffin in New York will be, for all intents and purposes, identical to those in Chicago and Los Angeles. Also, those eaten next week or next year will be identical to those eaten today. [...] The success of the McDonald's model suggests that many people have come to prefer a world in which there are few surprises.

Fourth, control, especially through the substitution of nonhuman for human technology, is exerted over the people who enter the world of McDonald's. [...] The people who eat in fast-food restaurants are controlled, albeit (usually) subtly. Clearly, lines, limited menus, few options, and uncomfortable seats all lead diners to do what management wishes them to do - eat quickly and leave.

Source: Adapted from George Ritzer, The McDonaldization of Society.
Section I  VOCABULARY ACTIVITIES

Nominalisation
Academic writing frequently uses nominalisation, i.e. turns verbs (actions or events) into nouns (things, concepts or people). Its frequent use is one of the characteristic features of formal, more objective language. On the other hand, in order to avoid wordiness and to write livelier, more “human” sentences, use, whenever possible, verbal constructions. (G.XIX.1)

A. Fill in with the appropriate verbal construction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominalisation</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Nominalisation</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>allocation</td>
<td>information</td>
<td>allocation</td>
<td>is making an attempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>assessment</td>
<td>the basis of the achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compliance</td>
<td>justification</td>
<td>compliance</td>
<td>the development of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>determination</td>
<td></td>
<td>determination</td>
<td>to make a discovery about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations of</td>
<td></td>
<td>expectations of</td>
<td>to make use of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exposure</td>
<td></td>
<td>exposure</td>
<td>verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had hopes</td>
<td></td>
<td>implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

McWords are words containing the prefix Mc- which name either products of the McDonald chain or are used pejoratively for inauthentic, heavily commercialised or globalised products or concepts, such as McDojo, McDegree, McNews, McWorld. Similar meaning/ functions have words like Coca-colonisation, Disneyfication, or Walmarting.

B. Fill in the blanks with some of the above mentioned words.

1. To some youth activists, …… refers to the realities of “corporate globalisation” (…).
2. ……. is a club for martial arts with no credibility.
3. He bought a …… in order to find better employment.
4. USA Today is the best example of ……, with its easy to read, fleshy coloured graphics.
5. According to Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, …… is, briefly, the transformation (as of something real or unsettling) into carefully controlled and safe entertainment.

C. Rephrase the bolded nominal constructions with the help of the verbs suggested in brackets:

1. We ensured the engagement of staff in the initiative with the use of dinner meetings. (engage, use)
   We engaged staff in the initiative by using lunchtime meetings.

2. The improvement of the provision of data on the use of facilities was implemented through the documentation of attendance by users. (provide, use, document, attend)

3. In recognition of the necessity of better management of staff being key to the development and delivery of this service, a restructuring taskforce was established. (recognize, need, manage, develop, deliver)

D. Now rephrase the verbal constructions into nominal so that the text sounds more scientific.

1. This information enables us to formulate precise questions. (formulation)
   This information enables the formulation of precise questions.
2. There appeared to be evidence that they treated children differently. (treatment)
3. Crime was increasing rapidly and the police were becoming concerned. (increase, concern)
Adding variety to your writing

There are several other ways/patterns/methods that can add variety and interest to your sentences. See the following examples from the text:

- *ing word group*: Rather, this process, occurring throughout society, is transforming our lives.
- *ed word groups*: Other institutions, fashioned on the McDonald's model, offer similar efficiency.
- *appositives*: “The McDonaldization of society,” a term he coined to refer to the increasing rationalization of the routine tasks of everyday life, stresses that "McDonaldization" does not refer just to the robot like assembly of food. These word groups are also called participial and appositional phrases.
- *ly opener (sentence adverbial)*: Clearly, lines, limited menus, few options, and uncomfortable seats all lead diners to do what management wishes them to do. (G.X; XIII.1)

A. Combine the following pairs of sentences into one sentence by using one of the above-mentioned patterns and omitting repeated words.

1. George Ritzer is the author of a series of studies that surveyed major tendencies of modern social theory.
   George Ritzer, is a sociologist teaching at the University of Maryland.  
   **George Ritzer, a sociologist at the University of Maryland, is the author of a series of studies that surveyed major tendencies of modern social theory.**

2. These studies have been and continue to be widely read for their comprehensiveness.  
   These studies are regularly updated in successive editions.

3. The study was reviewed.  
   The study offers a ‘career report’ of important developments.

4. 'The object is to look for new, innovative ways to create an experience that is exactly the same no matter what McDonald's you walk into, no matter where it is in the world.'  
   It is ironical.

5. The worker refuses to follow the rules.  
   He leaves the pickles or special sauce off a hamburger, thereby making for unpredictability.

6. People feel great comfort.  
   They know that McDonald's offers no surprises.

7. The Egg McMuffin in New York will be identical to those in Chicago and Los Angeles.  
   It is essential.

8. He points out that Ray Kroc applied the principles developed by Henry Ford to the preparation and serving of food.  
   Ray Kroc was the founder of McDonald's.

B. Write 4 similar sentences of your own. Compare them with a partner's.
Consider the following sentences:
1. *First, McDonald's provides efficiency, or the optimum method for getting from one point to another.* In this sentence, the word ‘or’ functions to introduce an explanation of a term that may be unfamiliar to the native reader. These reformulations are especially frequent in specialist academic literature and it is important to learn how to look for explanations of unknown terminology in its immediate context.

2. *In my own travels, for example, had I taken packaged tours, I never would have had the enjoyable, eye-opening experiences that have added to my appreciation of human diversity.* The phrase ‘for example’ introduces evidence to support the author’s claim (argument). Examples can also be used to help the reader or listener understand unfamiliar or difficult concepts, which are then easier to remember. (G. XXI.7)

A. Read the sentences below and complete the table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Words explained, reformulated; examples</th>
<th>Words used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rather, this process, occurring throughout society, is transforming our lives. For instance, shopping malls are controlled environments of approved design, logo, colours, and opening and closing hours.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Second, McDonald's offers calculability, that is, an emphasis on the quantitative aspects of products sold (portion size, cost) and service offered (the time it takes to get the product).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Another illustration of the process is <em>USA Today</em> that produces the same bland, instant news - in short, unanalytic pieces that can be read between gulps of the McShake or the Mc Burger.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Many agree that in contemporary American culture “we tend to believe deeply that in general ‘bigger is better.’” By way of illustration, people order the Quarter Pounder, the Big Mac, the large fries. […]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Use the following phrases to build up your own examples/illustrations/reformulations of the terms *routinization, eye-opening experience, control.*

… X was the case in point.

X, such as…

A good illustration of…

This is shown/ exemplified/ illustrated by…

This (experiment) shows/ exemplifies/ illustrates