Lesson Plan © Easy Access English

Urban planning

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Modal verbs, listening comprehension, reading comprehension



Activity one: **Questions and answers**

With your teacher or a partner, ask and answer the questions below

1. What do you think of the building designs in France?
2, Do you think that every city is different?
3, How would you describe the building design in Montpellier?
4, If you could design your own home, how would you design it?
5, Which city in France is your favourite for design?



Activity two: **Modal verbs**

What is a modal verb? How can we use them?

We use modal verbs to show if we believe something is certain, probable or possible. We also use modals to do things like talking about ability, asking permission making requests and offers, and so on. "Can" is one of the most commonly used modal verbs in English. It can be used to express ability or opportunity, to request or offer permission, and to show possibility or impossibility.

There are some special rules about modal verbs which you should remember:
1: They don't use an 's' for the third person singular.
2: They make questions by inversion ('she can go' becomes 'can she go?').
3: They are followed directly by the infinitive of another verb (without 'to').

Can you categorise the different phrasal verbs?

Activity three: **Identify**

Underline the modal verbs in the text below.

Eventually, a high-speed rail network may connect the entire Pacific spine. America's northeastern megalopolis begins in Boston through New York and Philadelphia to Washington.

We've changed all our light bulbs to energy-savers, and you should do the same thing, but changing all your light bulbs to energy-savers would save as much energy in a year as moving to a walkable city would do in a week.

But what if lifestyle was really about quality of life and about perhaps something that we would all enjoy more, something that could be better than what we have right now?

And every city has its own design. But to make it happen, sometimes you have to propose a scenario and to propose a design -- an idea that everyone, or the large majority, will help you to make it happen. I thought, if I could answer those questions, I could make a huge contribution to my city.

Activity four: **Gap fill**

Choose the correct gaps and enter the modal verb 'should' twice into this paragraph.

We are becoming this global network civilization because we _____ literally building it. Global infrastructure spending _____ rise to nine trillion dollars per year within the coming decade. We _____ been living off an infrastructure stock meant for a world population of three billion, as our population _____ crossed seven billion to eight billion and eventually nine billion and more. As a rule of thumb, we _____ spend about one trillion dollars on the basic infrastructure needs of every billion people in the world.



Choose the correct modal verb from the list to fill the gaps in this paragraph.

Should, could, may, might, shall, would, must

So, imagine if our global diplomatic institutions, such as the G20, were to base their membership on economic size rather than national representation. Some Chinese megacities _____ be in and have a seat at the table, while entire countries, like Argentina or Indonesia _____ be out.

By 2030, more than two thirds of the world's population _____ live in cities. There's 7.3 billion people in the world today; there _____ be 9.6 billion by 2050. But consider this one fact: In the 1800s, one in 30 people lived in cities, today it's one in two, and tomorrow virtually everyone _____ be there.



Activity five: **Discussion**

With a partner or your teacher ask and answer, using modal verbs to explain your answers.

1. Describe what a fully sustainable town would look like.
2. What would the world be like in 2050 if there were no more cities?
3. What would cause the end of urban sprawl?
4. What would a 'walkable' city look like, that had no cars?
5. If you were asked to plan new infrastructures to encourage people to live outside of cities and to use public transport to commute, what would you suggest?

Activity six: **Watch the video (first 3 minutes) and answer the comprehension questions below to revise both past tenses and modal verbs.**

https://www.ted.com/talks/kent_larson_brilliant_designs_to_fit_more_people_in_every_city?referrer=playlist-our_future_in_cities

1. What did people used to try to live close to when settlements began?
2. What would you see if you fly over Germany?
3. Where was daily life centred for hundreds, even thousands, of years?
4. What era began that changed the way cities and towns were laid out?
5. What was the preferred form of transport?
6. What is a 'tower sprawl' and where does it exist?
7. Which areas are people choosing to move to in China?
8. What needs to be built in China over the next 15 years?
9. How much of the global CO2 do cities account for?
10. What two features of cities does he give as reasons why people often want to live in them?



Activity seven: **Reading comprehension**
Read the extract below and answer the comprehension questions

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_urban_planning)

Reaction against modernism

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, many planners felt that modernism's clean lines and lack of human scale sapped vitality from the community, blaming them for high crime rates and social problems.

Modernist planning fell into decline in the 1970s when the construction of cheap, uniform tower blocks ended in most countries, such as Britain and France. Since then many have been demolished and replaced by other housing types. Rather than attempting to eliminate all disorder, planning now concentrates on individualism and diversity in society and the economy; this is the post-modernist era.

Minimally planned cities still exist. Houston is a large city (with a metropolitan population of 5.5 million) in a developed country without a comprehensive zoning ordinance. Houston does, however, restrict development densities and mandate parking, even though specific land uses are not regulated. Also, private-sector developers in Houston use subdivision covenants and deed restrictions to effect land-use restrictions resembling zoning laws. Houston voters have rejected comprehensive zoning ordinances three times since 1948

Comprehension questions:

1. What sapped vitality from the community?
2. When did modernist planning start to decline?
3. What kind of cities still exist?
4. What does Huston restrict
5. What is a zoning ordinance?



Activity eight: **Role plays**
In the role-plays below, try and use as many modal verbs as you can. Work in pairs and while your partner is talking, you must count the number of modal verbs that they use. See who can use the most!

PERSON A is an interviewer for job in big urban planning company. Asking
PERSON B about their portfolio, plans for creating new sustainable urban spaces, about their inspiration etc.

PERSON A is a Mum of 3, looking for a new house in a big city.
PERSON B is an estate agent, trying to persuade them of the advantages of moving to the suburbs.

PERSON A is an investor, wanting to know about the advantages of investing in a new town planning project, a housing estate with lots of facilities and links to the inner city and suburbs.
PERSON B is the project manager, trying to encourage the investor to buy shares.

