GREASE

'Greasy spoons' very rarely appear in guidebooks, but they are an essential part of life in the UK, especially for people living in the bigger cities. These small restaurants are so common that they often go unnoticed, but if they were removed, the country would be on its knees. In London, the capital city of the greasy spoon, there are hundreds of them, fuelling the population with bacon, egg and sausage.

Greasy spoon cafés are so called because any cutlery that comes into contact with the food they offer is immediately coated with a sticky, greasy layer of lard. More calories can be found in a cup of tea in a good greasy spoon than in a whole meal at a normal restaurant.

Greasy spoons are generally found slightly away from the main streets of most towns. they usually have large glass windows, a plastic sign with the name of the café – usually containing the name of the owner, e.g. Mario's, Bob's Place, Rita's Café – and a huge menu offering a wide variety of delights. Inside they are generally clean and functional. You'll see old wooden seats, tables covered with cracked linoleum and plain walls. Each table has on it a bottle of brown sauce, tomato ketchup and vinegar, and pots of salt and pepper.

In a typical greasy spoon, you will find people from all walks of life. Poets, builders, hurrying businessmen, students lazing around with huge mugs of tea. Some read novels, some stare into space, and others catch up on the day's news. At weekends there will always be large groups of friends, recovering from a night on the town.

The meals here are dangerously unhealthy, and absolutely delicious. All kinds of fried food can be bought for incredibly low prices. The centrepiece is usually the traditional English breakfast. Although it's called a breakfast, you have to be really brave to eat it first thing in the morning, because it is huge. At least two pieces of bacon, two sizzling sausages, two fried eggs,

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fried mushrooms, baked beans and bread soaked in hot oil and fried. The English breakfast is full of meat and fat. If you want something less filling, there's still a lot to choose from; particular specialities are bacon or fried egg sandwiches (or, of course, bacon *and* egg sandwiches). There is also often a range of vegetarian sausages and burgers.

Greasy spoons have some devoted followers. Typing 'greasy spoon' into an internet search engine will bring up hundreds of entries. With pictures, reviews, menus and stories, it's the next best thing to going to a greasy spoon café yourself. But of course, nothing can beat going to the real thing – especially on an empty stomach.

1 According to the article, greasy spoons are
   a only found in big cities.
   b advertised as a tourist attraction.
   c important to many British people.
   d going to be removed from city centres.

2 The characteristic feature of greasy spoons is that they
   a use a special type of cutlery.
   b offer a lot of dishes to choose from.
   c are furnished in a sophisticated way.
   d are not very clean.

3 People who come to greasy spoons
   a are often in a hurry.
   b come from various backgrounds.
   c usually meet friends there.
   d sometimes spend the night there.

4 The traditional English breakfast is
   a not very cheap.
   b not very tasty.
   c served in huge portions.
   d recommended for vegetarians.

5 The author of the article
   a is a great fan of greasy spoons.
   b believes greasy spoons represent British tastes in food.
   c learned about greasy spoons on the Internet.
   d thinks they should be moved away from the main streets.

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Read the following extract from a book about English people. Five sentences have been removed from the text. Fill in gaps 1–5 with the missing sentences from A–F. There is one extra sentence that won't fit any gaps.

(1) If you look from a helicopter at any English town, you will see that the residential areas consist almost entirely of rows of small boxes, each with its own little patch of green. [1]____ The principle, however, will be clear: the English all want to live in their own private houses with their own private gardens.

(2) What you cannot see from your helicopter, you will learn as soon as you try to visit an English home. [2]____ Some humorists claim this is the result of 'a conspiracy to mislead foreigners', pointing out that our streets are never straight, every time a street bends, it is given a different name, there are at least 60 confusing synonyms for 'street', and the numbering of the houses is hopelessly illogical.

(3) The house numbers are at least as well camouflaged as the street names. [3]____ One taxi-driver explained: 'An Englishman's home is his castle, right? We can't actually have massive walls around it, but we can make it difficult to get to.'

(4) The Englishman's home is much more than just his castle; it is also his identity and his prime obsession. [4]____ The mania for home improvements is widespread. Research shows that only 2% of English males and 12% of females have never done any Do-It-Yourself.

(5) Working on home improvements is an opportunity to exercise our creative talents. [5]____ Although it may sometimes be an economic necessity, we see the arrangement, furnishing and decorating of our homes as an expression of our unique personal taste.

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A You may have its address and a map, but you will have great difficulty in finding the house you are looking for.

B Or at least that's how we like to think of it.

C This is an unwritten rule of home ownership and the moving-in ritual.

D They are either hidden, or even not there at all.

E In better-off areas, these boxes will be further apart, and the green patches attached to them will be larger.

F This is why a house is not something you just passively 'have', it is something you constantly 'work on'.

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Read the text below on animals living in Canada, and then match questions 1–6 to each of the three animals.

KILLER WHALES

These mammals are absolutely beautiful. They have a very distinctive black-and-white colouration. Over 600 killer whales live along British Columbia's coastline. They make up some of the most complex communities we have seen in mammals. They always travel in groups called pods. There are between five and thirty animals in each pod. The whales live and travel with their mothers even after they are fully-grown, forming strongly matriarchal whale societies. Over its lifetime, the group will never separate and a female will always act as the leader of the group. Killer whales are very successful hunters due to their cooperative hunting, where all animals within the pod participate.

Female killer whales usually give birth every three to ten years. Killer whales have no natural predators (they are the top predators of the oceans) and can live for about fifty to eighty years. They are not considered endangered.

BLACK AND RARE WHITE BEARS

Along the coast of British Columbia also lives a population of between 120,000 and 160,000 black bears. Adult male black bears range from about 130 to 190 centimetres in length and 60 to 300 kilograms in weight.

The bears are generally vegetarian. Their diet consists of roots, berries, nuts, fish, insects and sometimes other animals.

Female black bears become mature at the age of three and usually give birth to two or three cubs. Cubs remain with their mothers for a year and a half. Consequently, the most often that female black bears can give birth is every two years. An amazing fact about some black bears is that they can produce beautiful bears that are white in colour!

Except for females with cubs, black bears spend most of their time alone. During the breeding season, a male and female may remain together for several days at a time. Their life expectancy in their natural environment is twenty to twenty-five years.

The Canadian Government realises that these black and white bears are very special. As a result, some steps have been taken to protect them. For example, there is a law that prevents people from hunting the bears.

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CANADA GEESE

Canada geese can be seen and heard in many areas of British Columbia. They usually stay till November or December before flying south for the winter in search of warmer climates. Canada geese have black heads, tails, necks and feet and white feathers on their heads. Their lifespan is quite long, ranging from twenty to thirty years. While Canada geese tend to produce young at the early age of three, females are known to reproduce up to the age of twenty, laying four to seven eggs each spring.

Canada geese have very strong family relations. In fact, both parents tend to their young for nearly a year. Families stay together until the time comes to return to the breeding areas. It is only at this time that the geese must go their separate ways. Because Canada geese are a national symbol, it is illegal to harm them in any way. This policy has actually resulted in an overpopulation of the birds. For example, in Vancouver, British Columbia, it is not uncommon to see a family of Canada geese walking around on a highway!

A killer whale
B black bear
C Canada goose

Which of the animals:

1 has the longest average lifespan? ☐
2 can be observed in two different colour varieties? ☐
3 produces their young the most often? ☐
4 does not have strong social instincts? ☐
5 is not protected by law? ☐
6 can be seen in populated areas? ☐

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