

A. Choose the correct word to match each definition.

1. to cause a change in someone or something

- a. affect b. remove c. accept d. increase

2. the act of helping or working for someone

- a. concept b. supply c. symptom d. service

3. to change a word, sentence, or text from one language to another

- a. ensure b. convince c. translate d. memorize

4. the ability to give attention or thought to a single object or activity

- a. nutrient b. convenience c. concentration d. trend

5. total number of people in an area

- a. population b. germ c. score d. behavior

B. Choose the best word or phrase to fill in the blanks.

1. It is important to _____ sincerely when you realize that you have hurt someone.

- a. make a difference b. apologize c. give a hand d. spread

2. This new medicine is designed to _____ from muscle pain.

- a. take a look b. go viral c. spend time d. bring relief

3. As a _____, I always save some money before buying anything expensive.

- a. rule of thumb b. gesture c. line of work d. boom and bust

4. Her bright yellow umbrella made her _____ in the crowded city street.

- a. run out b. spoil c. stick out d. hold her tongue

5. That restaurant has a great _____ for serving fresh food and friendly service.

- a. research b. reputation c. flavor d. claim

C. Read the readings and answer the questions.

Reading 1: How Reviews Shape Our Choices

Imagine you are choosing where to eat out with friends. You find a sushi restaurant online. The location is convenient, the food pictures look great, and the reviews seem positive. But then you notice the rating: 3.4 out of 5. Do you give it a try? (Ⓐ)

Online reviews often influence where we decide to eat. ① They give us useful information quickly: price, service, and food quality. Positive reviews can also benefit restaurants, especially new businesses trying to attract customers.

However, there are some issues with online reviews. (㉞) This can be influenced by culture. ㉟ Tourists visiting Japan are often surprised by the number of low user ratings on local apps like Tabelog. On this site, more than 95% of reviews are 3.5 or lower, and five-star ratings are rare. In contrast, foreign visitors are more likely to give good restaurants a much higher score.

You might think that restaurants would always want a high review score. But online fame can create its own problems. ③ Online reviews can also help customers discover restaurants they have never visited before. (©) A small restaurant that goes viral may not cope with the extra demand. Wait times might become longer, and food may run out fast. As a result, the restaurant could lose its reputation and _____.

Negative reviews can be even more serious. ④ Even a single bad review can harm a restaurant. In 2023, an izakaya in Aomori received about 40 one-star reviews in just one hour. Its score fell from 4.6 to 2.4. (⑤) The posts were found to be fake, so the website removed them. However, the negative reviews had still hurt the restaurant's reputation.

Online reviews are very influential, so we should use them carefully. Is a restaurant's rating based on many reviews or only a few? Does a reviewer give any reason for their high or low rating? And before posting our own comments, it's good to ask: Is what I'm saying fair? Our words may influence others more than we think.

1. Choose the sentence that does not fit the flow of the reading.

- a. ① b. ② c. ③ d. ④

2. What is NOT true according to the reading?

- Online reviews can provide information about price, service, and food quality.
- Foreign visitors tend to give good restaurants higher ratings than Japanese users do.
- A restaurant may face problems if it suddenly becomes too popular online.
- The *izakaya* in Aomori remained poorly rated because the website kept the fake reviews.

3. Choose the phrase that best fits the blank.

- a. increase its price
b. even its customers
c. attract more tourists
d. face even greater demand

4. Where is the best place to insert the sentence below?

People have different ideas about what a score means.

- a. ㉠ b. ㉡ c. ㉢ d. ㉣

5. What is the purpose of this reading?

- a. Explaining how online reviews influence choices and should be used carefully
- b. Comparing Japanese and foreign attitudes toward restaurant ratings online
- c. Promoting online restaurant reviews as useful tools for choosing meals
- d. Explaining how restaurants can gain popularity through positive online reviews

(continued on the next page)

Reading 2: Superfood Trends: Health or Hype?

“Kiwis help you sleep!” “Acai makes you look younger!” “Matcha lowers your stress!” Every year, a new superfood goes viral with claims about its health benefits. But the rise of superfoods may have a downside.

Firstly, the term “superfood” is a marketing label, not a scientific one. Many products sold as superfoods do have health benefits. ① However, not all claims spread online are based on science. Nutrition experts warn that having a diet based on just a few superfoods is not healthy. No one ingredient can ensure good health. It is more important, they argue, to have a balanced, varied diet. (㉠)

Another issue is the impact on price and supply. In the mid-2020s, rising demand caused _____ in just a year. Much of this demand came from outside Japan. ② Matcha has a strong green color and a unique taste. In 2024, Ippodo, a Kyoto-based tea supplier, apologized to its local customers when supplies ran out. (㉡) Japanese customers had to search online and choose from fewer products sold at higher prices.

You might think an increased demand for a product would be good for producers. (㉢) It’s true that growing demand often benefits local farmers, who can produce more crops and receive more money. During the matcha boom, demand for green tea increased tenfold in fifteen years. However, if the rise is too fast, some farmers are unable to cope. ③ Traditional methods may not keep up with demand. Today, most Japanese tea farms use machines to speed up production. Traditional hand-picking is slower and is becoming less common. A way of life is being lost, and farmers worry this will affect quality.

(㉣) Many trends follow a cycle, and demand for products like matcha is no different. Some tea farmers in Japan remember a previous boom in matcha in the late 1950s. It ended a few years later when coffee and black tea became popular, leaving farmers with unsold stock. In a cycle of boom and bust, demand can rise quickly and then fall. Today’s superfood will one day be replaced by the next. ④ As the saying goes, what goes up must eventually come down.

1. Choose the sentence that does not fit the flow of the reading.

- a. ① b. ② c. ③ d. ④

2. What is NOT true according to the reading?

- a. “Superfood” is mainly a marketing term rather than a scientific one.
b. Rising matcha demand caused higher prices and shortages for Japanese customers.
c. Most Japanese tea farms still rely mainly on traditional hand-picking methods.
d. Demand for superfoods can fall when new food trends become popular.

3. Choose the phrase that best fits the blank.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. matcha's price to double | b. matcha's popularity to disappear |
| c. production to decrease sharply | d. local prices to fall |

4. Where is the best place to insert the sentence below?

The biggest issue with superfoods may be their long-term sustainability.

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| a. ㉠ | b. ㉡ | c. ㉢ | d. ㉣ |
|------|------|------|------|

5. What is the purpose of this reading?

- a. Explaining why superfoods are healthier than ordinary foods
- b. Describing how matcha became popular in Japan and abroad
- c. Showing how farmers benefit from growing demand for superfoods
- d. Explaining the possible problems caused by popular superfood trends