



THE STORY OF THE HAMBURGER

Reading Passage: The Hamburger's Journey

The hamburger is one of the world's most famous foods. It's fast, it's tasty, and it's everywhere — from street stalls in Bangkok to fancy restaurants in Berlin. But where did it come from?

The story begins in the 13th century, when Mongolian horsemen carried raw meat under their saddles to soften it. (Yes, really.) This idea traveled west and became “steak tartare” in Russia. Later, in Hamburg, Germany, it evolved into the “Hamburg steak” — minced beef, seasoned and cooked.

In the 1800s, German immigrants brought the Hamburg steak to America. But Americans were in a hurry. They didn't want a knife and fork — they wanted something they could eat with one hand. So someone (history disagrees who) put the meat between two pieces of bread. Boom: the hamburger was born.

In 1900, a man named Louis Lassen in Connecticut reportedly served one of the first hamburgers in the U.S. Since then, the hamburger has become a global icon — with beef, chicken, fish, veggie, and even ice cream versions.

So next time you eat a burger, remember: it's not just lunch. It's history between buns.

Vocabulary Builder

Word/Phrase	Meaning	Example Sentence
Minced	Cut into very small pieces	Minced beef is used in burgers.
Immigrant	A person who moves to another country	German immigrants brought the recipe.
Icon	A symbol or famous image	The hamburger is a global icon.
Evolve	To change slowly over time	The dish evolved into the hamburger.
Reportedly	Said to be true, but not confirmed	Louis Lassen reportedly made the first burger.

Comprehension Questions

- Where did the idea of softening meat under saddles come from?
- What is a Hamburg steak?
- Why did Americans want the meat between bread?
- Who reportedly made one of the first hamburgers in the U.S.?
- What kinds of burgers exist today?

Grammar Focus — Passive Voice

Examples from the passage:

- “The dish was brought to America.”
- “The hamburger was born.”
- “One of the first burgers was served in 1900.”

Task: Rewrite the sentences using passive voice.

- German immigrants brought the Hamburg steak to America.

2. Someone invented the hamburger. _____

3. Louis Lassen served the first burger. _____

4. People eat millions of burgers every day. _____

5. Fast food chains sell burgers around the world.

Teacher's Key

Comprehension Questions

1. Where did the idea of softening meat under saddles come from?
Mongolian horsemen in the 13th century
2. What is a Hamburg steak?
Minced beef, seasoned and cooked
3. Why did Americans want the meat between bread?
They wanted fast food they could eat with one hand
4. Who reportedly made one of the first hamburgers in the U.S.?
Louis Lassen in Connecticut
5. What kinds of burgers exist today?
Beef, chicken, fish, veggie, ice cream

Grammar Focus — Passive Voice

Task: Rewrite the sentences using passive voice.

1. German immigrants brought the Hamburg steak to America.
The Hamburg steak was brought to America by German immigrants.
2. Someone invented the hamburger.
The hamburger was invented by someone.
3. Louis Lassen served the first burger.
The first burger was served by Louis Lassen.
4. People eat millions of burgers every day.
Millions of burgers are eaten every day.
5. Fast food chains sell burgers around the world.
Burgers are sold around the world by fast food chains.