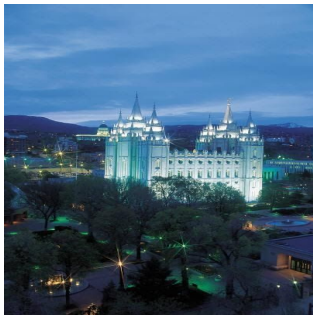


EPISODE 81
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



CITY TALKS...



A: How was your trip?

B: Great! Really amazing. Have you been there?

A: No, what's like?

B: It's really wild. It **took me by surprise** (= it surprised me a lot), actually. I didn't know what to expect, but the nightlife is totally mad.

A: Really?

B: Honestly, the people there **party like there's no tomorrow** (= to have a lot of parties and fun). We went out with these people and ended up in a place at about 4 in the morning and it was absolutely packed.

A: Wow!

B: Seriously, you couldn't move. In fact, the whole city was still **buzzing** (= full of people and life). You can still get stuck in traffic at that time of night.

A: oh !

B: Actually, that was a bit of a **downside** (= disadvantage), the **congestion** (= a lot of traffic).

A: Is it so bad?

B: Unbelievable! You just spend hours and hours in the car **crawling** (= to move forward very slowly) along with **honking** (= to make a lot of sound with a horn of your car) their horns. You'd be quicker walking.

A: So did you?

B: No, it's **unbearably** (= impossible to stand) **humid** (= wet in the air). Honestly, you only have to walk out of your hotel and you're dripping in sweat...

A: There must be a fair amount of pollution!

B: That's as well. There's an **appalling** (= awful) cloud of smog that constantly hangs over the city.

A: Sounds pretty **grim** (= gloomy, sad)...

Is there any place in your city /town which ...

- has **stunning** views = amazing
- has **unspoilt** landscapes = natural
- is very **tranquil** = calm, peaceful
- has many **run-down** buildings = destroyed
- was very **packed** = crowded
- was **bustling** with tourists = packed
- is good to **stroll** around = go for a walk
- is **overrated** and **overpriced** = too expensive
- is culturally **diverse** = with many cultures
- is **not all it's cracked up to be?** = not as good as many people recommend



EXERCISE 1

Decide if the sentences below are true or false. Correct the false ones.

1. When you are disappointed with a place, you can say it is not all it's cracked up to be.
2. When you say that your city is overrated, you are made to pay too much for everything.
3. When the place is grim, you wouldn't choose it as your holiday destination.
4. When the city is bustling it is totally empty.
5. When it is unbearably humid, you need to take an umbrella.

ENGLISH IN USE



Emphasizing and reinforcing:

We can emphasise by:

- using extreme words: appalling, packed, crawl,...
- adding adverbs: incredibly modern, ridiculously expensive, ...
- using like: like crazy, like there's no tomorrow

We often reinforce what we say using words like:

- honestly
- seriously
- actually
- I swear and ...

EXERCISE 2

Write a reinforcing sentence:

1. The amount of building work is incredible.
2. It's an absolutely huge sprawling city.
3. The city is a complete dump.
4. It's ridiculously cheap there.
5. It's like war zone in some parts of the city.
6. It's an incredibly vibrant place.

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



CITY SLICKER = *SOMEONE WHO LIVES AND WORKS IN A CITY. This word is usually used by people from the countryside who dislike people from the city.*

GENTRIFIED = we used this word to describe what happens when a poor area changes as more middle class people buy the cheap properties and do them up to live there.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



TURNOUT = THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ATTEND AN EVENT

GO AHEAD = TO HAPPEN

PAVE THE WAY FOR STH = CREATE A SITUATION WHICH MAKES IT EASIER FOR STH TO HAPPEN



EXERCISE 3

Match the sentence halves.

1. An estimatedof 50.000 demonstrators joined forces yesterday.
2. The march was not allowed to They were stopped just before the riots.
3. We are pressing ahead with plans for further action which could new possibilities of doing research.

NEWS



Pedestrian-friendly walkways, parks, landmarks and views make these urban centers the best for exploring on foot.

As any traveler worth their Nikes knows, to walk around a city is to experience its true **essence**—its soul, if you will. “Your brain functions quite differently when you walk,” says Scott Bricker, director of America Walks, a national nonprofit dedicated to

promoting the health benefits of putting one foot in front of the other. “It’s good for your health, both physical and mental, and good for your fellow man, because you engage with the community you’re walking among.”

Pretty much any city can be experienced on foot, as the **hordes** of **multilingual** tour groups **thronging** the European capitals will **attest**. But what is it exactly that makes a city perfect for strolling? Is it a certain sort of **pedestrian-friendly** urban design? The **streetscapes** themselves, with their distinctive architecture and attractions? The climate? The warmth and vibrancy of the residents? Or is it perhaps something more **ephemeral**?

Essence =	the most important part of something
Hordes =	groups of people
Multilingual =	speaking many different languages
Thronging =	forming a crowd
Attest =	to give proof, to be evidence of sth
Pedestrian-friendly =	good for people going on foot
Streetscapes =	city views
Ephemeral =	lasting only for a short time

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex. 1

1. True
2. True
3. True
4. False
5. False

Ex. 2

All possible words used for reinforcing.

Ex. 3

1. turnout
2. go ahead
3. pave the way for