

Name: _____ Class: _____ ()

Tuesday English News Report

Two legs good, four wheels bad ... at least for six hours

Broadcast Date: 4th October, 2016

Car-choked **thoroughfare** gives way to a relaxed area as traffic was **banished** from a stretch of one of the busiest roads in the heart of Hong Kong's business district for six hours on Sunday, September 25th in a **unique** and **unprecedented** social and environmental experiment on the use of public space and city planning.

Except for trams and people, the 200-metre **swathe** of Des Voeux Road Central was cleared of all vehicles from 10am to 4pm.

The atmosphere was carnival-like. Picnic tables and benches lined the road. Musicians took to the streets performing to audiences **lounging** in beanbag chairs. Pet owners **roamed** around with their dogs. Children sat around in circles for story time, arts and crafts, and played around in splash pools, while three-a-side soccer matches were held in roadsides turned into **makeshift** pitches.

Patrick Fung of the Clean Air Network said ****pedestrianisation** not only helped improve air quality in the neighbourhood, it also freed up public space for creative use in what he called 'people-first' planning. Fung said the idea was a ****scaled-down** version of their ultimate target – to get the entire stretch from Central to Western permanently rezoned as a tram and pedestrian-only thoroughfare.

While this was just a one-off event, Fung expressed hope the government would build on the success of the experiment and do this kind of thing more frequently.

Fung said the next step of the campaign was to **gauge** the opinions of stakeholders in the district. "The plan is to get people in the neighbourhood used to such arrangements."

Reactions were mixed. Jacqueline Leung, a long-term resident of Sheung Wan said, "It's pointless if they only do it for [Des Voeux Road Central] but the traffic problem is moved somewhere else. Where would the shops and restaurants unload their goods?"

Simon Lam, **proprietor** of a jewellery shop, welcomed the idea as it would increase the flow of people past his shop. "Of course more people walking around is a good thing, but whether they'll actually consume is a difficult question," he said. "It's too early to tell."

Angel Yiu, a shop assistant at a women's fashion store, had doubts that pedestrianised streets would mean more business. She pointed out that such moves usually attracted **curious** crowds rather than customers looking for goods to buy.

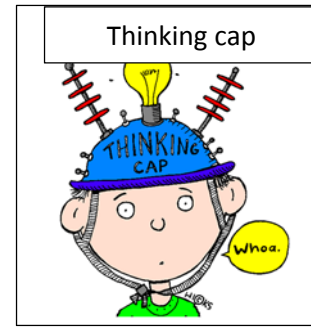
**** pedestrianisation = to make an area into one where vehicles are not allowed to go:**

**** scaled-down = smaller version than first planned**

Adapted from the article in the South China Morning Post which appeared on Monday, September 26th.

1. Questions to think about:

- What do you think of closing off roads to traffic?
 - What are the pros and cons of this type of action?
- What else could be done in Hong Kong to make the environment we live in more people friendly?



2. I: Extending your vocabulary: Synonyms

Choose the word or phrase in the box below which matches the meaning of the words from the text in the table. Fill in the table. One has been done for you.

wander	temporary	forbid to enter	one and only	find out	roadway
sit around	measure	special	extraordinary	inquisitive	
owner	ban	disallow	highway	unrivalled	relax
walk about	broad strip or area	assess	make-do		

A: Word from text	Synonyms		
1. thoroughfare (n)			
2. banish (v)			
3. unique (adj)			
4. unprecedented (adj)	unrivalled		
5. swathe (n)			
6. lounge (v)			
7. roam (v)			
8. makeshift (adj)			
9. gauge (v)			
10. proprietor (n)			
11. curious (adj)			

II: Usage of vocabulary

Fill in the missing words of the short paragraphs or sentences below using the vocabulary (1-11) from column A. Not all of the words will be needed.

The earthquake which was (a) _____ in the history of the country, a first-time natural disaster of this kind, damaged a huge (b) _____ of land. Main roads and (c) _____ were also impassable. Many people left homeless (d) _____ the streets aimlessly, not knowing what to do. Charity organisations set up (e) _____ tents as shelter for the victims who had no homes to go to. Hopefully, this would only be a temporary solution. Some areas were too dangerous so people were (f) _____ from entering.

Governments sometimes do surveys to (g) _____ the opinion of the public.

(h) _____ to find out more, the kid asked a lot of questions.

Challenge of the week: (1) The headline of the article is a play on words of a famous saying (or I should say commandment) from a book. In the book, it is **'Four legs good, two legs bad'**. *What is the name of the book? Who is the author?

First three students to answer the questions, win a prize & there is a bonus prize for the student who can tell me what it means.

(2) Usually before a word with a vowel (a,e,i,o,u) we use 'an', not 'a', but not with the word, unique. *Why? (Again, prizes can be won!)