

Teaching activities: Living in a city

Level:	B1–B2
Skills:	listening, speaking, writing
Interaction:	individual, pairs/small groups
Time:	70–130' (can be split into two lessons or partly done for homework)
Learning objective:	By the end of the session, learners will be better able to describe statistics to talk about how something has changed.

In the activities, learners watch a video about living in a city, then practise using language for statistics to talk about change. Finally, they research and prepare their own script for a short video.

*These activities use a video taken from our new Secondary course, *Shining Lights*, but offer additional activities to be used with it. To learn more about *Shining Lights* and download a sample, please visit cambridge.org/shininglights*

Contents

Teaching activities: Living in a city	1
Student worksheet.....	2
Talking about statistics	3
Creating a video script	4
Self-assessment.....	5
Teacher's notes and answer key	6

Student worksheet

- A. Make a list of advantages and disadvantages of living in a city.
- B. Watch the video. Does it mention any of the same ideas?
- C. Discuss the questions from the end of the video.
- D. Choose the correct word to create definitions for the words and phrases from the video.
- i. **A megacity:** a city with more than **one/ten** million people living there
 - ii. **Inhabitants:** the people who **live/work** in a particular place
 - iii. **To tell the difference (between A and B):** to see or understand how two things **are/are not** the same.
- E. Talk about the numbers your teacher shows you. What in the video do they refer to?
- F. Complete the sentences below using the numbers on the board, then watch the video again to check your answers.
- i. Today, over _____ of people live in cities.
 - ii. By 2050, this could be more like _____.
 - iii. In the 1950s, New York was the largest city in the world, with _____ people.
 - iv. Nowadays, there are more than _____ megacities.
 - v. _____ of children in the USA may never see stars because the city lights are too bright.
 - vi. _____ city children in the UK have never walked in the countryside.
 - vii. _____ have never swum in the sea.
 - viii. _____ cannot tell the difference between a bee and a wasp!
- G. Look at the statistics from the video.
- i. **Think:** Choose three statistics you found surprising. In what way did they surprise you? Can you change the statistic to make it what you expected?
 - ii. **Pair:** Compare with your partner. Do you have any similar ideas?
 - iii. **Share** your ideas with the class.

Talking about statistics

- H. Look at the statistic from the video. You can change the words in bold and keep the same meaning.**

*Example: Nowadays, there are **more than** 30 megacities. = Nowadays, there are **over** 30 megacities.*

Now look at some more statistics. For sentences a–d, choose two words or phrases from the box below which have a similar meaning to the words in bold. Rewrite each sentence using the two words you’ve chosen.

33% of	a [sharp] growth in	before	by the year
a [big] rise in	many	a third of	a lot of

- There’s been a **[huge] increase in** people living in cities.
There’s been _____ / _____ people living in cities.
- By** 2050, this could be more like 70%.
_____ / _____ 2050, this could be more like 70%.
- One in three** city children in the UK have never walked in the countryside.
_____ / _____ city children in the UK have never walked in the countryside.
- Living in a city has **lots of** advantages.
Living in a city has _____ / _____ advantages.

- I. Cross out the option which has a different meaning in each sentence.**

There’s been a **decrease in** / a **fall in** / a **rise in** the number of teenagers using Facebook in the last few years. These days, **fewer than 20%** / **more than 20%** / **less than 20%** of young people use it regularly. Many teenagers think Facebook **has few advantages** / **doesn’t have many advantages** / **has lots of advantages** compared to other social media apps.

- J. Complete the statistics with one word. The first one has been done for you.**

- There’s been a **sharp growth** in students using smartphones in class since 2015.
- A lot** _____ students say they listen to music while doing homework.
- _____ 2030, scientists hope to find new ways to reduce plastic waste.
- Half** _____ children now prefer reading online to reading books.
- _____ **than** a third (29%) of teenagers say they don’t eat breakfast every day.
- More** _____ 70% of young people play video games every week.
- There’s been _____ **drop in** teenagers watching traditional TV.
- Many teenagers spend _____ **3 hours** (190 minutes) a day on their phones.
- One** _____ **three** people use social media every day.
- In 2000, **fewer** _____ 6% of people used the internet regularly.

Creating a video script

K. Read the script from the video you watched earlier. Label each paragraph with the best description. The first paragraph has been done for you.

There's been a huge increase in people living in cities since the 1950s. Today, over 56% of people live in cities. By 2050, this could be more like 70%.	1. A description of the change which gets the listener's attention.
In the 1950s, New York was the largest city in the world, with twelve and a half million people. Tokyo was the second largest. They were the only two megacities – that is, cities with more than ten million inhabitants. Nowadays, there are more than 30 megacities.	2. _____
Living in a city has lots of advantages: more job opportunities, more cultural events and you might get the chance to meet people from all over the world.	3. _____
However, there are also many disadvantages. For example, keeping in touch with nature is very difficult. Eighty percent of children in the USA may never see stars because the city lights are too bright. One in three city children in the UK have never walked in the countryside. Forty-four percent have never swum in the sea, and a third cannot tell the difference between a bee and a wasp!	4. _____
City planners have often tried to help. Architects designed Central Park in New York in the nineteenth century so that its residents could escape to a green space. But, nowadays, experts worry that many young people prefer playing computer games to going outside.	5. _____
Do you live in a city? What do you like about living there? And what don't you like? Do you prefer playing video games to going outside?	6. _____

- i. Some good things about the topic
- ii. Some bad things about the topic
- iii. A description of the changes – comparing past and present
- iv. A way to improve the situation
- v. Asking the listener's opinion

L. Brainstorm some things which have changed a lot in the last 50 years. For example:

- a sport or game which is more or less popular
- a place which has changed
- a language which is more or less popular
- the way people do something (communication, shopping, using technology, etc.).

Choose one which interests you and do some research. Make notes on at least 3–5 interesting statistics and other key information so you can write a similar script to the one above.

M. Write your script of about 120–150 words.

Self-assessment

N. Read your script. How well have you done these things? Give yourself a score from 1 to 5.

I started with information that gets the listener's attention.	
I included phrases for talking about statistics.	
I included good things and bad things about the topic/the change.	
I asked the listener's opinion at the end.	
I wrote 120–150 words.	

Activity and suggested timing	Notes	Answer key
Lead in, 5' A.	Put learners in groups of two or three to brainstorm advantages and disadvantages of living in a city. Elicit a couple of examples then learners write their lists. Extra challenge: Learners rank their lists and justify their order.	
Objective, 5'	Share the learning objective with the class explaining what you are going to do. Give learners a couple of minutes to check understanding with their partner then clarify any questions in open class.	
Gist watch, 5' B. C.	Watch video and learners check if the video mentioned any of their ideas. Show questions from the end of the video on the board. In pairs, learners answer the questions: <i>Do you live in a city? What do you like about living there? And what don't you like? Do you prefer playing video games to going outside?</i> (If many of your learners don't live in a city, add an extra question such as <i>Would you like to live in a city? Why/why not?</i>) Extra challenge: Mini dictation – ask learners to write down the questions at the end of the video. They compare with their partner, then show the questions on the board so they can check.	
Vocabulary, 5' D.	Learners choose the correct option to check understanding of vocabulary from the video.	i. ten ii. live iii. are not
Detailed watch, 5–10' E. F.	Show the following numbers on the board: 80% 56% 70% 12.5 million 30 44% 1 in 3 1/3 Ask learners in pairs to try and remember what they refer to. Check and drill pronunciation of the numbers, as necessary. Learners use the numbers on the board to try and complete the video script. Then watch the video again to check answers.	i. 56% ii. 70% iii. 12.5 million iv. 30 v. 80% vi. 1 in 3 vii. 44% viii. 1/3
Discussion, 5–10'	Think, pair, share: Individually, learners choose three statistics they found surprising and be ready to talk about	

Activity and suggested timing	Notes	Answer key
G.	why. They compare with their partner, then share with the class.	
Language for statistics – meaning, 5' H. I.	Go through the example together first highlighting that <i>more than</i> = <i>over</i> . Then learners rewrite each sentence using two possible options from the box. Learners cross out the option which has a different meaning.	a. a sharp growth in / a big rise in b. Before / By the year c. A third of / 33% of d. many / a lot of l. a rise in more than 20% has lots of advantages
Language for statistics – form, 5–10' J.	Learners complete the statistics with one word.	i. in (example) ii. of iii. By iv. of v. Less vi. than vii. a viii. over ix. in x. than
Analysing a script, 5' K.	Individually, learners read the script and label the purpose of the paragraphs. Allow learners to compare in pairs before sharing answers.	2. iii 3. i 4. ii 5. iv 6. v
Preparation, 10–20' L.	Put learners in pairs or small groups to think about some things which have changed. Elicit a few ideas, e.g. more people speak English, more people use text messaging apps and social media to communicate, fewer people watch traditional TV. (In pairs or individually) Learners choose one area that interests them and do some research, making a note of interesting facts and 3–5 statistics they can share. If learners don't have internet access, print some information from different sources and give it out to groups to find information from. Alternative: This could be done for homework or in the next lesson.	

Activity and suggested timing	Notes	Answer key
Writing, – 15–30’ M.	<p>Learners write a script (120–150 words) sharing their findings. Remind learners to follow the paragraph plan in K. Highlight that the model script from the video is longer than what they need to write.</p> <p>Extra challenge: Learners write a script of up to 200 words.</p>	
Self-assessment, 5–10’ N.	<p>Learners read their scripts and complete the checklist. Allow time to edit and improve their scripts based on the checklist.</p>	
Publish (optional), 5–10’	<p>Learners put their scripts on the wall. Ask learners to read each other’s scripts and choose the most interesting or surprising facts from their classmates’ scripts.</p> <p>Share learners’ ideas.</p>	