



# A segregated society

Lesson code: S8S8-A589-VQSD

UPPER INTERMEDIATE +

## 1 Society and wealth

Complete the sentences below with the words in the box:

asset	headline	household	inequality	inner city
outskirts	poverty	segregated	underpaid	wealthy

1. In a \_\_\_\_\_ society, people from different classes or races are separated from each other.
2. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a person or group of people who occupy one place of living.
3. Somebody who has a lot of money and possessions is \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. A person who lives below the \_\_\_\_\_ line cannot afford to pay for all the resources which he/she requires to live.
5. An \_\_\_\_\_ is a valuable possession that somebody owns.
6. If you live below the \_\_\_\_\_ , you are very poor.
7. If you live in the \_\_\_\_\_ of a city, you live in the outer areas of the city.
8. If you are \_\_\_\_\_ , you receive too little money for the work that you do.
9. When there is \_\_\_\_\_ , there is a lack of the same opportunity or treatment for everyone.
10. The \_\_\_\_\_ is an area around the centre of a British city where many poor people and immigrants live.

## 2 Check the answers

Read the following statements about British society today compared to nearly 40 years ago. Decide whether they are T (True) or F (False) and then read the article below to check your answers:

1. The gap between rich and poor people is greater.
2. There are more average households (neither rich nor poor).
3. There are more extremely poor people.
4. Fewer people live below the poverty line.
5. Society is more segregated.
6. There is a greater concentration of wealthy households in the outskirts of cities.



THE  
INDEPENDENT

## Gap between rich and poor 'widest in 40 years'

- 1 Britain is becoming a segregated society with the gap between rich and poor reaching its highest level for more than 40 years, a report showed today.
- 2 During the past 15 years there has been a steady increase in the number of households living below the poverty line, with these households accounting for more than half of all families in areas of some cities, according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- 3 At the same time, households in already wealthy areas have tended to become disproportionately wealthier, with many rich people now living in areas segregated from the rest of society.
- 4 The group said the widening gap between rich and poor had led to a fall in the number of average households, which were classed as being neither rich nor poor, with these families gradually disappearing from London and the South East.
- 5 Since 1970 levels of poverty and wealth in different areas of Britain have changed significantly, with the country now moving back towards levels of inequality last seen more than 40 years ago.
- 6 While the number of people who are living in extreme poverty has fallen, the number of people living below the poverty line has increased, with more than one in four households classed as being so-called breadline poor in 2001.
- 7 At the same time the number of asset wealthy households rose dramatically between 1999 and 2003 with more than a fifth of families now falling into this category.
- 8 But the proportion of average households fell from around two-thirds of families in 1980 to just over half by 2000.
- 9 The group that said the concentration of poor households in inner cities had increased, while wealthy households were becoming concentrated in the outskirts of major cities.
- 10 The report said: "Poor, rich and average households became less and less likely to live next door to one another between 1970 and 2000.
- 11 A second report by the group, also published today, said the public thought the gap between rich and poor was too large.
- 12 But it added that people were more likely to think those on higher incomes were being overpaid, than to think those on low incomes were being underpaid.
- 13 The research also found that there was no clear consensus on how the issue of inequality should be tackled.
- 14 Author of the report Michael Orton said: "There is evidence that a high level of inequality may cause real socio-economic problems.
- 15 "There is widespread acceptance that some occupations should be paid more than others: but the gap between high and low-paid occupations is far greater than people think it should be."

*Adapted from The Independent, 17 July 2007*



### 3 Phrases in the text

Match the words to form phrases from the text:

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. a segregated | a. acceptance |
| 2. extreme      | b. consensus  |
| 3. low          | c. incomes    |
| 4. a clear      | d. occupation |
| 5. widespread   | e. poverty    |
| 6. a low-paid   | f. society    |

### 4 Describing a trend

Study the following sentences from the text:

1. Britain is becoming a segregated society.
2. During the past 15 years there has been a steady increase in the number of households living below the poverty line.
3. The number of asset wealthy households rose dramatically between 1999 and 2003.
4. ...wealthy households were becoming concentrated in the outskirts and surrounds of major cities.

Which sentence above describes a ...

- a. completed past trend?
- b. present trend in progress?
- c. trend that started in the past and continued to the present?
- d. past trend in progress?

Which tense is used in each case?

Which sentence contains the structure 'SUBJECT + VERB + ADVERB'?

Which sentence contains the structure 'There + is/was/has been etc. + ADJECTIVE + NOUN'?

Put the following words into the correct box according to their stress:

decrease (noun)  
increase (noun)

decrease (verb)  
increase (verb)

Stress on the first syllable	Stress on the second syllable



**5 Practice**

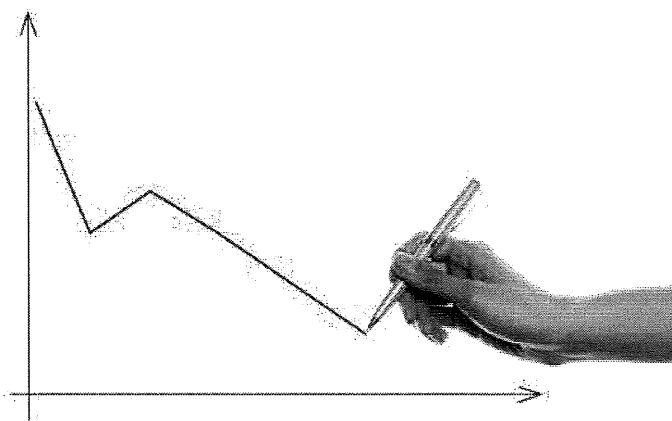
Work with a partner. On a blank sheet of paper, draw 5 different trends. Student A describe your trends to Student B. Student B draw the trends described to you. Compare graphs and reverse roles. Use both verb and noun structures (see example) for describing your trends.

VERBS: *rise increase soar fall decrease drop stay the same remain steady*

NOUNS: *rise increase fall decrease no change*

ADJECTIVES: *slight steady gradual sharp dramatic*

ADVERBS: *slightly steadily gradually sharply dramatically*



Example:

Since 2005, the price has fallen sharply.

From 2003 to 2005, there was a slight increase in the price.

**6 Describing the cause and result of a trend**

Study the following sentence:

*The widening gap between rich and poor led to a fall in the number of average households.*

Complete the sentences below with the following words and expressions:

because/since

caused/resulted in

due to/as a result of/owing to

1. There was a fall in the number of average households \_\_\_\_\_ the widening gap between rich and poor.
2. The widening gap between rich and poor \_\_\_\_\_ a fall in the number of average households.
3. There was a fall in the number of average households \_\_\_\_\_ the gap between rich and poor was widening.



1. Which words/expressions are followed by a noun clause?
2. Which words/expressions are followed by a subject + verb?
3. Which words/expressions introduce the cause of something?
4. Which words/expressions introduce the result of something?

**Now describe a possible cause or result for each of the trends that you described in the previous exercise, using the new structures from this exercise.**

## **7** Talking point

**Are people getting richer or poorer in your country? What are the causes of the change or lack of change?**

