**What’s For Dinner?**

Swiss Chalet, McDonald’s, and Burger King tempt hungry people every day with billboards and TV commercials. Hot succulent chicken, fries and a roll, wholesome sandwiches with a doughnut on the side, or the King of all fast food, the Big Mac: they are all ready, right now, nearby. It may seem that home-made meals cannot compete with this. However, on the basis of taste and ease of preparation, nutritional value, and cost, the home-made meal wins every time.

Sometimes people are hungry and just do not feel like cooking. A burger, fried chicken, or pizza seem like tasty ideas—at first bite. Let those cool down for a few minutes, though, and the sliver-thin burger leaves a fatty scum in the mouth and the chicken batter tastes like fried socks. There are better-tasting alternatives that are quick and easy to prepare. In half an hour, even inexperienced cooks can sauté a chicken breast, chop, or burger, bake a potato, and make a salad. The meat will be juicy inside and crispy outside; the baked potato will be hot and ready for toppings, and the salad will taste cool and fresh. Each can be seasoned and cooked exactly to taste, not according to a corporate formula. If the palate craves Italian flavor, takeout pizza is not the only option; the crust is usually chewier than the box it came in. Anyone can buy a good crust at the supermarket and dress it up or down to taste with different cheeses, seasonings, and toppings in exactly the desired quantities. A comforting bowl of pasta is as easy as boiling water, then opening a jar of gourmet sauce or just applying oil, garlic, and parmesan cheese. Add raw vegetables and dip, and dinner is complete. Cooking a simple meal is easy and always tastes better than predictable takeout options.

Another area where the home-cooked meal shines is nutrition. Fast-food options are often full of empty calories and fat. A fast-food burger, if it is a Big Mac, contains 560 calories, of which 270 come from fat; the fat makes up 46 percent of the burger (calorie-count.com). Add fries, and it adds another

610 calories, with 261 of those coming from fat. A quarter-pound burger pan-broiled at home amounts to about 200 calories, and with sides of oven roasted potatoes and steamed vegetables, will add up to the calorie-count of just the Big Mac alone, and a much lower proportion of fats. A KFC deep-fried, battered chicken breast contains about 500 calories, and more than half of those are fats. A Swiss Chalet chicken breast is a little better at 300 calories, but a chicken breast, with skin, floured, seasoned, and fried at home will add up to only 150 calories, with one-third of those coming from fats. Takeout burger or chicken meals are rarely balanced, either; generally takeout means no vegetables other than potatoes.

Finally, home cooking is always less expensive than takeout. Most ingredients for an ordinary dinner add up to about five dollars at the supermarket. In contrast, a quarter chicken takeout dinner for one costs at least eight or nine dollars. A chicken breast bought at the supermarket is at most two dollars, a potato thirty cents, and vegetables a dollar or two—the whole meal cooked at home costs about half of the takeout bill. Burgers and fries are cheaper forms of fast food, in general. But a quarter pound of ground beef is perhaps eighty cents at most; add the potato and vegetables, and the home-made burger meal tops out at about $2.50, compared to most burger and-fries (no veggies) combos, which will be at least $4.00 or more. Even a fully loaded pizza made at home is better value than the delivery model. The supermarket crust, jar of sauce, mozzarella, and even pepperoni may total six or seven dollars, but in most places, a medium or large pizza will be over ten dollars, and there will be a delivery charge. Where economy is concerned, do-it yourself meals are clear winners.

Stopping at a drive-through window or picking up the phone are tempting when hunger strikes. But the food never tastes as good as it looks in the menu pictures, and it’s nearly never nutritionally balanced. And if the savings that result from cooking at home are not enough, consider the ritual of making a meal exactly to taste as a soothing end to a busy day.

Questions:

1-What type of introduction does the article have?

2- What is the topic sentence for each body paragraph?

3- What type of essay is this?

4- Does the author focus more on comparison or contrast?

5- What are the points of contrast in the essay?

6- What is the pattern of organization in this essay?

7- What are the connotations of the word “scum” in paragraph two?

8- Which sentence in paragraph 3 of the essay should be followed by supporting details?

9- Is the conclusion logical (good)? Explain your answer.

10 – Is the essay coherent? Explain your answer.