

A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

LEVEL B2/C1

Part 1: WARM – UP

Ex.1.a Do you recognize the places shown below? What are they?



Source: theguardian.com



Source: musement.com



Source: brooklyneagle.com

EX.1.b What other landmarks come to your mind when you think about New York City?

EX.1.c What films and series has the city of New York been portrayed in?

Ex.2. Match the words with their meanings.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. trust fund baby 2. hassle 3. hotbed 4. skewed 5. nagging 6. scathing 7. in a similar vein 8. trademark 9. population density 10. borough 11. to give a rundown 12. to boast 13. cluster 14. to be all it's cracked up to be 15. melting pot 16. true-to-life 17. to surpass sth 18. thriving 19. immense 20. prevalent | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) tygiel; miejsce wielokulturowe b) szczycić się, chwalić się c) okręg d) charakterystyczna cecha, miejsce e) kłopot, zawracanie głowy f) tętniący życiem g) być tak dobrym jak mówią ludzie h) zniekształcony i) prawdziwy j) przekraczać coś k) zrządzący, narzekający l) przeważający m) ogromny n) skupisko o) w podobnym stylu p) zjadliwy q) gęstość zaludnienia r) siedlisko, kolebka s) dziecko z funduszem powierniczym/bogate t) podsumować |
|--|---|

Ex.2.a Fill in the gaps with an appropriate form of a word or phrase.

1. The photos that I take are very _____ . All the colors are exactly as they are in reality.
2. The perception of the NYC life style is of ten _____ in peoples' minds.
3. I have to give a buick _____ of today's meetings to my boss and then we can go.
4. The Big Apple is one of the most _____ cities on the planet.
5. Entertainment in Manhattan is _____. We go out every night and have fun!
6. NYC is a _____ of people from all corners of the world.
7. The coronavirus outbreak caused an _____ change in lives of all people.
8. NYC is a _____ of starving artists, yuppies and modern hippies.
9. The most _____ European nationalities found in NYC are Italian, German and Irish.
10. A lot of New Yorkers like to _____ that NYC is their place on Earth.
11. NYC consists of five _____ The Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan

and Staten Island.

12. The _____ in NYC is over 100,000 people per square kilometre.
13. Number of inhabitants in NYC has _____ 8.4 million of people.
14. He said that my friend was fat and ugly. What a _____ remark!
15. The Statue of Liberty is the most known _____ of NYC.
16. Alicia's boss has organized an emergency meeting. My supervisor is acting _____.
I'm getting worried.
17. Chinatown is a _____ of Chinese people.
18. Traffic jams are often so bad in NYC that getting from one place to another is a _____
19. There are a lot of _____ living in NYC. It's a perfect place to spend their money.
20. New Yorkers are often portrayed as _____ loud and impatient.

Part 2: READING

EX.3. You are going to read the article „New Yorkers of Today” from ‘English Matters’ magazine.

Pay attention to the words and phrases listed in EX.2.

‘New Yorkers of Today – Facts and Myths’ – by Jonathan Sidor

New York is one of the few cities that has left an indelible mark on global culture. Are popular notions of New York society true-to-life, or have our perceptions been skewed by the media? ‘English Matters’ gives a rundown in a New York minute.

New York is a thriving metropolis with a population surpassing 8.4 million inhabitants. It has been mythologised and romanticised in the public eye through decades of films and TV show. Life in New York has been glamourised, but is being a New Yorker really all it's cracked up to be?

A True Melting Pot

The sheer size of New York makes generalising its culture a Herculean task. One of the first things to hit you as you enter the city is its immense diversity. Only 45 percent of the city's inhabitants are white, and 36 percent are foreign born. New York's largest clusters of immigrants hail from the Dominican Republic, China and various Caribbean locales. The most prevalent European ancestries found in New York are Italian, Irish and German. The city boasts the biggest Jewish population outside of Israel and the largest community of Puerto Ricans away from Puerto Rico.

The borough of Queens is ranked as the most diverse county. Not only that, it is frequently cited as the most ethnically diverse region in the world. Approximately 48 percent of Queens residents were born abroad. On the street of Queens, English may be tough to come by. Most families speak a different mother tongue at home, the most popular of which are Spanish and Mandarin. Roughly half of all immigrants in Queens originate from Latin America.

Another distinguishing factor in New York is its extreme population density. Despite their disparate cultures, different ethnic groups coexist in a dynamic microcosm. New York is the densest municipality in the United States, housing over 10,000 people per square kilometre. In Manhattan alone, that same population density measure reaches an astonishing 25,000. Even though New York contains over three dozen ethnic enclaves, with names like Little Italy and Little Egypt (not to mention at least nine distinct Chinatowns), the entire populace is packed like sardines in a single tight space. This has helped New Yorkers blend their respective values together to craft a modern culture all their own.

Stigmas and Stereotypes

Regardless of their roots, on-screen portrayals of New York today have made them out to be a rather homogenous group. Certain popular generalisations paint New Yorkers in a negative light, yet they possess a grain of truth. New Yorkers are often depicted as loud, rude, and impatient. A distinct air of superiority is easy to find. Small talk with strangers is best avoided. The image of the neurotic New Yorker has also been imprinted on the minds of many. Think of the nagging, self-loathing Woody Allen in the bulk of his films.

Other stereotypes, however, aren't nearly as scathing. The beatnik youths of New York are frequently credited with bringing today's hipster subculture to life. Alternative fashion sensibilities, selective tastes in food, and progressive political views are just a few of their trademarks. Nonetheless, quirky neighbourhoods such as Brooklyn's Williamsburg wear their hipster pride like a badge of honour. In a similar vein, New York is a hotbed of starving artists looting to hit it big, whatever their craft may be. It should be easy to spot one in any of New York's rapidly-gentrifying districts.

Another segment commonly associated with New York is the ever-optimistic yuppie. These are the doctors, lawyers, and Wall Street mavens looting to strike it rich in the big city. Likewise, New York has its fair share of career-obsessed singles who profess settling down with a family will only be a hassle. Socialities young and old are sprinkled throughout the city. Especially in Manhattan, you can find the children of the elite, known as trust fund babies, who never have to work a day in their life. Finally, one of the New York's most intriguing staples is its population of Orthodox Jews. These ultra-conservatives often stick to their hubs, such as Borough Park, Brooklyn, yet their traditional garb and unique life style make them easily recognisable.

Life in the City

Everyday life in New York City is far from ordinary too. The average weekly wage in the city is close to \$2800, which happens to be more than double the US national average. That is not to say that all New Yorkers are loaded. For most, rent is egregiously high. New York is also ranked as having

North America's most expensive food. A Basic dinner for two can set you back over \$50, while ritzier options will skyrocket over \$100. A ticket to the cinema is at least \$15, a meagre packet of Malboros costs \$14, and a modest beer at your local pub comes to roughly \$7.

New Yorkers are fiercely proud of their city and the values that it embodies. It should come as no surprise that New York's legacy of multiculturalism has made tolerance a top concern for its residents. Constant exposure to divergent viewpoints has forced New Yorkers to be more open-minded in every facet of their lives. In addition, approximately 27 percent of inhabitants hold a bachelor's degree or higher, three percent above the national average. Furthermore, the city is a mecca for aficionados of high culture. All of these factors combine to make New Yorkers more liberal than the rest of Americans. Higher incomes, greater diversity, better education, and a deeper appreciation for culture give New Yorkers a world view all their own.

For some final insight into life in New York, you needn't look further than your TV screen. A handful of modern television series are set in New York, and the city's atmosphere plays a key role in each of them. Numerous superhero dramas, such as *Daredevil*, follow good guys and villains alike down the city's dark alleyways. For something on the lighter side, check out HBO's *Girls*, which showcases commonplace living in New York, at times with cutting realism. Lastly, 2015's Golden Globe winners for Drama and Comedy both take place in New York. The success of newcomers *Mr. Robot* and *Mozart in the Jungle* suggests that our love affair with New York City is far from extinguished.

A New York State of Mind

New York has long been held at the city where anyone could achieve „the American Dream.” While this notion has perhaps become idealised over time, New York is still a cultural capital whose citizens are one-of-a-kind. Our popular depictions of New Yorkers are indisputably overly broad. Nevertheless, the diversity, quirks and can-do spirit that characterize New Yorkers truly make their city a treasure to behold.

EX.3.a Answer the questions based on the article.

1. How many people live in NYC?
2. Which borough is ranked as the USA's most diverse county?
3. What is population density in NYC? How about Manhattan?
4. What are New Yorkers like? List at least four traits of character.
5. Who falls into the notion 'the ever-optimistic yuppie'?
6. What is an average weekly wage in NYC? How does it compare to the rest of the country?

EX.3.b Mark sentences below TRUE or FALSE based on the article.

1. 36 % of the city's inhabitants are white. **T/F**

2. The city accommodates the biggest Jewish population outside of Israel. **T/F**
3. Over 45% of Queens residents were born abroad. **T/F**
4. The population density in Manhattan is 10,000 per square kilometre. **T/F**
5. NYC contains over 20 ethnic enclaves. **T/F**
6. New Yorkers are known for their progressive political views. **T/F**
7. One of NYC's staples is its population of Orthodox Jews. **T/F**
8. 27% of New Yorkers don't have higher education. **T/F**

PART 3: NYC SLANG

EX.4. NYC Lingo. New Yorkers are known for their distinct accent. But there are also many slang words you'll only hear in New York. Below are some of them:

1. to grill – to stare
2. brick - very cold, freezing
3. Yooz- you people
4. whip- a very nice, expensive car
5. schlep-to move sth that's difficult to move or to go on a difficult journey
6. the city – Manhattan
7. pie – pizza
8. stoop – the stairs in front of an apartment
9. dumb – very
10. thirsty-to look desperate
11. dead-ass – very serious about sth
12. Bodega – a small shop, grocery store

EX.4.a Fill in the gaps using 'City Lingo' vocabulary.

1. Are _____ guys coming with us for a walk or what?
2. I'm gonna have to _____ all my stuff to my new apartment.
3. Please, sit down on the _____ in front of my apartment. I'll be right down.
4. Don't look so _____. It's pathetic. No one will want to talk to you if you look like this.

5. I'll have to run to a _____ cause there is nothing left in our fridge.
6. It seems my boss is a _____ serious about relocating the company. I'll have to look for a new job ASAP.
7. Let's grab some _____. I feel like eating Italian today.
8. They make a _____ great coffee in that place. Let's go there and grab some.
9. I've always wanted to live in _____.
10. I'd like this man to stop _____ me like that. I feel uncomfortable.
11. I just bought a new _____. Come and take a look.
12. Alex doesn't want to go out with us. He says it's _____ outside.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

EX.5. It seems that New Yorkers should be considered trilingual after a native language, English and NYC slang. If you want to learn more about NYC lingo watch the video '27 words you will hear only in NYC'. Make a list of the most interesting ones and try to use them in your own sentences.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zONaRfT4UyY>

