6 Where I'm from

Reading

1 Read the article about "15-minute cities." Choose the correct option (a–c).

1 A "15-minute city" is the name for _____.
- a a human-scale city
- b a megacity
- c an urban area

2 In Buenos Aires, many more people now _____.
- a live downtown
- b travel by bike
- c travel by train

3 In Singapore, _____.
- a 7,000 people live in 20-minute towns
- b they intend to change the city in the next few years
- c you can't take vehicles into the city

4 People in Melbourne _____.
- a like the idea of mixed neighborhoods
- b live and work in the same local area
- c mostly live in apartments

What is a "15-minute city"?

Cities around the world continue to grow into megacities. Urban planners believe that it's important for people's quality of life and well-being that within these megacities we develop local neighborhoods on a more human scale. People should be able to **reach** all the important **services and facilities** they need in about 15 minutes—the idea is known as the "15-minute city."

Buenos Aires

In Buenos Aires, the city authorities want to develop urban "microcenters." The idea is that people can easily **get to** places like **stores, offices, health centers,** and so on by walking, cycling, or taking public transportation. **At present,** everyone who lives in the city is no more than 15 minutes from a health center, for example. To improve the air quality, the authorities have reduced the amount of traffic in the city center by creating a zone where pedestrians have priority over cars. It has also become easier to take your bicycle on the underground "Subte" trains. The number of journeys made by bicycle has increased from 0.4 percent to 4.0 percent in 10 years.

Singapore

Singapore **is aiming** for a "45-minute city," where it takes a maximum of 45 minutes to reach your workplace, by the year 2040, after hearing the views of more than 7,000 Singaporeans. Everyone will also be a maximum of 20 minutes from the center of their neighborhood. The authorities have started to make changes that will improve quality of life. Public transportation is the key to this. For example, there are now more places that are connected by train, and the authorities **are planning** an app that lets people request buses when they need them. At the same time, buses will be cleaner and quieter, and more streets will be free of vehicles so that they can become healthy community spaces.

Melbourne

Melbourne has an extra challenge if the authorities **intend** to help people live locally. The downtown area is surrounded by a large area of suburbs. The suburbs are places where people live, but they don't usually work there. Also, a typical suburb in Melbourne has a lot of individual houses rather than apartment buildings. Fewer people live over a large area, so they have to travel longer distances to work. Urban planners have suggested that when new neighborhoods are **designed**, they should include a mix of places for jobs and services and also different types of homes. **At the moment**, very few areas of Melbourne outside the city center are really "15-minute neighborhoods," but the idea is very popular with local residents.

2 Read the article again. Which of the things connected with 15-minute cities are mentioned? Circle the correct options.

- a better air quality
- b more bike routes
- c pedestrian zones
- d better quality of life
- e open air cafés
- f healthy community spaces
- g a mix of jobs, services, and types of homes

3 Find a synonym in the article for each word or expression. All the words are in bold in the article. Sometimes, the verb is in a different form.

1 reach _____
2 services and facilities _____
3 at present _____
4 aim _____
5 plan _____

Grammar

Present perfect continuous

1 Complete the sentences with the present perfect continuous form of the verbs.

live	spend	wait	walk	not / work

1 My family _____ in this house for years.
2 _____ you _____ around the city all day?
3 The city information website _____ this week.
4 We _____ for a bus for an hour!
5 I _____ time with old friends in the city.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Read the comments. Write a question in the present perfect continuous form using the words in parentheses.

1 They have a lot of suitcases and bags. (they / travel)

Have they been traveling?

2 There's a nice smell coming from your kitchen. (you / cook)

3 Your Italian sounds really good. (you / practice)

4 She's still wearing her sneakers. (she / run)

5 They're getting lots of boxes out of the car. (they / go shopping)

3 Read the sentences. Then complete a new sentence using the verb in **bold** and the correct time expression where necessary.

1 She **lives** in Peru. She moved five years ago.

She *has been living in Peru for* five years.

2 Ross and his friends live in the same apartment. They started **sharing** the place in college.

They _____ they left college.

3 It's 6 p.m. I started **working** this morning and I just stopped.

I _____ all day.

4 I left my old apartment in November. I'm still **looking** for a place to live.

I _____ November.

5 Simon got a job in Lisbon last year. He **visits** his family in Madrid every month.

Simon _____ family in Madrid every month _____ a year.

6 Fran and Jo **plan** to move to New Zealand. Two years ago, they had a great time there.

They _____ two years.

4 Complete the paragraph about a couple who travels with the present perfect or present perfect continuous form of the verbs. In some places, both forms are possible.

Lia and Carlos [1]_____ (live) in their van since 2020. Since then, they [2]_____ (drive) over 20,000 kilometers. On their trip, they [3]_____ (meet) lots of other "vanlifers," and for the last three months, they [4]_____ (travel) with a couple they met in Mexico. Lia [5]_____ (learn) Spanish since 2021, and she now speaks it quite well. This helps a lot in their daily life. They both enjoy van life, but Carlos says that when you [6]_____ (share) a tiny space for a long time, it can be difficult. He says it's time for a change. He [7]_____ (think) about buying a bigger van or renting an apartment, but he [8]_____ (not / decide) yet.

Vocabulary

Towns and cities

1 Circle the correct option to complete the sentences about memories of a town.

1 I used to like the excitement of all the boats in the *district / harbor*.

2 We grew up in the *monument / suburbs*, so all our friends lived near us.

3 I didn't realize our local stores were *hostels / chain stores* until I traveled to other towns.

4 As teenagers, we spent a lot of time in *office buildings / shopping malls*.

5 We could see the tall buildings in the business *district / suburb* from our house.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Complete the comments (1–4) about people's hometowns with these words. For each comment, there is one extra word.

district harbor hostels

1 Angela: We always take visitors to the tourist _____. It's full of life because of all the _____ there.

harbor monument neighborhood

2 Craig: When people go to the _____, they always arrange to meet at the _____ to sailors. It's in front of the main boathouse.

chain stores office buildings
neighborhood shopping malls

3 Josep: Our _____ has a couple of _____. They're nice and cool when the weather is hot, and actually they have a good mix of _____ and small local stores too.

district office building suburbs

4 Erika: I spend a lot of time on the bus, because we live in the _____, but I work in a(n) _____ in the center of the city. I usually listen to music on my phone.

Listening

1 6.2 Listen to three people telling stories from their childhood. Choose the correct option (a–c).

1 Susana's story about playing on her bike shows that _____.
- a she was lucky to live close to her friends
- b the roads around her house were always busy
- c village life could be as dangerous as city life

2 Fabio's experience of living in different places _____.
- a made him good at making friends
- b helped him feel close to his brother
- c made him hate starting a new school

3 When Ewan was very young _____.
- a bad weather made him do something funny
- b he spent a lot of time playing in boats
- c the police once had to come and save him

2 6.2 Listen again and check (✓) each time you hear a signpost expression.

At that time, _____
Anyway, _____
Well, _____
One day, _____
The next day, _____
There was once _____
It's a funny story, actually. _____
So, _____
One evening, _____

3 6.3 Listen and complete the audio extracts from the stories with the signpost expression.

1 We used to race each other to the bottom. _____, you can guess what happened.

2 We arrived in the new town. _____, I walked to my new school with my little brother.

3 We used to get really excited and impatient. _____ a huge storm.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Read the sentences. Underline the option that is NOT possible.

1 She jumped *across / away / over* the stream.

2 They followed the car *by / through / toward* the city.

3 The road goes *by / to / up* my house.

4 They waved at their friends as they drove *away / toward / by.*

5 Don't run *down / through / up* the stairs!

6 Can we walk *away / across / through* this forest?

Pronunciation

Saying /l/ and /r/

1 6.4 Listen and circle the word you hear. Then listen again and repeat the words.

all	or	light	right
flee	free	lot	rot
fly	fry	lace	race
owl	hour	load	road
lead	read	stall	store

Writing

1 Look at the tourist information below about Salalah in Oman. Write (S) for places to see and (D) for things to do.

- buy gifts at the Haffa Souk _____
- explore Salalah _____
- Al Hosn Palace _____
- Jabal Samhan Nature Reserve _____
- Taqah Castle _____
- visit Al Balid ruins _____
- walk by Al Mughsail Beach _____

2 Read the sentences (1–5) from suggestions for a weekend tour in and around Salalah. They are in the order of the tour. Which expressions can you use in each sentence? Sometimes, more than one answer is possible.

After visiting	At this point,	Then
Later in the evening,	The next day,	
To start the weekend,	You can end	

1 _____ get an early start for a day trip to Jabal Samhan Nature Reserve.

2 _____ Jabal Samhan, head back toward the coast and Salalah.

3 _____ you'll be ready for a nice meal.

4 _____ have a relaxing walk around the city.

5 _____ the weekend buying gifts to bring home!

LIVEWORKSHEETS