

9B Megacities

1 READING

a Read the article quickly and choose the word that best describes Shanghai, according to the writer.

- a dangerous b stimulating c modern d polluted

b Read the article again and choose the correct answers.

1 Puxi and Pudong are...

- a two cities near Shanghai.
b two districts of Shanghai.
c two rivers crossing Shanghai.
d two people from Shanghai.

2 The residents of Shanghai often go outside because...

- a they don't have enough space at home.
b the weather is always fine.
c the food stalls sell good food.
d they need fresh air to do their hobbies.

3 The roads of Shanghai are dangerous because...

- a there are no traffic lights.
b drivers do not obey the rules.
c there is too much traffic.
d pedestrians do not use the crossings.

4 Tourists visiting Shanghai should always...

- a use public transport.
b travel with a guide.
c avoid talking to strangers.
d be careful when they arrive.

5 According to the writer, Shanghai is special because it has...

- a a lot of historical monuments.
b an excellent public transport system.
c a mixture of different things to see and do.
d the best hotels in the country.

c Look at the highlighted words and phrases in the text. What do you think they mean? Use your dictionary to look up their meaning and pronunciation.

Shanghai

with a population of around 23.5 million, is currently the fifth of the world's megacities. Its location on the mouth of the Yangtze River Delta in eastern China makes it one of the busiest ports in the world. The Huang Pu River, a tributary of the Yangtze, separates the historic centre of the city, the Puxi area, from the newly-developed financial and commercial area called Pudong.

On their arrival in Shanghai, visitors are hit by an explosion of sights, sounds and smells. Rents are high, and apartments tiny, so most residents prefer to hang out outside. The street is a place to eat, play, read and relax and it is not unusual to see people strolling around in their nightdresses and pyjamas. The street serves as an extension of the workplace as well. Hairdressers sit their customers on chairs outside their salons to cut their hair, and there are food stalls on every street corner piled high with delicious steamed buns filled with meat, vegetables or mushrooms.

However, it is not only the pavement that is crowded. Despite the extensive metro system – Shanghai has the third longest network in the world – the traffic in the city is terrible. During the rush hour, it can take two hours to drive a 30-minute route. In general, drivers do not like to follow the rules of the road, and they regularly ignore speed limits and traffic lights. This makes crossing the road extremely hazardous for pedestrians, whose safety is not guaranteed even when the green man is showing. In China, road accidents are the major cause of death for people aged between 15 and 45, with an estimated 600 traffic deaths per day.

But as far as crime is concerned, Shanghai is a relatively safe city. You rarely hear of crimes being committed, although pickpockets are known to operate in crowded areas and tourists are sometimes the target for scams. The most common of these consist of unofficial taxi drivers overcharging passengers for the ride to their hotel from the airport, or bar owners getting an accomplice to bring an unsuspecting tourist to their bar only to present him with a terribly high bill when he tries to leave. In general, however, the Chinese are very friendly to foreigners and they treat them with a lot of respect. Non-native residents usually become good friends with their Chinese neighbours, once they have got used to each other.

The city of Shanghai offers a fusion of East and West; old and new. Visitors staying at the brand new five-star Ritz Carlton Hotel can explore the ancient Buddhist temples when they go sightseeing. Passengers travel on the Shanghai Meglev, the fastest train in the world, while messengers transport impossible loads on their bicycles. Sometimes, the contrasts can be exhausting, but one thing is certain: Shanghai is a city where nobody ever feels bored.

