

14 Urbanisation

Problems and solutions, big city life

Problems and solutions

1.1 Consider whether you can ever have *too much, too many, too little or too few* of the following.

time traffic people money space work rubbish



1.2 ① 14a Listen to a conversation between two women and decide which two topics they talk about.

1.3 ② 14a Listen again and write down all the verbs that are used with the words *problem* and *issue*.

.....
.....
.....
.....

1.4 Complete the sentences using the verbs you wrote in 1.3. There may be more than one possible answer, so try to use a different verb for each sentence.

- 1 One of the biggest problems the world today is poverty.
- 2 Your problems won't go away if you ignore them, you need to them.
- 3 The problem was by a blocked pipe, which eventually burst.
- 4 Here is a list of the issues that will be during the meeting.
- 5 Unfortunately we were unable to the issue, even after two days of talks.
- 6 The main speaker did not arrive, which an awkward problem for the organisers of the conference.

1.5 Match the nouns in column B with the correct verbs in column A. Which two verbs can be used with the words *problem* and *compromise*?

A
find
overcome
solve
remedy
resolve
reach

B
a compromise
an issue
a situation
a difficulty
a solution
a problem

1.6 Correct the mistakes in these sentences.

- 1 I am not sure we will ever solve the issue of unemployment.
- 2 We need to resolve a solution to this situation as soon as possible.
- 3 What can we do to solve this difficulty?
- 4 At last scientists have solution the problems associated with solar-powered cars.
- 5 Finally, the members of the city council were able to solve a compromise and the building work was allowed to start.

1 solve the problem / resolve the issue
2 4
3 5

1.7 Cross out the one word in each list that is NOT a synonym for the word in capitals.

1 PROBLEM	difficulty, dilemma, benefit, challenge, obstacle
2 SOLUTION	answer, key, remedy, resolution, setback
3 WORSEN	compound, deteriorate, enhance, exacerbate
4 IMPROVE	advance, aggravate, flourish, progress, reform
5 CHANGE	acclimatise, adapt, adjust, amend, linger, modify, transform



Vocabulary note

We usually use a hyphen between two words if they are joined together to form an adjective: *user-friendly*. We don't use a hyphen if the first word ends in *-ly*: *environmentally friendly*

1.8 Use a hyphen to combine one of the words in box A with one of the words in box B. Then complete the sentences.

A double long short one

B edged sighted sided term

- 1 We need a plan for our transport systems that will take into account future growth.
- 2 A warning sign was put at the site of the accident as a measure until a new wall was built.
- 3 This argument appears to be a little I'd like to hear the other side as well.
- 4 The management agreed to employ five more members of staff, which in hindsight was a very decision because within a few weeks we were still understaffed.
- 5 Globalisation is a sword. It promotes multiculturalism while it erodes the local culture.

Big city life

2.1 Complete the text with suitable adjectives from the box. More than one adjective may be possible.

adequate basic booming catastrophic decent
enormous pressing staggering

Megacities

The world's population is ¹....., no more so than in its cities. Today, there are 21 megacities, each containing more than 10 million inhabitants, three-quarters of them in developing nations. By 2020, there are expected to be at least 27 megacities. Such a ²..... rate of urbanisation brings its own problems, especially in developing nations, where the majority of the megacities will be found.



Employment and educational opportunities are the main attraction of urban centres. But hopes for a better life are often dashed as overpopulation puts an ³..... strain on the infrastructure of the cities and their ability to provide ⁴..... necessities such as clean water and a place to live.

Many rural migrants fail to find ⁵..... work, and therefore cannot afford ⁶..... housing. In some megacities up to 50 per cent of the residents live in slums. This problem is ⁷....., with the United Nations predicting that half the world's population will be living in cities by next year. If the infrastructure within those cities does not grow at the same rate the result will be ⁸.....

2.2 Find words in the text on page 73 that match these definitions.

- 1 People that live in a particular place.
- 2 Areas of the world that are poorer and have less advanced industries.
- 3 The process by which more people leave the countryside to live in the city.
- 4 The problem of having too many people.
- 5 The basic systems and services of a city.
- 6 Very poor and crowded areas of a city.

2.3 WORD BUILDING Complete the table.

Noun	Verb	Adjective
<i>competition</i>		
		<i>excluded</i>
	<i>include</i>	
	<i>isolate</i>	
		<i>poor</i>
<i>responsibility</i> <i>responsibility</i>	
		<i>tolerant</i>

3.1 Answer these questions. Write one or two sentences.

- 1 What are the main problems associated with living in a big city?
- 2 Can anything be done to solve those problems?
- 3 Whose responsibility is it to solve these problems?



Vocabulary note

To refer to a group of people we can use the + adjective: *the elderly, the poor, the young.*
E.g. *We should look after the elderly.*

3.2 Now complete these answers to the questions with suitable words from 2.3.

- 1 Big cities can be overcrowded, so there are a lot of people c..... for each job and for accommodation. The lack of jobs usually means that there is a lot of p..... in big cities. And although there are a lot of people around you, many people feel very i..... in big cities and it's particularly difficult for the elderly.
- 2 I think we need to be more t..... of each other. I think it helps if we try to create small communities within the bigger city so we should try to i..... people rather than e..... them.
- 3 Well, we all have to t..... r..... for these problems and we can all do something to help. But the government is also r..... to a certain extent as well. They need to make sure that the p..... are looked after and that they have access to the facilities they need.

4 PRONUNCIATION 14b If we have *-ed* at the end of a word, it can be pronounced with a *t* or *d* sound. Look at the following words and write *t* or *d* depending on their sound. Now listen and check your answers, then practise saying the words.

accepted crowded developed excluded included isolated
overpriced overworked resolved stressed solved

Test practice

Academic Reading

Rags, bones and recycling bins

Tim Cooper investigates the history of waste recovery.

Test Tip



This reading text is also good practice for General Training section 3.

As concern mounts that the consumer society may be ecologically unsustainable, historians have begun to interest themselves in past efforts to achieve efficient use of scarce resources. Far from being a recent innovation, recycling and reuse of household cast-offs have a long history. In early modern Britain, one of the most characteristic forms of recycling has been the trade in second-hand clothing, which has survived to the present day in the shape of the ubiquitous charity shop. The cost of buying new ensured that many among the lower orders of eighteenth-century English society relied on second-hand apparel. The rag fairs of the rapidly growing cities and a network of tradesmen and pawnbrokers supplied this trade. Some historians have argued that the second-hand trade played an important role in the nascent development of mass consumerism and fashion; demand was so high that there was a ready market for stolen clothes.

Recycling was not restricted to the clothing trade. A much wider culture of reuse existed. This included, for example, the recycling of building materials from demolished buildings, the repair or reuse of most metal goods, and the use of old rags in the paper industry. The paper industry was almost wholly reliant upon recycling for its raw materials. Recycling was thus an important component of the pre-industrial economy, enabling it to cope with shortages of raw materials and aiding the poor. Pre-industrial recycling was largely a response to chronically low levels of production. After 1800, industrialisation, urbanisation and population growth would see the emergence of a new problem – waste – and give a new significance to recycling.

Of course, the generation of urban waste was not new in itself, but the scale of waste production after 1800 certainly was. The treatment and disposal of domestic waste became a problem of the first order. From the 1850s the problem of human waste disposal was being addressed by the construction of sewerage systems; the domestic refuse problem, however, remained relatively neglected until 1875. Up until 1900 most urban areas relied on private contractors for waste disposal, who operated only with the minimum of environmental regulation. This was the context in which the Victorian dust-yards, immortalised in Charles Dickens' novel *Our Mutual Friend*, emerged.

These yards sprang up either in or around many major cities in the nineteenth century, but were particularly characteristic of London. The dust-yards made their money by employing men, women and children to sift and sort through the filth in search of items of value, such as rags and metals. These were then sold to contract merchants. A large proportion of the material that remained after sorting was dust and cinders; where possible these were sold as a fertiliser or fuel source, but where no market existed they were dumped either on land or at sea.

The dust-yards were the most notorious of the nineteenth-century waste trades. In *Dangerous Trade* (1902), industrial health expert Thomas Oliver stated that 'under all circumstances dust-sorting is dirty and disagreeable work'. The uniquely unpleasant conditions of the yards meant that dust-women formed 'a class by themselves, and so the work becomes more or less hereditary'. The workers also received marginal reward for their efforts. By 1900 the average wages of women in contractors' yards in London were only between seven and eight shillings per week. As a result the dust-yards were increasingly controversial by the end of the nineteenth century. At the same time, the waste continued to grow. The 1875 Public Health Act had given local authorities a legal responsibility to remove and dispose of domestic waste. However, the last years of the century saw a solution to the apparently insoluble problem of what to do with the refuse of Britain's cities. A means, in the eyes of experts, to achieve the perfect removal of waste without resort to either the dust-yard or the tip: the incinerator.

Test Tip



For notes completion items, make sure that you stick to the word limit. Do not write extra unnecessary words. Check you have copied the words correctly from the text.

Questions 1–7

Complete the notes using **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text.

The history of recycling in the UK

Eighteenth-century Britain

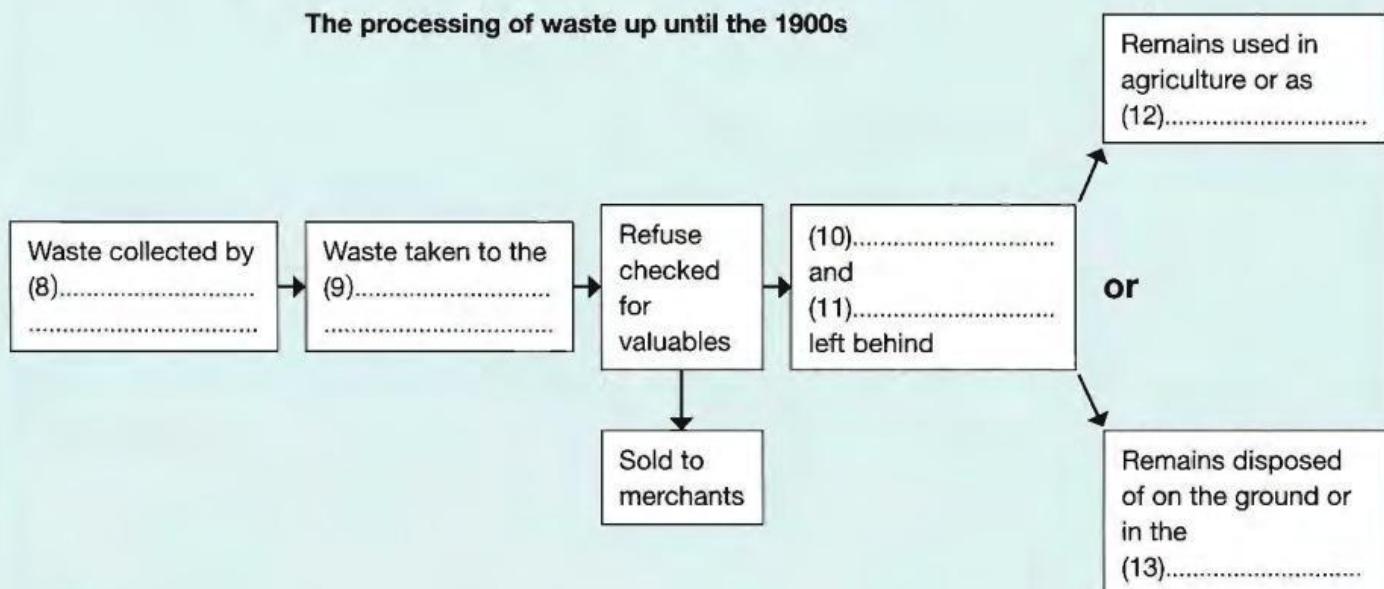
- People recycled products such as
 - used (1)
 - (2)
 - anything made from (3)
 - old cloth.
- The (4) business relied heavily on recycled materials.
- Recycling had two main advantages:
 - it provided necessary (5)
 - it helped (6)

Nineteenth-century Britain

- More refuse was created by an increase in the number of
 - big cities
 - inhabitantsand
 - increasing (7)

Questions 8–13

Complete the flowchart below using **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text.



Question 14

Choose the correct answer **A, B, C** or **D**.

In the final paragraph, what are we told about waste disposal at the end of the nineteenth century?

- A It was a respected business.
- B The work was relatively well-paid.
- C Authorities decided to burn the waste.
- D Disposal of waste had not yet been regulated.