



RAY KROC: THE FAST FOOD KING

I. BEFORE YOU READ.

You are going to read an article about the founder of the McDonald's chain of hamburger restaurants. Before you read the text, match the ten words in A with their definitions in B. Use a dictionary to check your answers.

A

B

to switch

new and without experience

to dispense

to rent

franchise

describes the place where people live outside of a city centre

fledgling

something bought for a cheap or attractive price

consistency

to change from one thing to another

to lease

something used to attract attention to a product

bargain

agreement from a company for somebody to sell its products

advertising

to provide, often from a machine

gimmick

doing things in the same way

suburban

publicising goods and services through the television, radio, newspapers etc.



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2. NOW READ THE ARTICLE AND ANSWER THE QUESTION BELOW.

KROC'S FAST FOOD FORTUNE

RAY KROC was born in Oak Park, Illinois, on October 5, 1902. After leaving school, he spent time playing the piano for a living. In 1922 he landed a job selling paper cups for the Lily-Tulip Cup Company. When one of his customers, Earl Prince, showed him the Prince Multimixer he had invented, Kroc switched companies and for the next 17 years sold mixers nationally.

He was comfortably off and thinking about retirement when in 1954 he walked into a hamburger restaurant in San Bernardino, California. What impressed Kroc about Dick and Mac McDonald's restaurant, apart from the queues down the street, was the way they ran their business. There was a limited menu with cheap prices. To limit cleaning the brothers dispensed plastic utensils and paper napkins. There were eight milkshake mixers producing 40 shakes at a time.

Kroc concluded that fast food along the lines of the McDonald brothers' place was the next restaurant revolution. He persuaded the brothers to license their name to him. In return, they received a percentage of the sales for each franchise Kroc created. Kroc standardised the size of the burgers he would sell in the fledgling McDonald's chain and the amount of onions served with each. He built a laboratory in Chicago to research French fries.

Kroc opened the first McDonald's restaurant in Des Plaines, Illinois, in 1955. Others quickly followed. Kroc enforced strict standards. He was so particular about quality, service and consistency that he nearly made himself bankrupt in the early years. He saved himself through a bit of financial engineering. He began buying the land where restaurants were to be located and leasing it to franchisees. This manoeuvre put him back in the black.

In 1961 Kroc bought out the McDonald brothers for \$2.7m – one of the great bargains of all time. He expanded his chain and began advertising heavily. He introduced Ronald McDonald as a marketing gimmick in 1965. In a short while,



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more children in the US knew Ronald's name than that of the President.

Kroc took his company public in 1965. This put him on the road to becoming one of the first billionaires. His wealth affected him little. He continued to spend his time ensuring McDonald's franchisees maintained his high standards.

One indulgence was the purchase of a major league baseball team, the San Diego Padres, in 1974.

He died in 1984 aged 81 in San Diego, California.

The development of Kroc's hamburger chain in the 1950s and 1960s suited the changes taking place in American society at that time. Much of the US was going suburban. The nation's love affair with the automobile intensified. Kroc provided an increasingly mobile nation with fast, cheap convenient food. The pros and cons of fast food have become a heated political issue across the world, but the industry is now one of the world's largest.

Adapted from 'Fast Food Flipped into a Kroc of Gold', *The Daily Telegraph*.

Complete Ray Kroc's CV with dates from the text.

RAY KROC CV

- 19__ Born
- 19__ Begins work as sales representative for Lily-Tulip Cup Company
- 19__ Visits burger restaurant owned by McDonald brothers in California
- 19__ Buys out the McDonald brothers for \$2.7 m
- 19__ Takes McDonald's public
- 19__ Ronald McDonald is introduced
- 19__ Purchases baseball team, San Diego Padres
- 19__ Dies



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3. READ THE TEXT AGAIN.

Decide if the statements below are true (T) or false (F).

	T	F
Kroc invented a product called the Prince Multimixer.	—	—
In 1954 Kroc had financial difficulties.	—	—
When Kroc opened his first MacDonald's restaurants, he immediately became very rich .	—	—
The Ronald McDonald character very quickly became popular with children.	—	—
Kroc sold shares in his restaurant chain four years after buying out the MacDonald brothers.	—	—
There were a lot of billionaires in the US in the mid 1960s.	—	—
When Kroc became very rich he lost interest in the McDonald's chain.	—	—
Kroc was born and died in the same state.	—	—
In the 1950s and 1960s more and more Americans were living outside of the city centre.	—	—
Politicians in most countries enjoy fast food.	—	—



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4. FIND PHRASES IN THE TEXT WHICH MEAN THE SAME AS THE FOLLOWING.

Example: succeeded in getting employment landed a job

.. had no financial worries without being very rich..

.. managed their company

.. in a similar way to

.. made sure that quality was of a high level

.. paid so much attention to

.. clever use of money

.. he returned to making a profit

.. started to sell shares in his business

.. advantages and disadvantages



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5. EXPRESSION.

The article states that *'the pros and cons of fast food have become a heated political issue'*.

Which fast food chains are popular in your country? What do you think are the pros and cons of fast food? Give reasons for your opinions.