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**Level 6 – 29th May 2023**

## New York City sinking four millimetres a year

**FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:**

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

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**Please try Levels 4 and 5 (they are easier).**

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# THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

Scientists say New York City is sinking by up to four millimetres a year under the weight of all its skyscrapers. A team of geophysicists from the United States Geological Survey calculated that there are 1,084,954 buildings in the city, weighing around 764 billion kilograms. This weight does not include fixtures and fittings in buildings, the transport infrastructure, or the weight of the city's 8.5 million inhabitants. Lead researcher Dr Tom Parsons said the gradual subsidence, coupled with rising sea levels, could make New York prone to natural disasters. He warned that "every additional high-rise building could contribute to future flood risk," especially along coastal and riverfront areas.

The researchers compared what is happening to New York to the problems Venice and Jakarta are having. Venice is experiencing more floods despite the construction of a \$5.3 billion system of sea walls. Indonesia is building a new capital city from scratch because Jakarta is sinking. The United Nations has forecast that 70 per cent of the world's population will inhabit cities by 2050. Parsons said: "When you build a city and it gets full of people, you end up with subsidence." He warned that New York City was "emblematic of a place that people migrate to and that obviously has a high concentration of construction." Increasing urbanisation will exacerbate problems for cities.

Sources: <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/23/nyregion/nyc-sinking.html>  
<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20230523-new-yorks-skyscrapers-are-causing-it-to-sink-what-can-be-done-about-it>  
<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/05/23/world/nyc-sinking-sea-level-climate-scn/index.html>

# WARM-UPS

**1. NEW YORK CITY:** Students walk around the class and talk to other students about New York City. Change partners often and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

scientists / New York City / sinking / weight / skyscrapers / buildings / disasters / risk  
Venice / floods / construction / capital city / population / migrate / urbanization / city

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. COUNTRYSIDE:** Students A **strongly** believe people should be moving out of cities to live in the countryside; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**4. CITY PROBLEMS:** How big are these city problems? How can we deal with them? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	How Big?	Solutions
Subsidence		
Overpopulation		
Homelessness		
High rents		
Traffic jams		
Pollution		

**5. SINK:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "sink". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. CITIES:** Rank these with your partner. Put the best cities at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- New York
- Paris
- Tokyo
- Sydney
- Cairo
- Bangkok
- Rio de Janeiro
- London

# VOCABULARY MATCHING

## Paragraph 1

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. skyscraper            | a. The basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for a town, city or country. |
| 2. geophysicist          | b. Relating to the study of the earth's physical structure and substance.  |
| 3. geological            | c. Someone who studies the physics of the earth.   |
| 4. fixtures and fittings | d. Likely or liable to suffer from, do, or experience something unpleasant or regrettable.   |
| 5. infrastructure        | e. A very tall building of many storeys.   |
| 6. subsidence            | f. Things that are attached to a house and equipment needed to make a house a home.  |
| 7. prone                 | g. The gradual sinking of an area of land.   |

## Paragraph 2

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 8. floods         | h. From the very beginning.   |
| 9. from scratch   | i. Of a person moving to a new area or country in order to find work or better living conditions.                           |
| 10. inhabit       | j. The process of making an area into a town or city.   |
| 11. emblematic    | k. Of a person, animal, or group living in a place or environment.  |
| 12. migrate       | l. The relative amount of a particular substance contained within a solution or mixture or in a particular volume of space. |
| 13. concentration | m. Serving as a symbol of a particular quality or concept; symbolic.  |
| 14. urbanisation  | n. Overflows of large amounts of water beyond its normal limits, especially over what is normally dry land.                 |

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

1. New York City's buildings are causing the city to sink. **T / F**
2. New York City has over one million buildings. **T / F**
3. New York City's weight of 764 billion kilograms includes its inhabitants. **T / F**
4. A scientist said every new building increases the risk of floods. **T / F**
5. The cities of Venice and Jakarta are also sinking. **T / F**
6. Jakarta is being replaced by a new city that is being built. **T / F**
7. Half of the world's population will live in the countryside by 2050. **T / F**
8. Increased migration to the countryside will bring problems for cities. **T / F**

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. <b>weight</b>       | a. residents          |
| 2. <b>fittings</b>     | b. from the beginning |
| 3. <b>inhabitants</b>  | c. slow               |
| 4. <b>gradual</b>      | d. relocate           |
| 5. <b>contribute</b>   | e. mass               |
| 6. <b>from scratch</b> | f. worsen             |
| 7. <b>forecast</b>     | g. typical            |
| 8. <b>emblematic</b>   | h. furnishings        |
| 9. <b>migrate</b>      | i. play a part in     |
| 10. <b>exacerbate</b>  | j. predict            |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                  |                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. under the weight of           | a. to natural disasters  |
| 2. weighing around               | b. and riverfront areas  |
| 3. fixtures and                  | c. from scratch          |
| 4. make New York prone           | d. problems for cities   |
| 5. especially along coastal      | e. fittings              |
| 6. a \$5.3 billion system        | f. all its skyscrapers   |
| 7. building a new capital city   | g. migrate to            |
| 8. a place that people           | h. of sea walls          |
| 9. a high concentration          | i. 764 billion kilograms |
| 10. urbanisation will exacerbate | j. of construction       |

# GAP FILL

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

Scientists say New York City is sinking by up to four millimetres a year (1) \_\_\_\_\_ the weight of all its skyscrapers. A team of geophysicists from the United States Geological Survey (2) \_\_\_\_\_ that there are 1,084,954 buildings in the city, weighing around 764 billion kilograms. This weight does not include (3) \_\_\_\_\_ and fittings in buildings, the transport infrastructure, or the weight of the city's 8.5 million (4) \_\_\_\_\_. Lead researcher Dr Tom Parsons said the (5) \_\_\_\_\_ subsidence, coupled with rising sea levels, could make New York (6) \_\_\_\_\_ to natural disasters. He warned that "every additional high-rise building could contribute to (7) \_\_\_\_\_ flood risk," especially along (8) \_\_\_\_\_ and riverfront areas.

*calculated*  
*gradual*  
*coastal*  
*under*  
*inhabitants*  
*future*  
*fixtures*  
*prone*

The researchers (9) \_\_\_\_\_ what is happening to New York to the problems Venice and Jakarta are having. Venice is experiencing more (10) \_\_\_\_\_ despite the construction of a \$5.3 billion system of sea walls. Indonesia is building a new capital city from (11) \_\_\_\_\_ because Jakarta is sinking. The United Nations has forecast that 70 per cent of the world's population will (12) \_\_\_\_\_ cities by 2050. Parsons said: "When you build a city and it gets full of people, you end up with (13) \_\_\_\_\_." He warned that New York City was "(14) \_\_\_\_\_ of a place that people migrate to and that obviously has a (15) \_\_\_\_\_ concentration of construction." Increasing urbanisation will (16) \_\_\_\_\_ problems for cities.

*emblematic*  
*scratch*  
*high*  
*compared*  
*exacerbate*  
*floods*  
*subsidence*  
*inhabit*

# LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

- 1) sinking by up to four millimetres a year under the weight of \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. all its scraped skies
  - b. all its skies scrapers
  - c. all its skies capers
  - d. all its skyscrapers
- 2) A team of geophysicists from the United \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. States Geological Scurvy
  - b. States Geological Surveillance
  - c. States Geological Survey
  - d. States Geological Sir Bay
- 3) This weight does not include fixtures and \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. fitting sine buildings
  - b. fitting sin buildings
  - c. fittings sin buildings
  - d. fittings in buildings
- 4) the gradual subsidence, coupled with \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. arising sea levels
  - b. rising sea levels
  - c. arisen sea levels
  - d. raising sea levels
- 5) every additional high-rise building could contribute to \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. future blood risk
  - b. future brood risk
  - c. future flood risk
  - d. future bloat risk
- 6) what is happening to New York to the problems Venice and \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Jakarta are having
  - b. Jakarta is having
  - c. Jakarta has having
  - d. Jakarta been having
- 7) Venice is experiencing more floods despite the construction of a \$5.3 billion system \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. off sea walls
  - b. oft sea walls
  - c. of sea walls
  - d. move sea walls
- 8) Indonesia is building a new capital \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. city from starch
  - b. city from sacks
  - c. city from such
  - d. city from scratch
- 9) The United Nations has forecast that 70 per cent of the world's population \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. will cohabit cities
  - b. will exhibit cities
  - c. will inhabit cities
  - d. will inhibit cities
- 10) He warned that New York City was emblematic of a place that \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. people migrate too
  - b. people migrate to
  - c. people migrate two
  - d. people migrate thru

# LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

Scientists say New York City is sinking by up to four millimetres a year under the weight of (1) \_\_\_\_\_. A team of geophysicists from the United States Geological Survey (2) \_\_\_\_\_ are 1,084,954 buildings in the city, weighing around 764 billion kilograms. This weight does not include (3) \_\_\_\_\_ in buildings, the transport infrastructure, or the weight of the city's 8.5 million inhabitants. Lead researcher Dr Tom Parsons said the gradual subsidence, (4) \_\_\_\_\_ sea levels, could make New York (5) \_\_\_\_\_ disasters. He warned that "every additional high-rise building could contribute to future flood risk," (6) \_\_\_\_\_ and riverfront areas.

The researchers (7) \_\_\_\_\_ happening to New York to the problems Venice and Jakarta are having. Venice is experiencing more floods (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of a \$5.3 billion system of sea walls. Indonesia is building a new capital (9) \_\_\_\_\_ because Jakarta is sinking. The United Nations has forecast that 70 per cent of the world's population will inhabit cities by 2050. Parsons said: "When you build a city and it gets full of people, you end (10) \_\_\_\_\_." He warned that New York City was "emblematic of a place that people (11) \_\_\_\_\_ that obviously has a high concentration of construction." Increasing urbanisation will (12) \_\_\_\_\_ cities.



# COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

1. What kind of scientists conducted this study?
2. How much do all the buildings in New York City weigh?
3. How many people live in New York City?
4. What did a scientist say could contribute to the flood risk?
5. Where is the risk of floods greatest in New York City?
6. What other cities does the article say are sinking?
7. What cost Venice \$5.3 billion?
8. How much of the world's population will live in cities by 2050?
9. What did a scientist say you end up with if you fill a city with people?
10. What will exacerbate problems for cities?

# MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

- 1) What kind of scientists conducted this study?
  - a) clever ones
  - b) geophysicists
  - c) town planners
  - d) seismologists
- 2) How much do all the buildings in New York City weigh?
  - a) 674 billion kilograms
  - b) 746 billion kilograms
  - c) 467 billion kilograms
  - d) 764 billion kilograms
- 3) How many people live in New York City?
  - a) 8.3 million people
  - b) 8.4 million people
  - c) 8.5 million people
  - d) 8.6 million people
- 4) What did a scientist say could contribute to the flood risk?
  - a) additional high-rise buildings
  - b) climate change
  - c) dams
  - d) disasters
- 5) Where is the risk of floods greatest in New York City?
  - a) Fifth Avenue
  - b) along coastal and riverfront areas
  - c) Lower Manhattan
  - d) the Bronx
- 6) What other cities does the article say are sinking?
  - a) Venice and Jakarta
  - b) London and New Orleans
  - c) Cairo and Dhaka
  - d) Lagos and Amsterdam
- 7) What cost Venice \$5.3 billion?
  - a) a network of highways
  - b) tourism
  - c) a system of sea walls
  - d) church restorations
- 8) How much of the world's population will live in cities by 2050?
  - a) 70%
  - b) 60%
  - c) 50%
  - d) 40%
- 9) What did a scientist say you end up with if you fill a city with people?
  - a) pollution
  - b) traffic jams
  - c) homelessness
  - d) subsidence
- 10) What will exacerbate problems for cities?
  - a) increasing tourism
  - b) climate change
  - c) increasing urbanisation
  - d) emblems

# ROLE PLAY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

## **Role A – New York**

You think New York is the world's best city. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their cities. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Tokyo, Cairo or Sydney.

## **Role B – Tokyo**

You think Tokyo is the world's best city. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their cities. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): New York, Cairo or Sydney.

## **Role C – Cairo**

You think Cairo is the world's best city. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their cities. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Tokyo, New York or Sydney.

## **Role D – Sydney**

You think Sydney is the world's best city. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their cities. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Tokyo, Cairo or New York.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'city' and 'sink'.

<b>city</b>	<b>sink</b>
-------------	-------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• under</li><li>• calculated</li><li>• include</li><li>• lead</li><li>• prone</li><li>• contribute</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• compared</li><li>• despite</li><li>• new</li><li>• build</li><li>• place</li><li>• high</li></ul>
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# NEW YORK CITY SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

Write five GOOD questions about New York City in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

# NEW YORK CITY DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'city'?
3. What do you know about New York City?
4. What problems might a sinking city experience?
5. What do you think of the New York City skyline?
6. What are the good and bad things about skyscrapers?
7. Are cities becoming too big?
8. Why do you think New York is nicknamed 'the Big Apple'?
9. Is New York the world's greatest city?
10. What makes cities in your country prone to natural disasters?

*New York City sinking four millimetres a year – 29th May 2023*  
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# NEW YORK CITY DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'sink'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. Should New Yorkers be worried about their city sinking?
15. How do you feel about Venice sinking?
16. Should people move from cities into the countryside?
17. Why are cities so attractive for people from the countryside?
18. Would you like to live in New York City?
19. How can city planners and engineers stop New York sinking?
20. What questions would you like to ask the geophysicists?

# DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

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# DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# LANGUAGE - CLOZE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

Scientists say New York City is sinking (1) \_\_\_\_\_ up to four millimetres a year under the weight of all its (2) \_\_\_\_\_. A team of geophysicists from the United States Geological Survey calculated that there are 1,084,954 buildings in the city, weighing around 764 billion kilograms. This weight does not include fixtures and (3) \_\_\_\_\_ in buildings, the transport infrastructure, or the weight of the city's 8.5 million (4) \_\_\_\_\_. Lead researcher Dr Tom Parsons said the gradual subsidence, coupled with (5) \_\_\_\_\_ sea levels, could make New York (6) \_\_\_\_\_ to natural disasters. He warned that "every additional high-rise building could contribute to future flood risk," especially along coastal and riverfront areas.

The researchers compared what is happening to New York to the problems Venice and Jakarta are (7) \_\_\_\_\_. Venice is experiencing more floods despite the construction of a \$5.3 billion (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of sea walls. Indonesia is building a new capital city from (9) \_\_\_\_\_ because Jakarta is sinking. The United Nations has forecast that 70 per cent of the world's population will (10) \_\_\_\_\_ cities by 2050. Parsons said: "When you build a city and it gets full of people, you end up with subsidence." He warned that New York City was "(11) \_\_\_\_\_ of a place that people migrate to and that obviously has a high concentration of construction." Increasing urbanisation will (12) \_\_\_\_\_ problems for cities.

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |                |                  |                  |                 |
|-----|----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | (a) by         | (b) of           | (c) at           | (d) as          |
| 2.  | (a) skywalks   | (b) skylights    | (c) skyscrapers  | (d) skylines    |
| 3.  | (a) footings   | (b) fattens      | (c) fittings     | (d) fastens     |
| 4.  | (a) inhibitors | (b) inhibitions  | (c) inheritances | (d) inhabitants |
| 5.  | (a) rising     | (b) arising      | (c) raising      | (d) arisen      |
| 6.  | (a) prune      | (b) prone        | (c) prime        | (d) prong       |
| 7.  | (a) doing      | (b) experiencing | (c) being        | (d) having      |
| 8.  | (a) cistern    | (b) system       | (c) citing       | (d) concrete    |
| 9.  | (a) splash     | (b) stash        | (c) scratch      | (d) smash       |
| 10. | (a) inhibit    | (b) cohabit      | (c) habitual     | (d) inhabit     |
| 11. | (a) symbol     | (b) represent    | (c) model        | (d) emblematic  |
| 12. | (a) excavate   | (b) exacerbate   | (c) exaggerate   | (d) exact       |



# SPELLING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

## Paragraph 1

1. A team of sypeighsicsot
2. the United States oglilecGao Survey
3. This weight does not include irfxuets and fittings
4. the transport natirrursctufe
5. the city's 8.5 million inahbnttisa
6. especially along acoltas and riverfront areas

## Paragraph 2

7. Venice is experiencing more flosod
8. The United Nations has artefsoc that 70 per cent
9. you end up with sbncuiseed
10. alebtiemmc of a place that people migrate to
11. a high tearicocnntno of construction
12. Increasing urbanisation will aetxbaceer problems

# PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

**Number these lines in the correct order.**

- ( ) its skyscrapers. A team of geophysicists from the United States Geological Survey calculated that there
- ( ) of a place that people migrate to and that obviously has a high concentration
- ( **1** ) Scientists say New York City is sinking by up to four millimetres a year under the weight of all
- ( ) and fittings in buildings, the transport infrastructure, or the weight of the city's 8.5 million
- ( ) walls. Indonesia is building a new capital city from scratch because Jakarta is sinking. The United Nations has
- ( ) and Jakarta are having. Venice is experiencing more floods despite the construction of a \$5.3 billion system of sea
- ( ) of construction." Increasing urbanisation will exacerbate problems for cities.
- ( ) are 1,084,954 buildings in the city, weighing around 764 billion kilograms. This weight does not include fixtures
- ( ) a city and it gets full of people, you end up with subsidence." He warned that New York City was "emblematic
- ( ) forecast that 70 per cent of the world's population will inhabit cities by 2050. Parsons said: "When you build
- ( ) levels, could make New York prone to natural disasters. He warned that "every additional high-
- ( ) inhabitants. Lead researcher Dr Tom Parsons said the gradual subsidence, coupled with rising sea
- ( ) The researchers compared what is happening to New York to the problems Venice
- ( ) rise building could contribute to future flood risk," especially along coastal and riverfront areas.

# PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

1. under of the Sinking skyscrapers . all its weight
2. does include and not This fittings . weight fixtures
3. 8.5 million The the inhabitants . weight city's of
4. natural disasters . to prone It could New York make
5. future building risk . to could contribute High-rise flood
6. experiencing the more construction . Venice is despite floods
7. new from It's a city scratch . capital building
8. gets and a build full . You city it
9. people Emblematic migrate to . of that a place
10. for cities . urbanisation problems Increasing will exacerbate

# CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

Scientists say New York City is sinking by *up / down* to four millimetres a year under the *weights / weight* of all its skyscrapers. A team of geophysicists from the United States Geological Survey *calculations / calculated* that there are 1,084,954 buildings in the city, weighing *abound / around* 764 billion kilograms. This weight does not include fixtures and *fittings / footings* in buildings, the transport infrastructure, or the weight of the city's 8.5 million *inhibitors / inhabitants*. Lead researcher Dr Tom Parsons said the *gradual / gradually* subsidence, *coupled / tripled* with rising sea levels, could make New York *prone / prune* to natural disasters. He warned that "every additional high-rise building could contribute to future flood risk," especially *along / under* coastal and riverfront areas.

The researchers compared what is *happening / experiencing* to New York to the problems Venice and Jakarta are having. Venice is *experienced / experiencing* more floods *despite / in spite* the construction of a \$5.3 billion system of sea walls. Indonesia is building a new capital city from *snatch / scratch* because Jakarta is sinking. The United Nations has forecast that 70 per cent of the world's population will *inhabit / inhibit* cities by 2050. Parsons said: "When you build a city and it gets *filled / full* of people, you end up with *subsidence / subsistence*." He warned that New York City was "*emblematic / emphatic* of a place that people migrate to and that obviously has a *high / height* concentration of construction." Increasing urbanisation will *exacerbate / exterminate* problems for cities.

**Talk about the connection between each pair of words in italics, and why the correct word is correct. Look up the definition of new words.**

# INSERT THE VOWELS (a, e, i, o, u)

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

Sc\_\_nt\_sts s\_y N\_w Y\_rk C\_ty \_s s\_nk\_ng by \_p t\_  
f\_\_r m\_ll\_m\_tr\_s \_ y\_\_r \_nd\_r th\_ w\_\_ght \_f \_ll \_ts  
skyscr\_p\_rs. \_ t\_\_m \_f g\_\_phys\_c\_sts fr\_m th\_ \_n\_t\_d  
St\_t\_s G\_\_l\_g\_c\_l S\_rv\_y c\_lcl\_t\_d th\_t th\_r\_ \_r\_  
1,084,954 b\_\_ld\_ngs \_n th\_ c\_ty, w\_\_gh\_ng \_r\_\_nd 764  
b\_ll\_\_n k\_l\_gr\_ms. Th\_s w\_\_ght d\_\_s n\_t \_ncl\_d\_  
f\_xt\_r\_s \_nd f\_tt\_ngs \_n b\_\_ld\_ngs, th\_ tr\_nsp\_r\_t  
\_nfr\_str\_ct\_r\_, \_r th\_ w\_\_ght \_f th\_ c\_ty's 8.5 m\_ll\_\_n  
\_nh\_b\_t\_n\_t\_s. L\_\_d r\_s\_\_rch\_r Dr T\_m P\_rs\_ns s\_\_d th\_  
gr\_d\_\_l s\_bs\_d\_nc\_, c\_\_pl\_d w\_th r\_s\_ng s\_\_ l\_v\_ls,  
c\_\_ld m\_k\_ N\_w Y\_rk pr\_n\_ t\_ n\_t\_r\_l d\_s\_st\_rs. H\_  
w\_rn\_d th\_t "\_v\_ry \_dd\_t\_\_n\_l h\_gh-r\_s\_ b\_\_ld\_ng  
c\_\_ld c\_ntr\_b\_t\_ t\_ f\_t\_r\_ fl\_\_d r\_sk," \_sp\_c\_\_lly \_l\_ng  
c\_\_st\_l \_nd r\_v\_rfr\_nt \_r\_\_s.

Th\_ r\_s\_\_rch\_rs c\_mpr\_d wh\_t \_s h\_pp\_n\_ng t\_ N\_w  
Y\_rk t\_ th\_ pr\_bl\_ms V\_n\_c\_ \_nd J\_k\_rt\_ \_r\_ h\_v\_ng.  
V\_n\_c\_ \_s \_xp\_r\_\_nc\_ng m\_r\_ fl\_\_ds d\_sp\_t\_ th\_  
c\_nstr\_ct\_\_n \_f \_ \$5.3 b\_ll\_\_n syst\_m \_f s\_\_ w\_lls.  
\_nd\_n\_s\_\_ \_s b\_\_ld\_ng \_ n\_w c\_p\_t\_l c\_ty fr\_m  
scr\_tch b\_c\_\_s\_ J\_k\_rt\_ \_s s\_nk\_ng. Th\_ \_n\_t\_d  
N\_t\_\_ns h\_s f\_r\_c\_st th\_t 70 p\_r c\_nt \_f th\_ w\_rld's  
p\_p\_l\_t\_\_n w\_ll \_nh\_b\_t c\_t\_\_s by 2050. P\_rs\_ns s\_\_d:  
"Wh\_n y\_\_ b\_\_ld \_ c\_ty \_nd \_t g\_ts f\_ll \_f p\_\_pl\_,  
y\_\_ \_nd \_p w\_th s\_bs\_d\_nc\_." H\_ w\_rn\_d th\_t N\_w  
Y\_rk C\_ty w\_s "\_mbl\_m\_t\_c \_f \_ pl\_c\_ th\_t p\_\_pl\_  
m\_gr\_t\_ t\_ \_nd th\_t \_bv\_\_sly h\_s \_ h\_gh  
c\_nc\_ntr\_t\_\_n \_f c\_nstr\_ct\_\_n." \_ncr\_\_s\_ng \_rb\_n\_s\_t\_\_n  
w\_ll \_x\_c\_rb\_t\_ pr\_bl\_ms f\_r c\_t\_\_s.

# PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

scientists say new york city is sinking by up to four millimetres a year under the weight of all its skyscrapers a team of geophysicists from the united states geological survey calculated that there are 1084954 buildings in the city weighing around 764 billion kilograms this weight does not include fixtures and fittings in buildings the transport infrastructure or the weight of the citys 85 million inhabitants lead researcher dr tom parsons said the gradual subsidence coupled with rising sea levels could make new york prone to natural disasters he warned that every additional highrise building could contribute to future flood risk especially along coastal and riverfront areas

the researchers compared what is happening to new york to the problems venice and jakarta are having venice is experiencing more floods despite the construction of a 53 billion system of sea walls indonesia is building a new capital city from scratch because jakarta is sinking the united nations has forecast that 70 per cent of the worlds population will inhabit cities by 2050 parsons said when you build a city and it gets full of people you end up with subsidence he warned that new york city was emblematic of a place that people migrate to and that obviously has a high concentration of construction increasing urbanisation will exacerbate problems for cities

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2305/230529-new-york-is-sinking.html>

Scientists say New York City is sinking by up to four millimetres a year under the weight of all its skyscrapers. A team of geophysicists from the United States Geological Survey calculated that there are 1,084,954 buildings in the city, weighing around 764 billion kilograms. This weight does not include fixtures and fittings in buildings, the transport infrastructure, or the weight of the city's 8.5 million inhabitants. Lead researcher Dr Tom Parsons said the gradual subsidence, coupled with rising sea levels, could make New York prone to natural disasters. He warned that "every addition of a high-rise building could contribute to future flood risk," especially along coastal and riverfront areas. The researchers compared what is happening to New York to the problems Venice and Jakarta are having. Venice is experiencing more floods despite the construction of a \$5.3 billion system of seawalls. Indonesia is building a new capital city from scratch because Jakarta is sinking. The United Nations has forecast that 70 percent of the world's population will live in cities by 2050. Parsons said: "When you build a city and it gets full of people, you end up with subsidence." He warned that New York City was "emblematic of a place that people migrate to and that obviously has a high concentration of construction." Increasing urbanisation will exacerbate problems for cities.







# HOMEWORK

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about this news story. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. NEW YORK CITY:** Make a poster about New York City. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. CITIES:** Write a magazine article about encouraging people to move out of cities. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against this.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?** Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

**6. LETTER:** Write a letter to an expert on New York City. Ask him/her three questions about it. Give him/her three of your opinions on New York. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## VOCABULARY (p.4)

1. e    2. c    3. b    4. f    5. a    6. g    7. d  
8. n    9. h    10. k    11. m    12. i    13. l    14. j

## TRUE / FALSE (p.5)

- 1 T    2 T    3 F    4 T    5 T    6 T    7 F    8 F

## SYNONYM MATCH (p.5)

1. e	2. h	3. a	4. c	5. i
6. b	7. j	8. g	9. d	10. f

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (p.9)

1. Geophysicists
2. 764 billion kilograms
3. 8.5 million people
4. Additional high-rise buildings
5. Along coastal and riverfront areas
6. Venice and Jakarta
7. A system of sea walls
8. 70%
9. Subsidence
10. Increasing urbanisation

## WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER (p.19)

1. Sinking under the weight of all its skyscrapers.
2. This weight does not include fixtures and fittings.
3. The weight of the city's 8.5 million inhabitants.
4. It could make New York prone to natural disasters.
5. High-rise building could contribute to future flood risk.
6. Venice is experiencing more floods despite the construction.
7. It's building a new capital city from scratch.
8. You build a city and it gets full.
9. Emblematic of a place that people migrate to.
10. Increasing urbanisation will exacerbate problems for cities.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ (p.10)

1. b    2. d    3. c    4. a    5. b    6. a    7. c    8. a    9. d    10. c

## ALL OTHER EXERCISES

Please check for yourself by looking at the Article on page 2.  
(It's good for your English ;-)