

## City Life and Country Life

### ***I. Pre-reading activities.***

#### **Answer the questions.**

- Do you live in a city or in a village?
- Why would you prefer living in a city/village to a village/city?
- In your opinion, what is the main advantage of life in a city?
- What opportunities for children and young people are in your town/village?

### ***II. Living in city and in the country – reading.***

Everything has its pros and cons. Let's have a nice comparison of life in town and country.

Life in the country is much calmer. There is fresh air and lots of greenery, nature is beautiful of all the woods, lakes and fields. There are no factories, it is quiet and you can do anything there. You can do sports. Country people can go on a hike any time they like, take a tour of the surroundings, ride a bike – children can play outside or ride bicycles without any danger. People mostly live in detached houses with gardens around them where they can grow fruits, flowers, vegetables and keep domestic animals. Giving a garden party in summer is the most favourite activity in many families.

What makes life in the country a bit uneasy is transport. In some places, buses operate only twice or three times a day. Pupils and students have to commute to schools, most people have to commute towns as there are very few jobs available in the country. Problems can arise with shopping. Villages have one or two stories with a limited offer of goods and higher prices as well. That's why shopping is mostly done in towns.

Social life in the villages is quite different than that of the town. There are also few possibilities to fully participate in cultural life. Cinema plays once or twice a week, sometimes a theatre or music group comes from the city. But people are closer to each other, they know each other well, they meet in the pub or during various festivals, parties or balls. They have similar interests, such as repairing their houses or gardening. They are close to nature. But another disadvantage is that everyone knows everyone and life can therefore never be anonymous.

By contrast, there are quite a lot of schools and shopping facilities in towns. In other words, there are more jobs available, better housing, cultural and sporting facilities and hospitals. People often work close to the place where they live and do not have to commute.

For the surrounding villages, a town is the centre of all activity. In the city there are many specialised shops and shopping centres. People can buy anything they need. Sometimes this leads to a consumer lifestyle, when people are interested only in new fashionable things

We should not forget, either, that we have various sport facilities available in the cities – winter stadiums, outdoor and indoor swimming pools, playgrounds, tennis courts, gyms, etc. Various sporting events are often held there. These can be athletic games, volleyball, basketball, handball, football, baseball, softball matches, as well as gymnastics and swimming competitions. City cultural organizations try to offer some competition to children who cannot get into the countryside and fresh air. For small children they have days full of games, sport competitions and lots of active movement. During the week children can attend different interest clubs and on weekends they can go out to the country with their friends.



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One of the city's features is a rather large number of schools – elementary, secondary, apprentice training centres and in some cases also universities.

In the town we can use many kinds of public transport – trams, buses, trains and in big cities underground, but most people use their own cars. Streets are often jammed by cars and public transportation may be slow and crowded. Traffic congestion causes air pollution. The air can be polluted also by factories, which are in the town or near it.

**Cultural life.** Cultural life in big cities can be rather rich. We can go to the cinema, to the theatre, dancing club, or we can stay at home and listen to the radio, watch TV and read books. People like going to the cinema instead of watching TV because in the cinema it is much stronger experience. The quality of picture and sound is much higher. Cinema multiplexes use Dolby Surround. System which ensures you that you feel like you were really on the scene you are right watching it. In the Czech Republic we can watch dubbed films or films with subtitles. There are many kinds of movies – for example criminals, thrillers, romantic films, films with social theme, comedies, psychological, adventurous or cartoons. Most films are produced by the USA but the Czech movies are also popular.

The other possibility of cultural self- realization is the theatre. Especially in large cities some theatres are focused on one genre. If you want to watch a comedy you visit a different theatre if you want to go to classical opera or ballet. When going to the theatre people wear festive clothes and tickets are bought in advance. Seats are divided into the stalls, balcony, or boxes. The programme brochure contains the date of the first or opening night, cast or the names of the choreographer and set and costume designers.

There are various theatre genres such as puppet shows, tragedies, comedies, musicals or historical drama, ballet, opera, operettas or musicals.

When we say fine art it can have many different meanings. One of them is painting and drawing. We can visit many exhibitions in galleries or there are also some open-air exhibitions, especially in summer.

The most popular kind of music is music. Probably everybody listens to some music. Young people prefer modern music which has many variations. In cities, there are numerous concert halls, jazz, blues and rock clubs, dance cafés and discos. Many people like classic music. It can be cultural experience to visit a concert of the classic music.

Music, the fine arts and architecture are inevitable parts of our everyday lives as they bring us beauty and joy. It is arts that help us better understand the history and meaning of life. Many people think arts help heal the mental state of their bodies and therefore take part in various therapies involving music, dance, drama and arts.

## **II. Vocabulary.**

<b>pros and cons</b>	pro a proti
<b>calm</b>	klidný
<b>hike</b>	pěší túra
<b>surroundings</b>	okolí
<b>commute</b>	dojíždět
<b>available</b>	dostupný
<b>arise</b>	nastat
<b>facility</b>	vybavenost
<b>competition</b>	soutěž
<b>attend</b>	navštěvovat
<b>feature</b>	znak
<b>apprentice</b>	učiliště
<b>congestion</b>	zácpa
<b>cause</b>	způsobit

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experience	zážitek
instead of	místo něčeho
ensure	zajistit
dubbed	dabovaný
subtitles	s titulky
adventurous	dobrodružný
genre	žánr
in advance	předem
opening night	premiéra
puppet show	loutkové divadlo
fine arts	výtvarné umění
inevitable	nezbytný
heal	léčit
involve	zahrnovat

### **III. Post-reading activities.**

#### **Answer the questions according to the text.**

- What is life in the country like?
- Where do people live there?
- What opportunities to work are there? And what about transport?
- What is social and cultural life in the country is?
- Where can people in a city live?
- Name the advantages of living in the town?
- Are there any problems of living in the town?
- Why do people prefer going to the cinema to watching TV?
- What theatre genres do you know?
- What can you say about music?

### **IV. Reading texts.**

#### **British and American Towns.**

London, the capital of Britain, with a population of eight million, is one of the largest cities in the world. The second largest city is in Britain. Birmingham has only one million people, a little more than Glasgow. In the north there are more industrial towns than in the South. In the South and in the West there are many lovely small towns which look, except for the traffic and modern roads, the same they did one or two centuries ago. Most seaside towns and passengers ports (the best known are Dover and Southampton) are in the South too.

American towns and cities have few historical landmarks, except for the oldest cities in the East. Their wide streets have no names, only numbers, and the towns look like a chessboard from the air. There are no squares as there are in old European towns. In the inner city there are modern skyscrapers as well as poor residential districts. Americans prefer homes in the suburbs

#### **The countryside in Britain and the U.S.A.**

The countryside in the South of England is very attractive. There are a lot of meadows there and because of frequent rain the grass is greener than in Central Europe. The South is not so heavily populated as the North and there is less industry and less pollution there. It may surprise you to hear that there are very few woods in Britain and practically no coniferous woods. The Scottish hills and mountains are usually



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covered with moors. You can go for hikes on marked paths, especially in some recreational areas, such as the Lake District and parts of Scotland.

The countryside in the U.S.A. cannot be described in one paragraph. It is as varied as the European Continent. You can find everything there: mountains higher than the Alps, rivers wider than the Danube, plains as large as in Russia, forests as thick as in Scandinavia, and beaches as fine as in the south of France. Have a good look at the map some time.

### V. Exercises.

#### Towns.

Here are some of the things you will find in most big towns:

- a commercial centre:** an area with lots of banks and company offices
- shopping centres:** places with many shops, either indoors or out doors
- car parks:** places to leave many cars
- factories:** buildings where you make things, e.g. cars
- suburbs:** areas outside the centre of town where people live
- libraries:** places where you can borrow books
- pollution:** dirty air because of smoke and petrol fumes
- night-life:** places to go at night, e.g. bars, restaurants, cinemas, theatres, discos, etc.

#### Advantages and disadvantages.

People who prefer the countryside to big towns, often say this:

<p><b>Towns:</b>  are noisy  are dirty and polluted  are stressful  are crowded  are dangerous</p>	<p><b>The countryside:</b>  is quiet and peaceful  is clean  is calm and relaxing  has lots of open space  is safe</p>
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People who prefer big towns have a different point of view:

<p><b>In towns:</b>  there are plenty of things to do  it's exciting  there's a wide range of shops  there's lots of night-life</p>	<p><b>In the countryside:</b>  there is nothing to do  it's boring  there are only a few shops  there's no night-life</p>
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#### 1. Complete this table of opposites.

##### Big towns and cities

.....  
.....  
exciting  
stressful  
.....  
.....  
dangerous

##### Village life and the countryside

quiet and peaceful  
clean air  
.....  
.....  
lots of open space  
nothing to do in the evening  
.....

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**2. Positive aspects of city life. Use each word only once to complete the sentences.**

pedestrian	amenities	location	lanes	heritage
storey	reach	reconstruction	street	precinct

1. His office has a really convenient ..... - it's only a short walk away from the bus station.
2. The stadium is within easy ..... of the railway station.
3. I get around on my bike. Luckily, there are lots of cycle ..... in the city centre.
4. They've just built a multi- ..... car park near the park, so that should solve part of the problem.
5. Ever since they opened that out-of-town shopping centre, it's been much more pleasant in the shopping ..... on Friday afternoon.
6. The hostel is close to local ..... like the swimming pool, the gym and bowling alley.
7. It's a good job they've turned this street into a ..... zone. There was far too much traffic here before
8. Lots of historical buildings are under ..... at the moment, which I consider a good sign – at least somebody cares about what this place looks like.
9. They're opening a new clothes shop in the high ..... tomorrow. Do you want to have a look?
10. Westminster Abbey is a UNESCO World ..... Site.

**3. Problems in cities. Fill in the missing vowels and complete the sentences.**

v - ndals	poll - ti - n	ov - rcrowd - d	sl - ms
p - vem - nt	stre - t	ren - vat - ng	p - cked

1. They should close down that factory because the air ..... is really unbearable.
2. I would hate to live in a/an ..... metropolis. I'm just fine in this sleepy little town.
3. The police have introduced several measures to fight the increasing ..... crime.
4. They really should ban traffic from our street. It's so narrow that you don't feel safe even on the.....
5. It must be horrible to live in those ..... with no heating or running water.
6. The building of my school is quite shabby and badly needs ....., but nobody has the funds.
7. I know public transport has its advantages, but I still hate it when people are ..... like sardines in the rush hour.
8. The building is dilapidated as it is, I don't see why those ..... should make it even worse by spraying graffiti all over it.

**4. Two-word phrases. Choose a suitable beginning or ending to complete the compound each gap.**

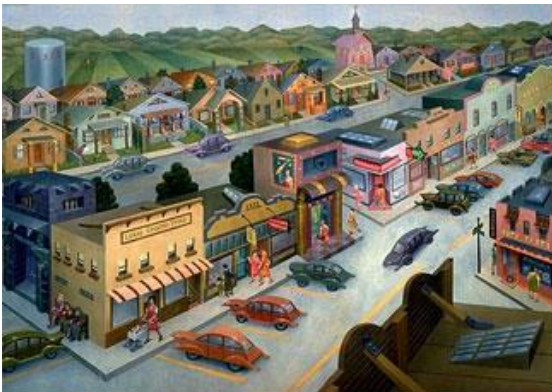
Beginnings:	Endings:
<i>open-air</i>	<i>lane</i>
<i>rural</i>	<i>farm</i>
<i>combine</i>	<i>green</i>
<i>organic</i>	<i>council</i>

- a. They live in a backward ..... area where there is no industry.
- b. My grandparents used to work in a vineyard which belonged to the local *collective* .....
- c. The only way to get to this isolated village is on a deserted *country* .....
- d. They decided to grow crops in a huge field, so they bought a tractor, a trailer and a .....*harvester*.
- e. In the ..... *museum*, you can see log cabins in which people used to live about a hundred years ago.
- f. The members of the *local* ..... decided to rename a few streets.

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- g. They grow ..... *vegetables* without chemical fertilizers or pesticides, but they struggle a lot with weeds and vermin.
- h. The fair is held on the village ..... on the second Sunday in June every year.

### 5. Describe the following pictures.



### 6. Read the statement and express and justify your opinion on it.

“Nowadays young people find living in the village unattractive. In a few years time everybody, except pensioners, will have moved to the cities.”

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- Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Why?
- Present an example and/or talk about your own experience.

### 7. Writing.

- Do you live and/or study in a city? Is it very big? How many advantages and disadvantages of city life can you think of? Write them down.
- Write three paragraphs called 'The Pros and Cons of Living in the Country'. In the conclusion give your own opinion. Write about 250 words.

### 8. Speaking.

Look at pictures A and B.

Which picture would you like to talk about? Describe it, please.

- Situation
- Place
- People
- Things you see
- Atmosphere
- Other



How do you like the place?

How do you feel about the picture?

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What is happening in this picture?

What are the people like?

Do you know what town it is?

### Solutions.

Ex. 2: 1. location, 2. reach, 3. lanes, 4. storey, 5. precinct, 6. amenities, 7. pedestrian, 8. reconstruction, 9. street, 10. heritage.

Ex. 3: 1. pollution, 2. overcrowded, 3. street, 4. pavement, 5. slums, 6. renovating, 7. packed, 8. vandals.

Ex. 4: a. rural, b. farm, c. lane, d. combine, e. open-air, f. council, g. organic, h. green.

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