

The Fifteen-Minute Neighbourhood

B1 | Adults / Teens | Reading + Vocabulary + Discussion | 50-60 minutes

BEFORE YOU READ

Talk with a partner. How far do you travel for food, school, work or exercise? What would make your neighbourhood easier to live in?

1. Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (A-F).

- | | | |
|------------------|-------|--|
| 1. neighbourhood | _____ | A. something considered more important than other things |
| 2. access | _____ | B. make something less |
| 3. facility | _____ | C. the ability to reach or use something |
| 4. convenient | _____ | D. easy and useful for a situation |
| 5. reduce | _____ | E. the area where people live near one another |
| 6. priority | _____ | F. a place or service designed for a particular purpose |

2. Read the article. The bold words are the vocabulary from Activity 1.

1. Imagine living in a **neighbourhood** where you can reach most daily needs within fifteen minutes on foot or by bicycle. You can buy food, visit a doctor, take a child to school, exercise and meet friends without a long car journey. This is the basic idea behind the fifteen-minute neighbourhood.

2. The idea does not mean that every street needs every service. Instead, city planners try to give people better **access** to useful places close to home. A small park, a local shop, a bus stop and a sports **facility** may be more important to daily life than one large shopping centre far away.

3. Supporters say this kind of planning can make cities more **convenient** and less stressful. If people can walk or cycle for short trips, it may also **reduce** traffic, noise and air pollution. Local businesses may benefit when more residents spend time in the area rather than travelling elsewhere.

4. However, not every neighbourhood begins with the same advantages. Some areas already have many services, while others have few shops, poor transport or unsafe streets. Building new facilities costs money, and residents may disagree about what should be the first **priority**. A new park may be popular, for example, but a health clinic may be more urgently needed.

5. The fifteen-minute neighbourhood is not a rule that forces people to stay close to home. People can still travel across a city for work, culture or family. The goal is simply to give people more choices in their everyday lives. For many residents, a shorter journey to a useful place can make a surprisingly big difference.

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UNDERSTAND, DISCUSS AND WRITE

3. Comprehension. Answer in complete sentences. Use the article to help you.

1. What is the central idea of a fifteen-minute neighbourhood?

2. What does the article say the idea does not mean?

3. How could this kind of planning reduce pollution?

4. Why might different neighbourhoods need different plans?

5. What is the goal of the idea according to the final paragraph?

4. Discuss. Talk in small groups. Give reasons and examples.

- What is missing from your neighbourhood?
- Which local facility should receive money first: a park, a clinic, a library or public transport?
- Would people walk or cycle more if streets were safer?
- Can a neighbourhood be convenient without being expensive?

5. Homework: Write an opinion paragraph.

Write 120-150 words describing one improvement for your neighbourhood. Explain the problem, your proposed facility or service, and how it would help local people.

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ANSWER KEY AND TEACHING NOTE

Vocabulary matching

1. neighbourhood - E
2. access - C
3. facility - F
4. convenient - D
5. reduce - B
6. priority - A

Comprehension answers

1. What is the central idea of a fifteen-minute neighbourhood?

It is an area where people can reach many daily needs within fifteen minutes on foot or by bicycle.

2. What does the article say the idea does not mean?

It does not mean that every street must have every possible service.

3. How could this kind of planning reduce pollution?

People may walk or cycle for short trips instead of using cars.

4. Why might different neighbourhoods need different plans?

They have different services, transport, safety and local needs.

5. What is the goal of the idea according to the final paragraph?

The goal is to give people more choices and make everyday journeys shorter and easier.

Teaching note

Compare vocabulary answers before reading. Help learners plan a neighbourhood improvement: a problem, a proposed service and benefits. Accept accurate comprehension paraphrases and supported personal responses.