

TOP CITIES

1 Match the adjectives in Box A to their opposites in Box B.

A	B
modern ugly tiny clean noisy dull	polluted enormous picturesque lively historic peaceful

2 Use the words from Boxes A and B above to complete the sentences. Choose words with meanings similar to the words/phrases in brackets.

- There is nobody on the beach at this time of year. It's very _____. (quiet)
- We enjoyed walking around the _____ city centre. (old)
- You must see Sofia's new room. It's _____! (very big)
- The problem with big cities like Bangkok is that they are very _____. (dirty with fumes)
- We had a fantastic time in Prague. It is such a _____ city. (there are lots of people doing lots of exciting things)
- The view over the river from our hotel was very _____. (lovely to look at)
- Brasilia is a _____ city, with a lot of office blocks. (new)
- It was a small town and there was nothing to do there. It was a bit _____. (uninteresting)

3 Read the information about a new book. Tick the statements which are correct. The book:

- provides information about different cities in the USA. ☐
- is a fictional description of life in New York. ☐
- tells you which are the best and the worst cities to live in. ☐
- describes twelve of the best European cities. ☐
- might be useful for someone who is planning to move to the USA ☐

Think your city is best?

See the latest rankings.

The latest issue of *Cities Ranked and Rated* is just out. This book describes the top cities in the USA. But what is it that makes a metropolis great (or bad)?

Are you thinking about relocating, or just curious how your city compares with others across the nation? Well, the answers to your questions are here, as features in the annually updated book *Cities Ranked and Rated*. The book authors, Bert Sterling and Peter Sander, talked to us about their findings.

4 Read the interview and match the questions 1-7 to the answers A-F.

- And how about older people, who are starting to think about retirement? What do they look for?
 - If I'm young and single, just starting out, what places would I find attractive?
 - And what if I have a family with kids? Is that different?
 - In general, what places make it to the top of the list?
 - How did you decide who makes it to the top?
 - Were there any surprises in your findings?
 - And what about the bad news? Why does a city end up at the bottom of your list?
- A** We look at over a hundred pieces of information about each place. We group those into nine categories including: economy and jobs, cost of living, climate, education, arts and culture. Then we press a button on the computer, and that's how we get the top ten.
- B** Cities with a university do especially well. They have plenty to do, nice city centres, pleasant surroundings and usually they aren't too crowded. The strength in higher education tends to affect all levels of education and most have excellent health care facilities. Then there are the state capitals, which tend to be clean, have a good economic situation and lots of cultural facilities – these are also good.

- C** Yes, quite a few. For instance, highly ranked cities are found all across the country, not just on the sunny coastlines like everybody thinks. There are a few interesting cities that we call the 'Big City Bargains'. These are big cities with a low cost of living, like Pittsburgh and Indianapolis.
- D** Areas at the bottom typically have high levels of unemployment and crime and a high cost of living combined with low levels of education, few facilities and not much to do. However, most of these cities recognise that there are problems and they are actively working to improve.
- E** Younger single people are interested in places with jobs where they can build their careers and make money. They want lively cities with lots to do, and of course lots of other single people too! Of course, the top ten cities would all be good places to live, but for singles in particular we would choose the Norfolk area in Virginia and San Antonio, Texas.
- F** Yes. Families look for many things, including good and affordable housing, quality education and more daytime facilities like parks, museums and outdoor recreation.
- G** Well, that is the important thing about this book, it won't just help you decide where you should be now, it'll help you to plan for the future, too. People who are planning to retire soon are thinking more about health care, leisure and the overall cost of living and less about jobs, housing costs and education.

5 Choose the best answers.

- 1** The authors decided on the top cities by
 - A** asking people about their favourite cities.
 - B** looking at the population of each city.
 - C** comparing statistics about each city.
- 2** According to the book, university cities
 - A** have a lot of crime.
 - B** are nice cities to live in.
 - C** usually have too many people.
- 3** Cities with lots of people in higher education also tend to
 - A** have a low cost of living.
 - B** have good hospitals and doctors.
 - C** come near the bottom of the list.
- 4** The top cities
 - A** are found on the coasts.
 - B** are cheap to live in.
 - C** are spread across the country.
- 5** 'Big City Bargains' are cities which
 - A** are cheap to live in.
 - B** are expensive to live in.
 - C** have a low standard of living.
- 6** Cities at the bottom of the list
 - A** don't realise that there is a problem.
 - B** have a lot of people who do not work.
 - C** are cheap to live in.
- 7** Young single people look for cities
 - A** where they can get good jobs.
 - B** where there are a lot of parks and museums.
 - C** which are cheap to live in.
- 8** Older people are not so interested in
 - A** parks and museums.
 - B** the price of houses.
 - C** the cost of living.