Unit 1
Urban Planning
Safe Cities

Unit Description

Content: This course is designed to familiarize the student with concepts in urban planning and design.

Skills: Main Ideas and Supporting Details
- Finding the main idea in reading quickly: skimming
- Finding details when reading: scanning
- Preparing for lectures in order to improve comprehension
- Listening and understanding a speaker’s main point(s)
- Listening for supporting details
- Writing a thesis statement
- Using parallel structure

Unit Requirements

Readings: “Eyes on the Street to Safe Cities.” (from Wegerle, Places)

Lecture: “Visions of the Modern City”

Integrated Writing Task: Writing an expository essay

Assignments: www.myngelab.com
Previewing the Academic Content

More than half the world’s people live in large cities, forming a growing urban population. Almost all future population growth is expected to occur in these urban areas. With large numbers of people living closely together, personal safety is a concern. In the cities we know best, there are places where we feel safe and places where we fear for our safety. How can urban planners—the people who design cities—reduce, modify, or eliminate unsafe areas?

1. Label the illustrations with the key words.

   - metropolis n a large city
   - rural adj relating to the countryside
   - suburban adj relating to the area immediately around a city
   - urban adj relating to cities

2. Look at the table on the next page. It compares the rates at which victims experience property and violent crime in urban, suburban, and rural areas of the United States. This rate is called the victimization rate. What can you say about the victimization rates in urban, suburban, and rural areas?

3. Work in small groups. Discuss the questions and share your ideas with the class.
   1. Why do you think crime rates are higher in urban areas?
   2. Think of areas in your city (or a large city you know) where you feel unsafe. What are some specific reasons why you do not feel safe?
   3. What kinds of things might urban planners do to help lower crime rates?

Previewing the Academic Skills Focus

1. Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

   If a city’s residents feel safe, then the city will be an economic, social, and cultural success. A city is different from a town in that its inhabitants are essentially strangers to each other. In an urban setting, it is most likely that individuals are surrounded by more strangers than friends. Even neighbors living closely together may be strangers. The metropolis is successful only to the extent that these strangers feel secure on the streets and in their homes. Those residents who do not feel protected will not do business, socialize, or participate in the city. A city that does not provide a safe environment for its citizens will fail in many ways.

   1. What is the main point in this paragraph? Write the main idea on a separate piece of paper. Then compare your answer with a partner’s.
   2. Discuss your answer to these questions with the class.
      - Do you agree or disagree with the main idea of this paragraph? Why?
      - What happens to a city if people do not feel safe there?
   3. Read the last two sentences of the paragraph again. What are some specific ways in which a city might fail because its citizens don’t feel safe?
Main Ideas and Details

The main idea is the writer or speaker’s most important idea or point. A detail is a single fact or piece of information that supports a larger idea. Details include examples, explanations, elaborations, reasons, solutions, opinions, and exceptions.

When reading, use these strategies to find the main idea of a text:
- Read the title, headings, and subheadings if there are any.
- Find the topic sentence of a paragraph or the thesis statement of an essay.
- Read the first and last sentences of each paragraph.
- Look for repeated key words and synonyms of key words.

When you become skilled at identifying the main idea of a text, you will be able to understand the overall meaning quickly. This ability is important in situations where you have a limited amount of time to read a long text or you need to get a general idea of what the text is about before you focus on the details.

Which of the strategies above did you use to find the main idea of the paragraph? What other strategies did you use?

Before You Read

1. Work in groups of three and write your names at the tops of the columns. Read the questions in the first column and write your answers in your own column. Then take brief notes as you listen to your partners’ answers.

Students’ Names:

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<tr>
<td>Students’ Names:</td>
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<td>1. Are large crowds of people safe or dangerous? Why?</td>
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<td>2. Do you feel more comfortable walking down a busy street or a deserted one? Why?</td>
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Key Words

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<td>Students’ Names:</td>
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<td>3. Does having a bar or late-night restaurant on your street make the street safer or more dangerous? Why?</td>
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<td>4. Is it safer to have homes and stores on the same street or in separate areas of the city? Why?</td>
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<td>5. Is it safe to have a park on your street? Why?</td>
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2. Based on your group’s answers, describe the safest and the most dangerous places to live.

3. Collocations are words that are frequently used together. Use a key word to make a collocation that completes each statement.

- The ___________ clearance project made the downtown safer.
- Jane Jacobs felt it was important to ___________ a safe city movement.
- More than half the world’s people live in large cities, forming a growing ___________ population.
- ___________ areas can be found on the land surrounding many large cities.
- The government built a large ___________ project downtown.
- Visionary thinkers often suggest projects that go against the ___________ ideas of their times.

foster v to help develop over a period of time
internship n a short-term job that a student does to gain experience, often without pay
prevailing n accepted at a particular time
public housing n houses or apartments built by the government for poor people
slum n an area of the city that is in very bad condition where very poor people live
Global Reading

**Finding the Main Idea in Reading Quickly: Skimming**

When you skim a text, you read it strategically to understand its general meaning or main idea. Below are some strategies you can use to skim a reading. Notice that some of these strategies were listed on page 4.

- Read the title, headings, and subheadings of a text.
- Read the first and last sentence of each paragraph.
- Look at captions, diagrams, and illustrations.
- Keep your eyes moving consistently over the page.
- Don’t use a dictionary.
- Don’t spend time reading the details.

Which of these strategies do you use when you want to read quickly for general comprehension? Are there other strategies that you use? What are they?

1. **Skim paragraphs 1–6 of the text “From ‘Eyes on the Street to Safe Cities’” to find the main idea.**

   **From “Eyes on the Street to Safe Cities”**
   By Gerda Wekerle (from *Places*)

   1. Many people quote the phrase from Jane Jacobs that “there must be eyes on the street” to emphasize the relationship between urban safety and design. Jacobs's views on urban safety were, in truth, far more complex than this phrase suggests, and they were widely attacked and dismissed when her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* was published. Still, they have become the basis of a worldwide movement to foster safer cities.

   2. Jacobs made an important contribution to our understanding of cities by emphasizing the link between the fear of crime and urban design. Jacobs was visionary in arguing that we should be concerned about the everyday experiences of city inhabitants, instead of focusing on crimes against property or the criminals themselves. Jacobs writes about the ways in which planning and design diminish or enhance people's sense of safety. [...] The bedrock attribute of a successful city district is that a person must feel personally safe and secure on the street among all these strangers. It does not take many incidents of violence on a city street or in a city district to make people fear the streets. And as they fear them, they use them less, which makes the streets still more unsafe.

   3. Although Jacobs's comment about the need for eyes on the street is still broadly quoted, her many other recommendations, based on close observation of public spaces, have received little attention. For Jacobs, eyes on the street came from stores and public places, including bars and restaurants "sprinkled along the sidewalks," street vendors, and pedestrians. She recommended the installation of bright street lights to "augment every pair of eyes."

   4. But Jacobs widened her attention to urban safety in general, including parks and public housing projects. She discredited the prevailing myths about good design and public housing projects. She discredited the prevailing myths about good design and expected behaviors. While most planners have great respect for neighborhood open spaces focusing on the green benefits of parks, she argued against open space in cities if it meant parks that were underused and dangerous. She argued that parks could be "volatile places." She observed that parks are successful when they encourage a range of activities and users.

   5. Jacobs's views on public housing were equally controversial. She noted that slum clearance projects that created high-rise towers with concentrations of poor people were often dangerous places that people with other choices avoided at all cost. Her critique of public housing design included long, unwatched corridors, unguarded elevators, stairwells, and courtyards that became settings for rape, theft, and vandalism. She also observed that too often, public housing managers were more concerned with vandalism—the destruction of property—than danger to human beings.

   6. Her recommendations to increase safety at public housing sites emphasized design and management policies to encourage interaction and commitment. She suggested integrating public housing communities into existing street patterns and cultivating street activity by including businesses in the buildings. She opposed fencing and security guards, which created a sense of territory and insulated public housing residents from the wider community. She suggested that women tenants could be elevator attendants to provide eyes on the vertical streets.

   (continued on next page)

Key Words

- **corridor**: n a long, narrow passage with doors leading off of it
- **sprinkle**: v to scatter small drops of water or small pieces of something
- **subtle**: adj not easy to notice unless you pay careful attention
- **volatile**: adj likely to change suddenly and without warning

2. Circle the choice that best represents the main idea of paragraphs 1–6.
   
   a. Jacobs wrote a book called *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.
   b. Jacobs examined the relationship between safety and urban planning.
   c. Jacobs felt that including businesses in public housing projects would improve safety.
5. Now skim paragraphs 7–12 to find the main idea.

7. In the 1970s, Oscar Newman and others built on Jacobs’s insights into the relationship between urban design and crime. They launched the new field of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). But they simplified Jacobs’s vision, focusing on an approach that relied on experts (either design or security professionals) to define the issues and to provide standardized solutions.

8. CPTED programs often ignored a key aspect of Jacobs’s argument—the importance of fear of crime. CPTED programs tended to ignore crimes against people and focused more on crimes against property and crime rates. Programs also ignored differences in fear of crime between men and women and between white and minority urban residents.

9. CPTED programs promoted hardware and design changes, rather than encouraging the presence of people and varied activities. Fences, buzzers, gates, and traffic barriers were proposed to keep people out and to define territory, particularly in residential areas—despite Jacobs’s warnings to the contrary. CPTED largely ignored the more subtle elements of urban safety that Jacobs had suggested: a mix of activities and land uses that could attract diverse populations to streets, neighborhoods, housing projects, parks, and civic centers.

10. The evolution of high-security shopping malls illustrates CPTED principles. Shopping malls in high-crime areas in California have installed motion sensors and other high-tech security equipment around the mall that allow security forces to observe the entire mall, and security patrols are more visible.

11. In contrast, Dufferin Mall, in a working- and middle-class, ethnically diverse neighborhood in Toronto, took a community development approach to reduce crime rates and enhance profitability. The mall provides rent-free space for youth services, a teen drop-in center, a program for high-school dropouts, and a clothing exchange. As Jacobs suggested, these have brought a range of activities and users into the mall and reduced crime rates.

12. Jacobs wrote about her experience of daily life in the city and urged planners to pay attention to how ordinary people actually use urban space. From her experience as a wife, mother, and resident of Greenwich Village in New York City, she arrived at a more human vision of the city than the experts of the day did. Her concern about urban safety was visionary, and her manner of looking at the city still offers a critical viewpoint for evaluating crime prevention and community safety strategies today.

6. Circle the choice that best represents the main idea of paragraphs 7–12.
   a. The CPTED movement was built on Jacobs’s views of urban planning to encourage urban safety.
   b. The CPTED movement misinterpreted Jacobs’s views of how to achieve urban safety.
   c. The Dufferin Mall is an example of a CPTED project.

7. Now share your answers with a partner and talk about the strategies you used to find the main ideas of the text. Which strategies were most useful for you? Why?

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**Focused Reading**

**Finding Details When Reading: Scanning**

Scanning is reading strategically to find the answers to specific questions. It can be especially valuable when you need to answer a set of questions in a short amount of time. Here are some strategies you can use to scan readings for answers:

A. Find a key word in the question and search for the key word, or a synonym of it, in the text.
B. Look for capitalized letters if you are looking for an answer to a who or whose question.
C. Read quotes. Authors usually quote only the most important information from another author.
D. Look for numbers if you are looking for an answer to a numerical question.
E. Read the first and last sentence of each paragraph to find the paragraph in which you will most likely find the answer.
F. Look for key transition words such as in contrast, however, and therefore. These indicate that a new point of view will be introduced.

1. Scan the entire text on pages 6 to 8 and write answers to the questions. Write the letter of the strategy you used and a brief description of the strategy.
   1. Who is the author who wrote *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*?
      Answer: Jane Jacobs
      Strategy: B—Look for capitalized letters to answer a “who” question
   2. According to Jacobs, what makes the streets less safe?
      Answer: _______________________________
      Strategy: _______________________________
   3. What did Jacobs recommend to increase the eyes on the streets?
      Answer: _______________________________
      Strategy: _______________________________
   4. What were Jacobs’s views on public residential projects?
      Answer: _______________________________
      Strategy: _______________________________
   5. When did Oscar Newman and others create the crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) movement?
      Answer: _______________________________
      Strategy: _______________________________
   6. How did CPTED simplify Jacobs’s vision?
      Answer: _______________________________
      Strategy: _______________________________