

City Vocabulary Teacher's Notes – by Lindsay Clandfield

Level: Intermediate +

Aims: Students learn fifteen items of city lexis. They play a speaking game that extends their city vocabulary as well as giving them opportunity for speaking practice using the vocabulary they have learnt. The optional cultural aim of this lesson is to make students aware of some of the landmarks of three famous American cities.

Note: This lesson first appeared in August. The game is therefore called Summer in the City and is intended as a fun activity ideal for summer courses. It can be used at any time of year.

Warmer

Spell out the following words to your students. After you have spelled all four, ask them what they have in common:

N-E-W-Y-O-R-K, W-A-S-H-I-N-G-T-O-N, C-H-I-C-A-G-O, S-A-N-F-R-A-N-C-I-S-C-O
They are all cities! Today's vocabulary lesson will be on city vocabulary.

Wordsearch

Set the wordsearch for your students. The words can go in any direction and can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal. On the worksheet the words have been provided. If you think that makes it too easy, see *alternative procedure ii*

Alternative procedure: Photocopy the wordsearch onto a transparency and project it onto a whiteboard with an OHP. When a student sees a word, he/she should shout "I've found one!" and can then circle it on the paper or on the board.

Alternative procedure ii: Copy the wordsearch but cut out the words. Give students the first and last letters of the words and a clue to what they are (see below for examples)

C----H (noun, a place)
D-----D (adj)
D-----N (noun)
D-----E (noun, a place)
H----C (adj)
etc.

Categories and Writing

Set #2 for students to do alone and feedback the answers. Clarify any words that the students don't know. Then do #3, which could be set either for homework or done as a collaborative writing task in groups.

Answers: a) places in a city: CHURCH, HOSPITAL, DRUGSTORE, SHOPPINGMALL, TOWNHALL b) parts of a city: PROJECTS (from HOUSING PROJECT), DOWNTOWN, SUBURBS, UPTOWN c) adjectives to describe a city: DESERTED, HECTIC, HISTORIC, PACKED, RUNDOWN, SPACIOUS

Summer in the City Game

Go through the instructions with the students. For larger groups, students can play in pairs. For very large groups, make a copy of the task sheet and assign students the roles of giving the tasks. Circulate and help.

NOTE: Teachers should adapt these tasks to suit their students' level and background. If you want to play for more than one tour around the board, you can write some more questions for each section.

Summer in the City Task Sheet – Intermediate + Tasks

DESCRIBE: For these tasks, the student must describe one of the following:

- a famous site in their country
- a local attraction or festival in their city
- the rich or poor parts of the city/town they are from.
- their route to school or work (what they drive/walk past)

A TOURIST ASKS... For these tasks, set the student a mini roleplay. Tell them to imagine they are in a city they know well and you are the tourist (you can assign the tourist role to another student if you like). The tourist asks them a question, or questions and they must respond. Note: To make it more authentic, the tourist should preface the question with “Excuse me, do you speak English?” Here are some examples:

- A tourist asks you to take their picture in front of a monument. They have a very complicated camera!
- A tourist is lost. He/She asks you the way.
- A tourist tells you “I’ve been robbed! What can I do?”.
- A tourist wants to see the “real” city, not just the tourist parts.

TELL US THREE THINGS YOU FIND: For these tasks, the student must name at least three things they find in the following places.

- in the Town Hall
- in a drugstore
- in a hospital
- in a church

NAME THAT CITY! There are four ways of doing these tasks. 1) Use the descriptions below of famous American cities. Read out the description and they have to guess the city 2) Invent descriptions of famous cities yourself or 3) ask students to describe a city and the others identify it and finally 4) play the capitals game: every other student in the group challenges the student on the square to name the capital of a different country!

Sample city descriptions:

- This is a very big city in the north of the USA. It is famous for many of its buildings, including the Capitol, the Pentagon and the Lincoln Memorial and the White House. The government of the United States is here. The President lives here. It is in the District of Columbia, also known as DC. (Washington)
- This city is also called the Big Apple and it is home to Broadway, the Statue of Liberty and Wall Street. It is famous for its big skyscrapers. (New York)
- This city is on the Pacific coast of the United States. It is very big. Many film stars live there. It is famous for Sunset Boulevard and Hollywood. One of the rich areas of this city is called Beverly Hills. It has a Spanish name (Los Angeles).

EITHER, OR, BOTH. For these tasks, the student must state their preference for one thing or another and say why. If they have no preference (they like or hate both) they must still give reasons.

When you are in a city, which do you prefer...

- Public transport or travelling by car?
- Shopping or sightseeing when you visit a city?
- Going to a restaurant or having a picnic in a city park?
- Living in the city or living in the country?
- Living downtown or in the suburbs?