

### Exercise 1

Read the following article about birthday celebrations, and then answer the questions on the opposite page.

# Happy Birthday!



People around the world celebrate their birthdays in many different ways. Here are some examples of customs from different countries:

#### **United Kingdom:**

A special cake is made and small candles are put on the top. The person celebrating their birthday has to blow out all the candles at the same time if their wishes are to come true. Then all their family and friends sing a song wishing them a happy birthday. Some people also like to give the birthday boy or girl 'the bumps'. This means that one person holds their legs, another person holds their arms, and then they lift them up and down, bumping them each time they touch the ground. The number of bumps is the same as the person's age, and then one extra bump is given for good luck.

#### **Germany:**

Small candles are placed in a special birthday candle holder and put on the dining table. Then a large, beautifully decorated candle is placed in the centre. The candles are lit early in the morning and kept burning until the evening, when the birthday boy or girl has to try and blow out all the candles with one breath. One interesting custom involves single men celebrating their 30th birthday. They have to take a brush and sweep the steps of the city hall. At the same time, some friends throw rubbish onto the steps, making them more difficult to clean. In this way, all the women can see which man is still single at 30, and they can find out whether he is good at cleaning.

#### **Brazil:**

On their birthday, Brazilian children usually enjoy eating sweets which are in the shape of fruit and vegetables. Their homes are decorated with banners and brightly coloured flowers. Adults and older children pull the ears of the birthday boy or girl, one pull for every year of their age. There is a cake and the birthday boy or girl has to give the first slice to their most special friend or relative.

#### **Mexico:**

A model of an animal is made out of papier-mâché. It is filled with sweets and good things to eat, and then hung from the ceiling. The birthday boy's or girl's eyes are then covered up, and they try to hit the animal shape until it breaks open and the sweets fall out. Then they share the contents with family and friends and they all sing a birthday song.

#### **Canada:**

In Canada, it is traditional for Canadians to cover the birthday boy's or girl's nose with butter. The idea is that the greasy nose makes it too slippery for bad luck to stick to them. They hope that only good luck will follow them for a year.

(a) In the UK, why do people try to blow out all their birthday candles at the same time?

..... [1]

(b) How many bumps are given to someone on their birthday in the UK?

..... [1]

(c) In Germany, when are the candles lit on a person's birthday?

..... [1]

(d) What can women discover about men on their 30th birthday in Germany? Give **two** details.

.....  
..... [2]

(e) What sort of sweets do Brazilian children have on their birthday?

..... [1]

(f) In Brazil, how do you benefit when your best friend has a birthday?

..... [1]

(g) What do Mexicans do to get sweets on their birthday?

..... [1]

(h) What do Canadians do to people on their birthdays?

..... [1]

[Total: 9]

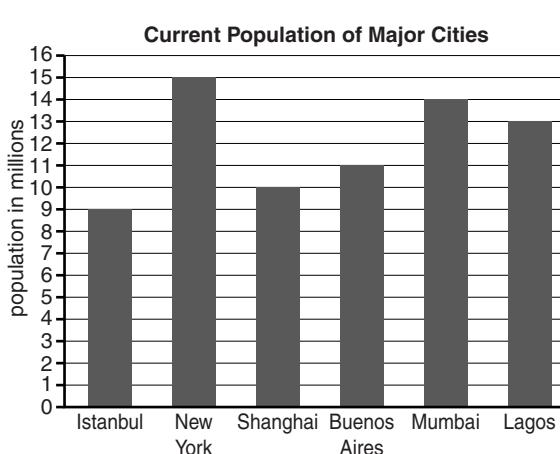
## Exercise 2

Read the following article about cities of the future, and then answer the questions on the opposite page.

### Cities for tomorrow

Imagine a city of the future. Do you see clean streets, flying cars and robots doing all the work? No-one really knows what the future holds, but the reality now is that our urban spaces are overcrowded and polluted.

Almost 50% of the world's population currently lives in cities, and by 2050 that is expected to increase to 75%, which will put pressure on resources. Experts say that it is time to start designing better urban environments. We need new cities to sustain an ever-growing population, and we have to redesign the ones that we have lived in for centuries.



There seem to be two main opinions about how cities should look in the future. There are some planners who believe that we need to go back to a simpler life, and others who think that advanced technology will solve all the problems.

On one hand, sustainability experts predict carbon-neutral cities full of electric vehicles and bike-sharing schemes. People are already starting to use these forms of transport in many cities of the world. Some skyscrapers combine living and office space and have vegetable gardens on their roofs. Many people are attracted to growing their own food, and we may need to combine urbanisation with a more rural lifestyle.

On the other hand, computer experts believe that the answer may lie with the use of electronic technology. "The use of this technology will bring a wide range of new services to citizens," says Professor James. "Many of the big technology companies believe that the most efficient cities will be those that are connected to networks. One company already has 2,000 projects in cities around the world. These projects include crime prevention, recording water usage and smarter public transport systems. This company's most important project is in Rio de Janeiro, where it has built an operations centre which controls the city. This centre was first built to help manage the floods that regularly threaten Rio de Janeiro. It now co-ordinates 30 government agencies and provides mobile applications to inform people about traffic problems, and to give other city updates. There is clear evidence that the number of accidents has fallen because drivers take greater care if they have advance warning of incidents."

However, critics such as Fatima Khan question how quickly this kind of city may become outdated, just like the computer systems they rely on. Professor James responds to such concerns by explaining that developers are constantly updating systems. He also says, "In our experience, although some people are worried about loss of privacy, most people are happy for us to collect data, as long as they are informed." He explains about a project his company completed, where households were given information about their water consumption. Most people quickly changed their habits and saved water when they realised how much they were using. Those who also had access to their neighbours' information saved twice as much.

Ms Khan is concerned that ordinary citizens will no longer have a voice in the development of their cities. She is convinced that successful cities will be able to provide something for everybody, but only if everyone is involved in planning and creating them. The developers building the cities of the future would be advised to take notice of her views.

(a) What is true about today's cities?

..... [1]

(b) According to the graph, which city has the second highest population? How many people live there?

..... [1]

(c) What are the **two** different views about how to plan future cities?

.....  
..... [2]

(d) How will people travel in an environmentally-friendly city? Give **two** details.

..... [1]

(e) What traditional activity is likely to continue in future cities?

..... [1]

(f) What practical benefits could internet networks bring to cities of the future? Give **two** details.

.....  
..... [2]

(g) What proof is there in Rio de Janeiro that shows that internet networks are effective?

..... [1]

(h) In Professor James's project, which group of people saved the most water?

..... [1]

(i) What does Ms Khan believe is necessary for cities to be successful?

..... [1]

(j) Give four concerns that people have about life in future cities.

.....  
.....  
.....  
..... [4]

[Total: 15]