

Read the article about green spaces in the city and do the tasks that follow.

### Bringing the countryside into the city centre

*[Student architect Alan Clark talks about parks around the world]*

Most people in the world live in cities. But city life isn't always great – it's often too hot to spend time outside in the summer, there's pollution from traffic and there are signs everywhere saying that people can't ride skateboards or bikes. However, green spaces can bring the countryside into city centres and really make people's lives better.

I played in my local park as a child, but I never thought about how important it was to me. Then, at sixteen, my uncle invited me to stay with him in Valencia during the school holidays and took me to the Jardín del Turia. This amazing park is over seven kilometres long and until 1986 it was just **empty** land after the river flooded the whole city. It now has space for walking, **social** areas for chatting and even a playground for kids. You don't have to pay to use it, so everyone can enjoy it. People who live nearby are healthier and happier and love their city park.

I started reading about other exciting green spaces and found the High Line in New York. This was an old railway line, ten metres above the city, and is now a **colourful** park with flowers and **wild** areas, and amazing views over the city. The city government was worried it would be expensive to build and no one would use it. However, it was popular from day one. As well as New Yorkers, it attracts thousands of tourists, and the money they spend in the city more than pays for it. Local people work with city gardeners to keep it tidy.

The Underpass Park in Toronto is on land under road bridges, which was covered in rubbish before. You don't see it as you drive past, so it's a special, secret place. It's also **peaceful**, as you can't hear the traffic above. Because the road gives it a roof, people can use it in all weather and it's lovely and cool in the summer. It doesn't have much natural light, but mirrors on the 'walls' solve this problem. Mainly teenagers use it, and because they feel it's theirs, they know they must keep it clean and they mustn't leave rubbish.

**Exercise 1. Choose the best answer A, B, C, or D.**

**1. What is the writer doing in the first paragraph?**

A. Explaining how his work as an architect helps to make cities better.

- B. Telling people about the dangers of pollution in cities.
- C. Explaining the need for green spaces in cities.
- D. Giving advice to people on how to build new parks in their city.

**2. Alan first became interested in parks while he was \_\_\_\_\_.**

- A. visiting a relative
- B. playing in his local park
- C. studying at school
- D. working with his uncle

**3. What do we learn about the High Line in New York?**

- A. Not many people used it at first.
- B. There are sometimes too many tourists.
- C. It is quite expensive for the city.
- D. People who live nearby help to look after it.

**4. How does Alan feel about the Underpass Park?**

- A. He is disappointed that it doesn't get much natural light.
- B. He is glad that people of different ages use it.
- C. He is worried that people might leave rubbish there.
- D. He is pleased that people can't see it from the main roads.

**5. Which best describes Alan's opinion about green spaces in cities?**

- A. They're nice, but they aren't as good as the real countryside.
- B. They are a good way to use empty land and can bring lots of benefits to people.
- C. They are expensive to build, and they can cause problems.
- D. They make cities look more attractive, but people don't always use them.

**Exercise 2. Match the adjectives to describe places in bold in the article with their meanings.**

1. with nothing in it: \_\_\_\_\_
2. growing in a natural way, not like a garden: \_\_\_\_\_
3. with lots of different colours: \_\_\_\_\_

4. where people can meet and be together: \_\_\_\_\_
5. away from the heat of the sun: \_\_\_\_\_
6. not busy and with no noise: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANSWER KEY**

**Excercise 1.**

1. C      2. A      3. D      4. D      5. B

**Excercise 2.**

1. empty              2. wild              3. colourful  
4. social              5. cool              6. peaceful