

LANGUAGE OF PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Give synonyms of the word *problem*

diff.....                      set...                      hur.....                      obs ...                      iss...

Combine the nouns with adjectives:

minor                      major                      unresolved                      burning                      key

**Collocations with verbs**

do	... your best // ... more harm than good // ... the right thing
make	... a suggestion //... a proposal //... a mistake // ... an effort // ... sure // ... do with
take	... notice of // ...part in // ...a chance // ... risks

- Which group of verbs collocates with “A PROBLEM” and with “A SOLUTION”?

have, experience, pose

face, discuss, deal with, tackle, address

alleviate, mitigate

exacerbate, aggravate

solve, sort out, settle, resolve

put forward , work towards

work out

propose , arrive at , come up with

**Collocations with nouns**

Difficulties	encounter difficulties
Hurdles	overcome hurdles
Threat	pose a threat
Risk	carry a risk, minimize a risk

Emergency	respond to an emergency
Progress	hinder progress
Proposition	express a proposition
Error	spot an error

Advanced English Collocations in Use, CUP, 2008

Use three or more of the phrases above to describe an example of your difficulties.

**CITIES - warm up:**

- Which city do like, either in your country or abroad? Why do you like it?
- Are there any aspects of city life in general that you feel as negative?



## 1. Discuss your opinions on the role of cities in sustainable development

Background reading <http://www.bu.edu/pardee/files/2010/04/UNsdpk004fsingle.pdf>

Key terms: *population density* *carbon footprint* *sustainable development*

- Does the high population density in cities bring more problems or more advantages? Give examples.
- In cities there is a better quality of life than in rural regions. However, this is connected with producing carbon footprint. In your opinion, can high quality of life be combined with low carbon footprint?
- Do cities represent a problem or a solution in sustainable development? What is your idea of an ideal city?

## 2. Improving life in cities – an example from Brazil [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porto\\_Alegre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porto_Alegre) Participatory budgeting in the city of Porto Alegre

vocabulary: *budget* *amenities* *expenses* *implement* *mayor* *sewer*

1. What kind of problem does participatory budgeting react to?
2. How does participatory budgeting work?
3. What percentage of residents took part in the process?
4. Do you think it has brought significant improvements?



Porto Alegre City Hall

A feature of public administration in Porto Alegre is the adoption of a system of popular participation in the definition of public investment, called the Participatory Budget. The first full participatory budgeting process was developed in the city starting in 1989. It was part of a number of innovative reform programs to overcome severe inequality in living standards amongst city residents. One third of the city's residents lived in isolated slums at the city outskirts, lacking access to public amenities (water, sanitation, health care facilities, and schools).

Participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre has occurred annually, starting with a series of neighborhood, regional, and citywide assemblies, where residents and elected budget delegates identify spending priorities and vote on which priorities to implement. Porto Alegre spent about 200 million dollars per year on construction and services. This money is subject to participatory budgeting, unlike the annual spending on fixed expenses such as debt service and pensions, which is not subject to public participation. Around fifty thousand residents of Porto Alegre took part at the peak of the participatory budgeting process (compared to 1.5 million city inhabitants), with the number of participants having grown year on year since 1989. Participants are from diverse economic and political backgrounds. Although participatory budgeting appears to continue in the city today, two prominent scholars on the process have stated that "after the defeat of the Workers' Party in late 2004, a politically conservative coalition maintained the surface features of PB while returning the actual functioning of the administration to more traditional modes of favor-trading and the favoring of local elites."

The participatory budgeting cycle starts in January and runs throughout the year in many assemblies in each of the city's 16 districts, dealing with many areas of interest to urban life. The meetings elect delegates to represent specific neighborhoods. The mayor and staff attend, in order to respond to citizens' concerns. In the following months, delegates meet to review technical project criteria and district needs.

A World Bank paper suggests that participatory budgeting has led to direct improvements in facilities in Porto Alegre. For example, sewer and water connections increased from 75% of households in 1988 to 98% in 1997. Also, Porto Alegre's health and education budget increased from 13% (1985) to almost 40% (1996). The number of schools quadrupled since 1986. According to Fedozzi and Costa, this system has been recognized as a successful experience of interaction between people and the official administrative spheres in public administration and, as such, has gained a broad impact on the political scene nationally and internationally.

### **3.Role-play: Consider the situations and be prepared to explain your suggestions and reasons.**

A: Your task is to build a new urban district with as low carbon footprint as possible.

- Which functions will the place have? Think about a plan of the district and draw it on paper.
- What kind of buildings will you design?
- What energy sources will you count with?
- What technical and social infrastructure will you build?

B: You are a volunteer consultant for improving living conditions in slum areas in poor cities.

- What are your priorities for improvement?
- What technical solutions do you propose?
- Are you going to collaborate with anyone?
- Where will you get money for your plans?

### **4. Case studies**

Do you know any examples of cities / districts

- where energy demands have been lessened?
- where slum conditions have been improved?

Work in pairs A and B – each of you will be given a different text. Read your text and report the key information to each other.

Questions for text A

1. What energy does the district use for heating and electricity?
2. What construction solutions have been adopted?
3. What strategy for saving water is there?
4. What kind of transport facilities is provided?
5. What evidence of lowering carbon footprint is there?
6. Are there any failures?
7. How eco-friendly is the project compared to an average UK settlement?

Questions for text B

1. How long has Slum Dwellers International been working?
2. What achievements has SDI made?
3. Who participates in the development of the strategies?
4. What kind of groups have been formed in slums?
5. Who are the 'managers' in these groups and why?
6. Where do the groups get money from and how do they use them?
7. What other activities are there and how do they help?

Do these cases implement any of the propositions you've made as consultants?

### **VIDEOS**

BedZED sustainable housing development

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00nxNfsxz\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00nxNfsxz_k)

Slum Dwellers International

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxJsgOF8CIc>

## REVISION

Expressions from Slum Dwellers International find these phrases in the text.

1. Vyvinout veškeré úsilí
2. Poskytnout řešení
3. Formulovat jaké problémy existují
4. Budou se řešit nezbytné potřeby
5. Dát najevo rozhořčení
6. Univerzální přístup

Complete the sentences describing **Beddington Zero Energy Development**. Use passives.

*choose delay design highlight produce use*

1. The project ..... to use only energy from renewable sources generated on site.
2. The gasifier ..... at the moment, because of technical implementation problems.
3. Appliances ..... to be water-efficient.
4. In 2003, 11% of electricity ..... by solar panels.
5. The remainder normally would be produced by a wood chip plant but its use .....
6. In 2010, a few significant failures .....

## Exam practice

**Cycling: Complete the text using the noun clauses**

- A that traffic patterns will shift for the better
- B that cycling brings many benefits to a country or city
- C that the numbers speak for themselves
- D that cycling can be advantageous for the city
- E that cyclists run a heightened risk of accidents
- F that treating the physical trauma (broken bones, etc.) bears a cost of its own

The proposition 1 \_\_\_\_ can be measured financially. It is a fact 2 \_\_\_\_, and from this it follows 3 \_\_\_\_ . However, on balance, regular cyclists live longer than people who have a sedentary lifestyle. Another benefit to the community is the likelihood 4 \_\_\_\_ . In other words, when a critical mass of workers commutes by bicycle, this lowers the number of cars on the road at rush hours. Mayors and councillors all over the world are coming to the conclusion 5 \_\_\_\_ and therefore 6 \_\_\_\_ .

Source - Oxford Grammar for EAP, K. Patterson, OUP, 3013 Key 1b 2e 3f 4a 5c 6d