



## Unit 7 Cities

Urban planning: Urban regeneration – a case study

Reading skills: Following a narrative

Writing skills: Writing a case study narrative

### 1 SPEAKING

- a**  Tell your partner about your favourite parts of the city, town or village where you live. Say why you like them.
- b** Think about changes that have been made to a city, town or village you know (it doesn't have to be where you live).
- 1 What kind of changes were made?
  - 2 Do you like these changes? Why / Why not?
  - 3 How have people living in that place reacted to the changes?
-  Tell your partner about the changes.

### 2 VOCABULARY Word families

- a** Match the words in bold to the meanings a–f.
- 1 ☐ Her family **moved** from a small town to the city about five years ago.
  - 2 ☐ They bought an old cottage and **renovated** it so the inside is modern and comfortable.
  - 3 ☐ I don't like living in the city centre – it's much quieter living in a **suburb**.
  - 4 ☐ He **commutes** by train to work and it takes about 45 minutes.
  - 5 ☐ She **donated** £50 of her monthly salary to the charity Save the Children.
  - 6 ☐ A big crowd of people **protested** against an increase in university fees.
- a repair and improve a building  
b an area on the edge of a city or larger town where people live  
c give money to help people or an organisation  
d show you disagree by standing somewhere, shouting and carrying signs  
e make a daily journey from home to work and back again  
f change the place where you live

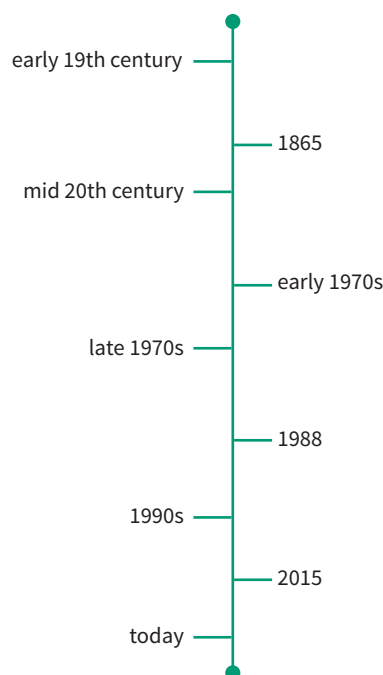
Which word is a different part of speech from the others?

- b** Use a dictionary to find different parts of speech. Does the meaning change?
- 1 Find nouns for these verbs: *move*, *renovate*, *donate*
  - 2 Find nouns that refer to a person for these verbs: *commute*, *protest*
  - 3 Find an adjective for this noun: *suburb*

### 3 READING

- a** Read the introduction to a case study on page 2 about changes in American cities in the 1950s. Answer the questions.
- 1 What was the change?
  - 2 What was the reason for the change?
  - 3 What was the result of the change?
  - 4 What happened 30 years later?
- b** Read the case study about a part of central New Orleans. How often has there been urban regeneration in the Lower Garden District?
- a once                      b twice                      c three times

- c** Read the text again. Add events to the timeline.



#### STUDY SKILLS: DIFFERENT WAYS OF TAKING NOTES

- 1 In 3c you made notes on a timeline. What kind of text is a timeline useful for?
- 2 What are other ways of taking notes?
- 3 How can you decide which is the best way of taking notes when you read?

#### CRITICAL THINKING INFERRING INFORMATION

Discuss the questions. Read the text again to help you.

- 1 Apart from bringing an area back to life, what are other benefits of urban regeneration?
- 2 What are some of the challenges?

## Urban regeneration

After World War II, there was dramatic change in the urban plan of many cities in the US with the movement of people from the city centre to the suburbs. People felt the suburbs would provide a better quality of life with larger houses with gardens. Improved public transport as well as an increase in the production of cars meant that those who moved to the suburbs could commute to

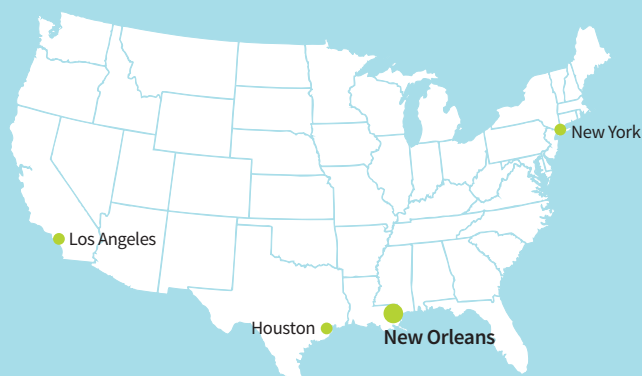
work in the city centre easily. As a result, houses and apartments in central cities were often left empty and they went into decline. However, in the 1980s, younger people who had grown up in the suburbs began to move back into city centres to live in and repair old buildings. This led to what is known as urban regeneration, a process of bringing central city housing back to life.

### Case study: The Lower Garden District, New Orleans

This was once a part of central New Orleans where wealthy people lived. It was built in the early part of the nineteenth century around a large park. **After** the end of the American Civil War **in 1865**, the area began to decline and by the middle of the twentieth century it had become a poor part of town. In the 1970s, a new bridge over the Mississippi River was planned which would have meant dividing the Lower Garden District and preventing people living there from getting to the park. Many old houses were bought and then repaired in order to save them. At the same time, there were protests against the building of the bridge. Together the new home owners and the protestors were successful and the plan to build the bridge was dropped. However, after that, people left the area again and it went into decline once more.

More than ten years later in 1988, a local housing organisation developed a plan to try and save the Lower Garden District and bring it back to life. To begin with, they found people who wanted to buy the houses and supported them while they repaired and renovated the houses. The next step was to ask architects and companies to donate their time and materials to help with the repairs. Finally, the owners paid a fair price to buy their houses. After that, the area came alive again and restaurants, shops and small businesses opened up.

In 2005, all of New Orleans was badly damaged by Hurricane Katrina and there was heavy flooding in large parts of the city. The Lower Garden District was not badly damaged by the hurricane and remained dry afterwards. This meant the process of regeneration has continued and is on-going today. It is still possible to find an inexpensive house or apartment in the Lower Garden District and repair it. It is a beautiful part of New Orleans with fascinating architecture and a rich cultural history.





## 4 LANGUAGE FOCUS Time expressions

**a** Notice the two time expressions in bold in the first paragraph. Underline more words and expressions like this in the case study.

**b** Some of the words and expressions show *when things happened*. Others show *steps in a process*. Put the words and expressions in the correct box according to how they are used in the text. Which expression can go in both boxes?

when things happened	steps in a process
after in 1865	to begin with

**c** Find the time words and expressions in sentences 1–5 and put them in the correct box in 5b. One can go in both boxes and one sentence contains two expressions.

- First of all, the city council decided which land could be used to build new houses.
- Small pieces of land were sold to young families. Meanwhile, the council built new roads so this new part of town could be reached easily.
- The first street of new houses was completed in 1958 then families began to move in.
- The last family moved into the new suburb in 1961. At this point, house prices there were very high.
- In the end, the suburb was pulled down to make room for a new motorway in the 1990s.

**d** Answer the questions about the expressions in 4b and 4c.

- When we use the expression *after that*, does *that* refer to a thing or an event?
- When you want to talk about a decade (e.g. 1990 to 1999), what do you need to remember to include before the years?
- Match these two words/expressions to the correct meaning:
  - in the end
  - finally
  - this in the final point in a list
  - this is the last thing that happened



Christchurch, New Zealand

**e** Complete the paragraph about urban regeneration after an earthquake. Add the expressions in the box to gaps 1–5.

at this point	after that	in 2012	at the same time
six years	the first step	in 2013	

1 \_\_\_\_\_ the government and local construction businesses signed an agreement to rebuild the city of Christchurch in New Zealand which was badly damaged by an earthquake a year earlier in February 2011. Before signing the agreement, a lot of work was already completed. 2 \_\_\_\_\_ was to clear large parts of the city. Many buildings had to be pulled down. It was also very important to get the city working again so, 3 \_\_\_\_\_, workmen repaired key services such as electricity, water and roads. 4 \_\_\_\_\_, work began on repairing houses and building new ones. 5 \_\_\_\_\_, two years after the earthquake, development of the centre of the city area got underway with the renovation of the historic arts centre buildings and the creation of parks and play areas for children. 6 \_\_\_\_\_ some major hotels also began to reopen to try and encourage tourists to return to Christchurch. Exactly 7 \_\_\_\_\_ after the earthquake in 2017, a memorial with trees and a special wall was opened beside the Avon River in central Christchurch.

## 5 WRITING

**a** The notes below are about two apartment buildings in a neighbourhood. Imagine it is your neighbourhood and use the notes to write a case study. Work in pairs and discuss how you can turn the notes into sentences and use different time expressions.

- were built in 1960s by city council – many people move from the country to the city
- each apartment two small bedrooms – not big enough for large family
- 1980s many families moved out – too small
- both buildings decline – poor and unemployed people moved in
- 1990s many students rented apartments
- rents cheap – neighbourhood near university
- many students renovated apartments – stayed after they left university
- they turned two bedrooms to one big bedroom – painted everything
- improve(d) kitchen and bathroom – apartments felt bigger – looked more modern
- many students bought apartments from city council
- now apartments very popular – more expensive to buy

**b** Write your case study. Use some of the time expressions from the Language focus. Begin with this sentence:

*In my neighbourhood, there are two apartment buildings where small families used to live, but for many years they were in very bad condition.*

**c** Compare your case study with another student. Have you used time expressions in the same way?

## 6 READING EXTENSION

- a Think about the sounds you hear in a city today. Compare these with the sounds people heard 150 years ago. What are the differences?
- b Read *Sounds of the city*. Does it mention any of your ideas?
- c Read the text again and complete the notes.

### Typical sounds

- today: \_\_\_\_\_
- in the past: \_\_\_\_\_

### Understanding sounds in the past

- thunder: \_\_\_\_\_
- church bells: \_\_\_\_\_
- sound of horses: \_\_\_\_\_
- famous people: \_\_\_\_\_

### Recent studies

- Bailey (1996): \_\_\_\_\_
- Corbin (2000): \_\_\_\_\_

### Information/messages:

- in the past: \_\_\_\_\_
- today: \_\_\_\_\_

- d Which is the best summary of the text?

- 1 In the past, cities were full of different sounds than they are today. Furthermore, people understood those sounds in a different way than we do and also reacted to them very differently. This is similar to the way we now have an alternative understanding of what people said in the past. There has been more research on the role of sounds in cities and towns of the past and the way in which they were used for communication.
- 2 In general, cities in the past were a bit noisier than cities of the present because there were horses and carriages everywhere and bells were often ringing. These sounds were often very frightening for people who lived in cities. It was more common for rich people to use horses and carriages that made a lot of noise for poorer people. Recent studies have looked at the way noise created problems in the past and the role of bells in the French Revolution. With the arrival of radio and television, sounds have become less important in cities.

# Sounds of the city

Cities have always been noisy places. However, on the whole, urban historians have paid little attention to urban sound. They have often assumed that even if the sounds themselves were different, the role they played was similar. Therefore, the sounds of horses and carriages were similar to today's traffic noise; the bells of early modern cities were like today's alarm clocks or school bells. In a certain sense this is true, but in the same way that people in the past interpreted their visual world differently than we do, they also experienced sound in a different way. For example, it is difficult for us to understand just how frightening the sound of thunder must have been for them, particularly when they did not understand what caused it. Likewise, it is not easy to know exactly how they felt when they heard very loud church bells, which caused some people to have a physical reaction almost like falling down.

Even when sounds are similar to those in the past, we usually have a completely different understanding of them. Today, when we hear the sound of a horse, we may think of long, silk dresses and formal clothes for men, in other words, we think of the lives of wealthy people. However, in the past, there were horses everywhere and people did not automatically think of beautiful clothes and an elegant lifestyle. Even when we hear recordings of famous people from the past, they do not have the same effect on us as they had on their original audience. We may hear the same words, spoken in the same way, but we understand those words in a very different way in the present.

Recently, there have been an increasing number of studies that focus on the role of urban sound in history. Bailey (1996) has looked at the changing idea of 'noise', in other words, sound that had no meaning or was unwanted. He suggested that different understandings of what was sound and what was noise changed as modern mass societies grew. Corbin (2000) studied the history of bells in the French countryside of the nineteenth century. He looks at different roles they played as signs of local identity as well as symbols of authority and resistance. He shows the way in which bell sounds had a political role in that society. People who lived in European towns and cities in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries understood sounds in very specific ways. These societies had no radio or television so often these sounds were a way of carrying information and messages to people. Sounds played an important part in the way people experienced the social world of a city and went about their daily lives.

