Saving the British Pub

In 1946 George Orwell described his favourite pub, “The Moon under Water”, where there were “mirrors behind the bar” and a “ceiling stained dark yellow by tobacco smoke”. It was the perfect pub, but it didn’t exist since the ideal boozer lived only in Orwell’s imagination. If we carry on the way we are, by 2046 many of the real pubs will exist only in our imaginations, too.

Today about 17,000 pubs are expected to be affected by a dramatic raise in business rates, with closures feared in the next five years. Yes, the death of the great British pub has long been predicted, with some losses since the 1900s. However, in the past decade numbers have dropped like a stone. What is strangling “The King’s Head”? The smoking ban, wage stagnation, alcohol duty, supermarket pricing and the more nebulous “cultural change”. In the forties Orwell wrote that the trend was “away from creative communal amusements and towards solitary mechanical ones” - and this was half a century before the Internet and Netflix came to seduce us.

There are many good economic arguments for wanting to see pubs thrive. In fact, a recent report showed that the industry supports 900,000 jobs. But this is not why the thought of decline hurts. It hurts because for many British people pubs are, in a strange way, an extension of what home is. Our national identity is glued by the places we share, the common denominators of the British experience - and there is perhaps no greater one of these than the pub.

More should be done especially to help rural pubs provide different services and stay alive. One organization helps landlords set up post offices, shops and libraries. We should take more pride in our pubs and support them.
QUESTIONS

1.- Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE.
   a) George Orwell used to visit his favourite pub every day. FALSE “It was the perfect pub, but it didn’t exist since the ideal boozer lived only in Orwell’s imagination”
   b) Pub closures have been most significant since the beginning of the 21st century. TRUE “Yes, the death of the great British pub has long been predicted, with some losses since the 1900s. However, in the past decade numbers have dropped like a stone”

2.- In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions. Do not copy from the text.
   a) There are several reasons for pub closures. Mention four.
      The taxes are now more expensive and for this reason they are less attractive for people and day by day people change their customs. In addition to this, smoking in pubs is forbidden and stores offer cheap alcohol and that way people tend to stay at home.
   b) Why is the decline of pubs affecting British people’s feelings? British people feel like home in pubs, surrounded by people and feeling that they are with friends. Since the decline of the pubs, these feelings are changing and they are not as happy as they were before.

3.- Find the words in the text that mean:
   a) spectacular (paragraph 2) - DRAMATIC
   b) succeed (paragraph 3) - THRIVE
   c) actually (paragraph 3) - IN FACT
   d) establish (paragraph 4) - SET UP

4.- Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given.
   a) People should __BE ENCOURAGED_____ (encourage) to visit pubs by the government so as __TO_____ close the gap between the price of supermarket and pub booze.
   b) __ALTHOUGH_____ smoking is no longer permitted, some people still __ENJOY_____ (enjoy) socialising in pubs.
   c) You always come __ACROSS_____ friendly people in local pubs. That’s __WHY_____ we should try to frequent them.
   d) I remember __GOING_____ (go) to the pub with my father when I was a child. However, now you are not allowed __UNLESS_____ you are over 18.

5.- Write about 150 to 200 words on the following topic.
Is it important to save traditions? Give your opinion.

Personally, I think that this is a very controversial issue, I know a lot of people with different opinions about this topic and it is very difficult to get an agreement.

On the one hand, some people consider that we are in a big world and we are making a great culture with the globalization and for this reason, the customs each place are not important, we have to learn common things, like English language, because it is a link between people and this is far more important than any other thing.

On the other hand, other people say that every monument, every language and the traditions must be respected, because they are an important part of our cultural heritage. They don’t agree with the global world, because they feel that we lose our identity.

To sum up, I have to admit that maybe the key is keeping a balance between preserving our cultures and living in a big global world.

OPTION B

Fancy a Lab Grown Burger?

Tissue engineering, which helps to improve damaged cells or whole organs, has proved to be extremely useful for medical applications that extend our lives. However, we might question ourselves what’s the point of living with artificial organs for a much longer period and without disease if our planet is going to be barren and without food. The answer might be cultured meat, that is to say, meat produced in a laboratory, in a cell culture, rather than from an animal, but identical to the burgers you can find at any supermarket. This new type of meat has the potential to address huge global problems such as world hunger and global warming in the coming years. After all, if you look at the potential benefits of tissue engineering, food production for 9 billion people is going to be a much more relevant matter than merely prolonging their lives.

After producing the first cow-less burger, which cost a massive €250,000 to grow, a researcher at the University of Maastricht has become the public face of cultured meat. That first burger, which was financed by a co-founder of Google, was tasted live in London back in 2013. The price has since dropped to around €10 per burger, and several new companies in the US and in Israel are currently working on their own cultured meat products. In 3-4 years’ time these companies might have launched some expensive burgers in small scale production. However, large-scale production with a price equal to regular meat will take much longer.

Lab grown meat is not only beneficial for humans. Animal welfare is an added benefit; however, if one had to prioritize, no doubt the environmental impact of protein production alternatives for beef and pork is even more important. More cultured meat means less pollution through fossil fuel usage, animal methane, effluent waste, and water and land consumption.
1. Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE.

a) The University of Maastricht invested a total of a quarter of a million euros from its own budget in the first synthetic burger. **FALSE** “That first burger, which was financed by a co-founder of Google, was tasted live in London back in 2013”

b) It will take some time before the cultured burgers cost as much as regular ones. **TRUE** “However, large-scale production with a price equal to regular meat will take much longer”

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

2. In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions. Do not copy from the text.

a) Explain how tissue engineering may help biomedical research.
It can help people to live longer, because they will be able to fix organs or create new ones, that way we could be “repaired” and we will live more and more.

b) What may be the effects of large-scale cultured meat production on global warming? The effects will be positive, some of them will be very important, for instance: the reduction of the use of petrol or gas, the fields will be wilder without so many animals eating there, and the negative gases that animals produce will be reduced too.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

3. Find the words in the text that mean:

a) entire (paragraph 1) - **WHOLE**

b) subsidised (paragraph 2) - **FINANCED**

c) fallen (paragraph 2) - **DROPPED**

d) nowadays (paragraph 2) - **CURRENTLY**

(Puntuación máxima: 1 punto)

4. Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given.

a) I wish scientists **HAD DISCOVERED** (discover) meat culture decades ago! It **WOULD** have spared the planet much irreversible degradation.

b) The first cultured meatball **WAS MADE** (make) in 2016 by an unknown company **WHOSE** manager is a young bio-engineer in her twenties.

c) Some believe that cultured meat is one of **THE MOST IMPORTANT** (important) discoveries in recent times for **DEFEATING** (defeat) some world problems.

d) Nowadays, **BEING** (be) a vegetarian is becoming a far more popular option **THAN** it used to be a few decades ago.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

5. Write about 150 to 200 words on the following topic. Would you like to live in a world with only artificial food? Justify your answer.

(Puntuación máxima: 3 puntos)
PERSONALLY, I THINK THAT THIS IS A VERY CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE, AND IT IS A REALLY DIFFICULT TOPIC TO TALK ABOUT, AND I SUPPOSE THAT IT IS ALSO HARD TO GET AN AGREEMENT ABOUT IT.

FIRST OF ALL, I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT EATING HEALTHY AND LAB MADE FOOD SOUNDS REALLY INTERESTING, IF IT IS GOOD FOR US AND IT TASTES GREAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY A DISADVANTAGE. SECONDLY, OUR WORLD IS OVERPOPULATED AND BEING ABLE TO FEED THE WORLD ARTIFICIALLY COULD SOLVE A LOT OF PROBLEMS.

HOWEVER, IT IS HARD TO THINK THAT WE WILL NEVER EAT NATURAL FOOD AGAIN, AND IT JUST SOUNDS INSANE, THE WORLD IS CHANGING EVERY MINUTE AND TECHNOLOGY MAKES GREAT DEVELOPMENTS EVERY DAY, YEARS AGO THINKING ABOUT THIS ISSUE WAS COMPLETELY STRANGE, AND NOWADAYS IT IS ALMOST A REALITY.

TO SUM UP, IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO THINK ABOUT A WORLD WITHOUT NATURAL FOOD, WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT, IT COMES TO MY MIND AS A SCIENCE FICTION FILM, BUT...WHO KNOWS?