

Part One: Reading

(15points)

A/ Comprehension

(07points)

Read the text carefully then do the following activities.

The fast-food industry is fueling a surge in child labor violations across the United States, especially at companies with franchised locations such as McDonald's, Sonic and Chick-fil-A, according to a Washington Post analysis of federal data.

Since the widespread labor shortages of the pandemic, fast-food companies have illegally scheduled thousands of teenagers to work late and long hours and to operate dangerous kitchen equipment. Labor experts say that franchised chains have higher rates of violations because they are less invested in preserving a brand's reputation. They are also under pressure to keep labor costs low to make up for steep operating costs, especially franchise fees. Yet, McDonald's USA called child labor violations rare, saying in a statement that they don't reflect the experience of most teenagers working in age-appropriate roles and looking for meaningful jobs in their local communities.

The American government has launched an initiative to crack down on child labor violators, but the number of federal investigators tasked with enforcing child labor laws is at a near-record low. In most cases, employers pay a fine for each child labor violation. However, the Labor department has said that these fines are not enough to deter highly profitable companies from breaking the law. Besides, powerful restaurant industry lobbyists are pushing to roll back state child labor laws, in some cases below federal standards.

Adapted by Hicham Ouazene

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2024/01/14/>

1. The text is:

- a) a web article b) a book extract c) a magazine article

2. Say whether the following statements are true or false.

- a) The food industry has a child labor problem.
b) Working in fast-food companies is safe for teenagers.
c) McDonald's USA defended child labor violations.
d) Child labor violators are usually rewarded.

3. Answer the following questions according to the text.

- a) Has the surge in child labor violations in the US stalled?
b) Why are franchisees the worst child labor offenders?
c) Did the US government succeed in preventing companies from violating the law? Justify.

4. Find who or what the underlined words in the text refer to.

- a) they (§2) b) their (§2)

5. Give the general idea of the text.

