4F Reading

Online dining

I can understand a text about an unusual online service.

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1 Complete the messages on the internet forum. Use the words below.

chef customers fork knife menu service tray waiters

I love this restaurant. The [1] _____ is from Italy and makes fantastic pizzas. There are lots of great pasta dishes on the [2] _____ too. And the [3] _____ are really friendly.

I don't like the atmosphere. The [4] _____ are all over 40 and eat their pizzas with a [5] _____ and [6] _____. It isn't for young people!

Don't go there! It's really expensive. You pay £18 for a small [7] _____ of bread, olives and other starters. Main courses are about £20 each. And then they add 15% to your bill for [8] _____!

2 Read the text. Tick the best definition of *mukbang*.

a Buying meals online and eating them alone. ☐
b Finding friends online and going out for meals together. ☐
c Paying to watch somebody online eat a meal. ☐

Reading Strategy

When you have to complete sentences with information from a text, start by deciding which part of the text contains the information you need. Remember that the sentences follow the same order as the text.

3 Read the Reading Strategy. Complete the sentences with information from the text. Write one or two words in each gap.

1 When Lee Chang-hyun starts work, he sits in front of his _____.
2 While Lee Chang-hyun is working, he gets messages from his _____.
3 About 3,500 people in South Korea _____ in *mukbang*.
4 Park Seo-yeon earns $9,000 _____ from *mukbang*.
5 Park Seo-yeon thinks people pay to watch her eat because they don't want to eat a lot of _____ or sugar.
6 Perhaps South Koreans enjoy watching people eat online because a lot of them live _____.
7 For the viewers, *mukbang* is like eating with _____.

TV DINNERS

Lee Chang-hyun lives in Seoul, the capital of South Korea, and he has a very unusual job. He starts work at midnight. He sits in front of his computer, connects to the internet, and starts to eat. He doesn't eat quietly – he makes lots of noise! While he eats, people can watch a live video of his meal online. And every day, about 10,000 people watch him. These viewers send messages to him. The messages appear on his computer and he answers them while he's eating. And all the time, he is earning money.

Watching people eat is a popular online activity in South Korea. You can also watch on a special TV channel. The name of the hobby in Korean is *mukbang*. About 3,500 South Koreans take part in it and a small number of them are famous. For example, Park Seo-yeon is well known online as TheDiva. She earns $9,000 a month from her viewers and it is now her full-time job.

But why do the viewers pay? Park Seo-yeon believes that health is the main reason. People love dishes with lots of fat and sugar, but they don't want to eat them, so they ask her to eat them – and they watch! But can you really enjoy watching a meal but not eating it? Or is there another reason for the popularity of *mukbang*?

Perhaps there are social reasons for its popularity. These days, a lot of South Koreans live alone. When you eat dinner alone every evening, it's easy to feel sad. But with *mukbang*, you can eat with others. It is a kind of online dinner party. And when you visit the website often, it is almost like visiting friends.

At the moment *mukbang* is only popular in South Korea, not in other countries. But perhaps it just needs some time …

LIVEWORKSHEETS