

READING

7 Read the article. Are the statements true (T) or false (F)?

A MODERN CAVEMAN

People have dwelt in caves since the dawn of time. But if you're picturing a cold, damp and cramped space, you'll need to think again. In Spain there are literally thousands of modern day cave-dwellers who call a hole in the ground their home and there are a large number of luxurious houses carved into the Andalusian mountains which offer more comfort than you might imagine.



Why choose to live in a cave? To begin with, cave houses are affordable, easy to heat in the winter and stay cool in the summer. Being carved into stone, their temperature does not fluctuate much, but rather a steady twenty degrees Celsius is maintained throughout the year. Each home is unique and, if you purchase a property which is licensed to be modified, it's easy enough to carve yourself out an extra shelf in the wall or even a whole new room. The largest cave home boasts as many as forty rooms and can be had for as little as 200,000 euros.

You don't need such a vast, sprawling cavern to feel the charm of a cave home, however. Even those of a much more modest size seem surprisingly open – there is no sense of being underground or feeling cooped up. Cave houses exude a warmth and cosiness which is a unique selling point for many buyers: sound is gently muffled and the amount of light seems to defy common logic. Most cave homes face southward to allow for natural light to enter through the windows cut into the rock face. But due to the ingenious layout of many homes and the white matte of the walls, light is easily transmitted throughout. In areas further back, modern builders often use a system of ordinary mirrors to reflect natural light around the interior.

Cave dwelling is also surprisingly safe. They are not prone to fires or earthquakes and they do not tend to collapse. Ventilation is important, however, as a cave home needs to breathe and excess moisture can become problematic and in extreme cases even trigger asthma attacks. Electricity is generally preferred over gas – although when gas fittings are provided, these tend to be closer to the front of the cave for safety reasons.

As cave communities tend to be in small villages, a car is essential for getting around and nightlife is hard to find. Such homes are very much for those who prefer a quiet rural lifestyle, quaint cobbled backstreets and breathtaking views.

- 1 Cave homes tend to meet people's initial expectations of living in a cave. ☐
- 2 A cave home might be a good purchase for the economically minded. ☐
- 3 Every cave home can be adapted by the owner to suit their own tastes. ☐
- 4 Owners typically enjoy the unique ambience and interior design of cave homes. ☐
- 5 Sophisticated modern technology is used to light the deeper parts of cave homes. ☐
- 6 Natural disasters are a common hazard of living in a cave house. ☐
- 7 The article suggests everyone would enjoy living in a cave home. ☐

SPEAKING

8 In pairs, complete the speaking task.

Here are some things people sometimes have problems with when they move to a big town or city, and a question for you to discuss. Talk to each other about why these things can cause problems.



Now talk about which of these things is most difficult for people to do in a big town or city.

9 In pairs, discuss the questions.

- 1 Would you prefer to live in a town, a city or in the countryside? Why?
- 2 Do you think it's a good idea for children to live and study in cities? Why?/Why not?
- 3 Some cities attract a lot of tourists. Do you think this is a good thing for the people who live there? Why?/Why not?
- 4 How important is it to keep old traditional buildings in our cities and towns and not knock them down? Why?
- 5 Which city in the world would you like to live in for a short time? Why?

WRITING

10 Complete the writing task.

In your English class you have been talking about life in a big city. Now your English teacher has asked you to write an essay. Write an essay using **all** the notes and give reasons for your point of view.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of moving from the city centre to the suburbs?

Notes

Write about:

- socialising and free time activities
- work or study
- _____ (your own idea)

Write your essay in 140–190 words.