

## What is a city?

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Big System

Sprawling

Street

Slum

People

50%

Vibrant

City

TOURIST

Ghetto

Community

Fumes

Livelihood

Poverty

URBAN

Money

Dirt

Regeneration

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The above words were generated by a group of teachers in a quick-fire word association at a session to explore Cities. The three trigger words are those in red font. The others are reaction words.

- Which words do you think go with each trigger word?
  - Are there words there that surprise you?
  - What words would you add?
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## Defining the city

Here are a few ways of defining a city:

Choose some from the page below and insert in here [would advise leaving out the source perhaps?]

- Which one do you associate with most?
- How would you define a city?

## Definitions of 'city'

### Penguin Dictionary of Geography:

1. in general, in Britain, a large TOWN 2. more strictly, a town of any size which is or has been the seat of a bishop and has a cathedral. 3. in U.S.A., city implies the incorporation of a settlement and the establishment of some form of local government, but a city may in this sense be only a few hundred people.

### Herbert Girardet: Creating Sustainable Cities:

'where human destiny will be played out, and where the future of the biosphere will be determined ... cities as engines of economic power ... uniquely human places ... cultural centres ... superorganism'

'A 'sustainable city' is organised so as to enable all its citizens to meet their own needs and to enhance their well-being without damaging the natural world or endangering the living condition of other people, now or in the future.'

'Cities are nothing if not centres of knowledge, and today this also means knowledge of the world and our impact on it.'

### Cities transformed: Panel on Urban Population Dynamics, Human Research Council

""satanic mills' where one could seize economic opportunity only at some risk to life and health".

""large and capital cities' as those cities of 1 million population and above, leaving a broad residual category of "small cities" which includes every city of between 50,000 and 1 million population."

### Bible: Zephaniah

Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!

[www.askoxford.com](http://www.askoxford.com)

city

- noun (pl. cities) 1 a large town, in particular (Brit.) a town created a city by charter and containing a cathedral. 2 (the City) the part of London governed by the Lord Mayor and the Corporation. 3 the financial and commercial institutions in this part of London.

ORIGIN Old French cite, from Latin civitas, from civis 'citizen'.

## Further links for city definitions:

### Department for constitutional affairs, UK

City status is a rare mark of distinction granted by the Sovereign and conferred by Letters Patent.

It is granted by personal Command of The Queen, on the advice of Her Ministers.

[www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/city/cityhome.htm](http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/city/cityhome.htm)

### UK Cities website

[www.ukcities.co.uk](http://www.ukcities.co.uk)

[www.ukcities.co.uk/definitions](http://www.ukcities.co.uk/definitions)

### "Cities of Today, Cities of Tomorrow" (United Nations CyberSchoolBus)

[www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/habitat/toc.asp](http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/habitat/toc.asp) Unit 1: What is a city?