

MEGALOPOLIS

A. Reading

Discourse Structure

In this section you are given a text to read. You should first read it through, even if you do not understand it all. Looking at special to the way it is set out in paragraphs. This will give you a general idea what it is about and how it is arranged.

Megalopolis

To the north of Hong Kong, the world's biggest city is growing. It hasn't got a new name yet, but it will probably be called Pearl River City. Jonathan Glancey visits this ugly, exciting mess.



Shenzhen

The town of Shenzhen, just forty kilometres north of Hong Kong, is the world's biggest building site. In 1982 it was a fishing village with two main roads, fields, a population of 30,000. Now it has a population of 3 million. It is growing at an incredible speed. It is spreading north toward Guangzhou (also known as Canton) and west toward Macau. The Chinese government hopes that in less than ten years this area will be the biggest city on earth, with a population of 40 million people.

China is changing. It is no longer a country where everything is owned and controlled by the state. Developers are welcomed. As Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader, said in 1992, 'To get rich is glorious'. The old China of bicycles and little red books are disappearing. A world of mobile phones and capitalism is arriving.

The Chinese people seem to welcome dramatic change. They don't worry about losing traditional ways of life. They want the new. As the posters on the sides of the highway shout, 'Development is the only way.'

Shenzhen is a shocking place. Like nowhere else on earth that I have ever seen. It is a city with no boundaries and no centre. There are new concrete office blocks, factories, and housing blocks as far as the eye can see. Not just dozens of new buildings, nor even hundreds, but thousands. And it is all happening so fast. It takes just six months to design, build, and finish a 60-storey, air conditioned skyscraper. As one architect said to me, 'If you move to slowly here, someone will walk over you.'

The new Hopewell highway runs from Shenzhen to Guangzhou, and it takes just two hours to do the 123 kilometres. This super highway will become the main street of a huge new city, as it gets bigger and bigger until the east meets the west, and the countryside in the middle disappears under concrete.

There will of course be more and more cars on the road. People don't want bicycles. If you have a car, it means you have made money. So the traffic will be like in Bangkok, where people spend four hours commuting every day. People eat and work in their car.

Pearl River City very nearly exists. It will probably be the world's First City, the greatest city on earth. It won't be beautiful, but its power, energy, and wealth will be felt in all corners of the world.

Taken from: *New Headway English Course Student's Book* (Pre-intermediate)

Exercise

Now read the passage carefully, looking up anything you do not understand, and answer the following questions.

1. What is the meaning of Megalopolis?
2. Where is Shenzhen?
3. Is traditional culture in China still maintained?
4. Why the writer said that Shenzhen is a shocking place?
5. Is it necessary to say that Shenzhen is a jump city?

Topic Sentence and Supporting Sentence

Look at the second paragraph.

China is changing. It is no longer a country where absolutely everything is owned and controlled by the state. Developers are welcomed. As Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader, said in 1992, 'To get rich is glorious'. The old China of bicycles and little red Books are disappearing. A world of mobile phones and capitalism is arriving.

This paragraph consists of six sentences:

1. China is changing.
2. It is no longer a country where absolutely everything is owned and controlled by the state.
3. Developers are welcomed.
4. As Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader, said in 1992, 'To get rich is glorious'.
5. The old China of bicycles and little red Books are disappearing.
A world of mobile phones and capitalism is arriving.

In the theory of discourse structure, a paragraph consists of one *topic sentence* and one or more *supporting sentences*. In the above paragraph sentence 1 is the *topic sentence*. Sentence 2-6 are *supporting sentences*.

Now look back at the reading text above. What are the *topic sentences* for paragraph 1, 3, 4, 5, 6? Where in the paragraph (beginning, middle, and end) do you find the *topic sentence*? What are the *supporting details*?



One generation plants the trees; another gets the shade.

B. Vocabulary

Definitions and Synonyms

It is sometimes necessary for us to define a particular word or expression in a text in order to understand what the text is about. Now explain in your words the meaning of the following words and expressions as used in the text.

- Site (paragraph 1, line 3)
- Population (paragraph 1, line 5)
- Capitalism (paragraph 2, line 4)
- ways of life (paragraph 3, line 2)

In addition, synonyms (word similar in meaning) are very useful to help understand a text. Now, find the expressions in the text which are similar in meaning to the following expressions:

- Village
- Storey
- Concrete
- Road



C. Grammar

Clause and Sentence Structure

The text above consists of some paragraphs and each paragraph consists of some sentences. How many paragraphs are there and how many sentences are there in each paragraph? Again, look at the second paragraph.

China is changing. It is no longer a country where absolutely everything is owned and controlled by the state. Developers are welcomed. As Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader, said in 1992, 'To get rich is glorious'. The old China of bicycles and little red Books are disappearing. A world of mobile phones and capitalism is arriving.

How many sentences does the paragraph have?

Now we are focusing our discussion on sentences. Look at the following sentences

1. China is changing.
2. Developers are welcomed.
3. It won't be beautiful, but its power, energy, and wealth will be felt in all corners of the world.
4. The new Hopewell highway runs from Shenzhen to Guangzhou, and it takes just two hours to do the 123 kilometres.
5. We die if we have no food.
6. If you move too slowly here, someone will walk over you.

The above sentences can be classified into three categories on the basis of the number and type of clauses. Sentences 1 and 2 are simple sentences 3 and 4 are compound sentences, and 5 and 6 are complex sentences.

