

The *Shinkansen* are fast but onboard food sales slowing

The Japanese *Shinkansen*, generally known as bullet trains and famed for their high speeds, are phasing out sales of food. The trains have been operating since 1964 and their popular food carts have always been an enjoyment for passengers. However in recent years, not only has there been less demand for food onboard, but also there has been no shortage of food sales on platforms. People are either buying from vending machines or bringing their own food such as the traditional Japanese *bento* boxed lunches.

The change takes place this autumn on the original bullet train connection between Tokyo and Osaka. For customers with a desire for food, it will only be available in the first-class carriages and only if purchased in advance via an app. The slower *Kodama* bullet train on the same Tokyo-Osaka service already stopped food cart sales in 2012. Now the same applies on the other services, both the faster *Nozomi* and *Hikari* trains. So as travellers pass by landmarks such as Mount Fuji, they will need to have made alternative plans for food, or stay hungry.

This also signals a reduction in the number of cabin crew who would be needed to push the carts up and down the aisles. Plus they will be dressed more simply. Female staff will neither have to wear skirts nor hats, they can be at ease in trousers and without hats. Yet the crew will still follow Japanese etiquette, bowing when entering and leaving the coaches.

Warm-up activities and vocabulary

Activities:

Preparing food for a trip or buying food on a trip – think of three good reasons for both options.

What social etiquette do we use on public transport?

Taking “the scenic route” or going “as the bird flies”. What do these travelling phrases mean and which is the better way to travel?

Vocabulary:

1. Scan the text and find a word or phrase that means:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| A. <i>working</i> (paragraph 1) | o... |
| B. <i>happiness</i> (paragraph 1) | e... |
| C. <i>packed</i> (paragraph 1) | b... |
| D. <i>need</i> (paragraph 2) | d... |
| E. <i>earlier</i> (paragraph 2) | i... |
| F. <i>sights</i> (paragraph 2) | l... |
| G. <i>different</i> (paragraph 2) | a... |
| H. <i>cut</i> (paragraph 3) | r... |
| I. <i>also</i> (paragraph 3) | p... |
| J. <i>manners</i> (paragraph 3) | e... |

2. What does the italicised phrase below mean – *feared*, *recorded*, or *noted*?

famed for their high speeds

3. Which word below doesn't belong?

carriage – alternative – onboard – connection

Phrases, synonyms, and antonyms match-up

Match the words on the left to their endings to make phrases from the text.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. cabin | A. class |
| 2. bullet | B. machines |
| 3. first- | C. advance |
| 4. less | D. the aisles |
| 5. phasing | E. crew |
| 6. boxed | F. train |
| 7. up and down | G. cart |
| 8. vending | H. out |
| 9. in | I. lunches |
| 10. food | J. demand |

Match the words on the left from the text to their synonyms.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. phase out | A. line |
| 2. connection | B. corridor |
| 3. shortage | C. through |
| 4. aisle | D. lack |
| 5. via | E. end |

Match the words on the left from the text to their antonyms.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. at ease | A. increase |
| 2. reduction | B. later |
| 3. in advance | C. stressed |

Reading comprehension match-up

1. The Japanese *Shinkansen*, generally known as bullet trains and...
 2. The trains have been operating since 1964 and their popular food...
 3. However in recent years, not only has there been less demand for...
 4. People are either buying from vending machines or bringing...
 5. The change takes place this autumn on the...
 6. For customers with a desire for food, it will only be available in...
 7. The slower *Kodama* bullet train on the same Tokyo-Osaka service...
 8. Now the same applies on the other services, both...
 9. So as travellers pass by landmarks such as Mount Fuji, they...
 10. This also signals a reduction in the number of cabin crew...
 11. Plus they will be...
 12. Female staff will neither have to wear skirts nor hats, they...
 13. Yet the crew will still follow Japanese...
-
- A. ...their own food such as the traditional Japanese *bento* boxed lunches.
 - B. ...the first-class carriages and only if purchased in advance via an app.
 - C. ...dressed more simply.
 - D. ...famed for their high speeds, are phasing out sales of food.
 - E. ...food onboard, but also there has been no shortage of food sales on platforms.
 - F. ...will need to have made alternative plans for food, or stay hungry.
 - G. ...can be at ease in trousers and without hats.
 - H. ...who would be needed to push the carts up and down the aisles.
 - I. ...original bullet train connection between Tokyo and Osaka.
 - J. ...etiquette, bowing when entering and leaving the coaches.
 - K. ...the faster *Nozomi* and *Hikari* trains.
 - L. ...carts have always been an enjoyment for passengers.
 - M. ...already stopped food cart sales in 2012.

Grammar pairs cloze: coordinators

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. A. but also / B. nor | 6. A. For / B. So |
| 2. A. or / B. so | 7. A. or / B. yet |
| 3. A. For / B. Either | 8. A. Plus / B. Not only |
| 4. A. both / B. and | 9. A. nor / B. and |
| 5. A. neither / B. both | 10. A. Either / B. Yet |

The Japanese *Shinkansen*, generally known as bullet trains and famed for their high speeds, are phasing out sales of food. The trains have been operating since 1964 and their popular food carts have always been an enjoyment for passengers.

However in recent years, not only has there been less demand for food onboard, 1._____ there has been no shortage of food sales on platforms. People are either buying from vending machines 2._____ bringing their own food such as the traditional Japanese *bento* boxed lunches.

The change takes place this autumn on the original bullet train connection between Tokyo and Osaka. 3._____ customers with a desire for food, it will only be available in the first-class carriages 4._____ only if purchased in advance via an app. The slower *Kodama* bullet train on the same Tokyo-Osaka service already stopped food cart sales in 2012. Now the same applies on the other services, 5._____ the faster *Nozomi* and *Hikari* trains. 6._____ as travellers pass by landmarks such as Mount Fuji, they will need to have made alternative plans for food, 7._____ stay hungry.

This also signals a reduction in the number of cabin crew who would be needed to push the carts up and down the aisles. 8._____ they will be dressed more simply. Female staff will neither have to wear skirts 9._____ hats, they can be at ease in trousers and without hats. 10._____ the crew will still follow Japanese etiquette, bowing when entering and leaving the coaches.

Vocabulary gap-fill cloze

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| A. reduction | F. carriages |
| B. shortage | G. simply |
| C. etiquette | H. applies |
| D. landmarks | I. operating |
| E. connection | J. enjoyment |

The Japanese *Shinkansen*, generally known as bullet trains and famed for their high speeds, are phasing out sales of food. The trains have been 1. _____ since 1964 and their popular food carts have always been an 2. _____ for passengers. However in recent years, not only has there been less demand for food onboard, but also there has been no 3. _____ of food sales on platforms. People are either buying from vending machines or bringing their own food such as the traditional Japanese *bento* boxed lunches.

The change takes place this autumn on the original bullet train 4. _____ between Tokyo and Osaka. For customers with a desire for food, it will only be available in the first-class 5. _____ and only if purchased in advance via an app. The slower *Kodama* bullet train on the same Tokyo-Osaka service already stopped food cart sales in 2012. Now the same 6. _____ on the other services, both the faster *Nozomi* and *Hikari* trains. So as travellers pass by 7. _____ such as Mount Fuji, they will need to have made alternative plans for food, or stay hungry.

This also signals a 8. _____ in the number of cabin crew who would be needed to push the carts up and down the aisles. Plus they will be dressed more 9. _____. Female staff will neither have to wear skirts nor hats, they can be at ease in trousers and without hats. Yet the crew will still follow Japanese 10. _____, bowing when entering and leaving the coaches.

Writing cloze

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. inahpgs | 6. gieracras | 11.banci ewcr |
| 2. roieapgnt | 7. vcanaed | 12.lsPu |
| 3. yejenontm | 8. pilsaep | 13.mypisl |
| 4. ahsreogt | 9. kanmrsald | 14.qtieteuet |
| 5. oecntoninc | 10.ctorednui | 15.wgbion |

The Japanese *Shinkansen*, generally known as bullet trains and famed for their high speeds, are 1. _____ out sales of food. The trains have been 2. _____ since 1964 and their popular food carts have always been an 3. _____ for passengers. However in recent years, not only has there been less demand for food onboard, but also there has been no 4. _____ of food sales on platforms. People are either buying from vending machines or bringing their own food such as the traditional Japanese *bento* boxed lunches.

The change takes place this autumn on the original bullet train 5. _____ between Tokyo and Osaka. For customers with a desire for food, it will only be available in the first-class 6. _____ and only if purchased in 7. _____ via an app. The slower *Kodama* bullet train on the same Tokyo-Osaka service already stopped food cart sales in 2012. Now the same 8. _____ on the other services, both the faster *Nozomi* and *Hikari* trains. So as travellers pass by 9. _____ such as Mount Fuji, they will need to have made alternative plans for food, or stay hungry.

This also signals a 10. _____ in the number of 11.(two words) _____ who would be needed to push the carts up and down the aisles. 12. _____ they will be dressed more 13. _____. Female staff will neither have to wear skirts nor hats, they can be at ease in trousers and without hats. Yet the crew will still follow Japanese 14. _____, 15. _____ when entering and leaving the coaches.

Fill-in first letters

The Japanese *Shinkansen*, generally known as bullet trains and named for their high speeds, are racing out sales of food. The trains have been operating since 1964 and their popular food carts have always been an enjoyment for passengers. However in recent years, not only as there have been less demand for food onboard, but also there has been a shortage of food sales on platforms. People are either buying from vending machines or bringing their own food such as the traditional Japanese *bento* boxed lunches.

The change takes place this autumn in the original bullet train connection between Tokyo and Osaka. For customers with a desire for food, it will only be available in the first-class carriages and only if purchased in advance via an app. The lower *Kodama* bullet train in the same Tokyo-Osaka service already topped food cart sales in 2012. Now the same applies in the other services, both the faster *Nozomi* and *Hikari* trains. So as travellers pass by landmarks such as Mount Fuji, they will need to have made alternative plans for food, or stay hungry.

This also signals a reduction in the number of cabin crew who would be needed to push the carts up and down the isles. Plus they will be dressed more simply. Female staff will either have no ear kirts or hats, they can be tase in rousers and without hats. Yet the crew will still follow Japanese etiquette, owing when entering and leaving the coaches.

Cool-down discussion, game, and keywords

Discussion questions:

- What are the job responsibilities of cabin crew?
- When do you use trains? For example, commuting, day trips, or long-distance travel?
- Have you ever ordered food via an app?
- What did people do when travelling before the internet existed?
- What jobs are associated with hats, helmets, or masks?

Language game:

How many words can you make from the letters in *platforms*? Write them below.

CEFR B2 10 lesson keywords:

(a = adverb / n = noun / v = verb)

apply (v), carriage (n), connection (n), enjoyment (n), etiquette (n), landmark (n),
operate (v), reduction (n), shortage (n), simply (a)

Answers

Page 2 Warm-up activities and vocabulary

1. A. operating, B. enjoyment, C. boxed, D. desire, E. in advance, F. landmarks, G. alternative, H. reduction, I. plus, J. etiquette
2. noted
3. alternative (the others describe trains)

Page 3 Phrases, synonyms, and antonyms match-up

Phrases 1E, 2F, 3A, 4J, 5H, 6I, 7D, 8B, 9C, 10G
Synonyms 1E, 2A, 3D, 4B, 5C
Antonyms 1C, 2A, 3B

Page 4 Reading comprehension match-up

1D, 2L, 3E, 4A, 5I, 6B, 7M, 8K, 9F, 10H, 11C, 12G, 13J

Page 5 Grammar pairs cloze: coordinators

1A, 2A, 3A, 4B, 5B, 6B, 7A, 8A, 9A, 10B

Page 6 Vocabulary gap-fill cloze

1I, 2J, 3B, 4E, 5F, 6H, 7D, 8A, 9G, 10C

Page 7 Writing cloze

1. phasing, 2. operating, 3. enjoyment, 4. shortage, 5. connection,
6. carriages, 7. advance, 8. applies, 9. landmarks, 10. reduction,
11. cabin crew, 12. Plus, 13. simply, 14. etiquette, 15. bowing

For this lesson's interactive and listening exercises, please visit:

<https://www.everybitenglish.com/lesson-20230813-middle-b2-bullet-train>

Thanks for using this lesson!