

1 Underline the words to complete the sentences. Use a dictionary to check the words in bold.

- a People of different backgrounds and cultures have *the same / different / similar* **values**.
- b These *traditional / modern* buildings are reminders of the rich culture and **heritage** of the city.
- c They believe that their country will have a **prosperous** future and their standard of living will *improve / decline*.
- d This city is a financial **powerhouse**. Its economy is one of the *strongest / weakest / slowest* in the country.

Singapore: a world-class city-state

In South-East Asia is a small, yet powerful city-state. Its economy is one of the strongest in Asia. Its streets are clean, its crime rates are low, and its weather is hot year-round. Its small geographic area, measuring some 719 km, is home to communities of Chinese, Malaysians, and Indians. Its name is Singapore. The name *Singapore* comes from the Sanskrit words *simha* and *pura*, meaning “lion” and “city” respectively. Previously under British rule, the city-state gained its own government in 1959 and became an independent state after separating from Malaysia in 1965.

Over the past 50 years, Singapore has grown to become a major economic success. It now has one of the wealthiest economies in the world, with a GDP per capita even higher than the US. It may be hard to believe that the city-state was once a fishing village. With few natural resources, Singapore has invested in its port, the second busiest worldwide, as well as opened its doors to foreign businesses. In fact, Singapore is one of the best places to do business in the world. Its open economy and low tax rates have attracted investment, and overseas corporations including Microsoft, the BBC, ESPN, and the Discovery Channel have opened regional branches there. Along with its growing economy, property prices have steadily risen.

Singapore is well known for balancing the modern alongside its history and rich cultural heritage. Traditional values and modern influences can be seen and felt throughout, in its architecture, food, and even shopping. Classical buildings from Singapore’s colonial past sit alongside modern high-rises. Michelin winners can be found at local hawker stalls, and five-star international restaurants are opening around the city-state. From budget shopping at Bugis Street to major brands at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore is filled with a mixture of old and new. It is a small but prosperous powerhouse with Western influences and traditional Eastern values.

2 Read the text and check the sentences True (T) or False (F).

- | | |
|---|---|
| a Singapore has hot summers and cold winters. | T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b Singapore was previously ruled by the United States. | T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c People of different cultures and ethnics live in Singapore. | T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d Singapore developed from a small village into today's economic powerhouse. | T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e Low tax rates and an open economy make Singapore an attractive place to do business. | T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f Singapore can be described as a city-state where East meets West. | T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g You can only find new, modern buildings in Singapore. | T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> |

3 Talk to a partner and answer the questions.

- a** What do you like best about your city or town?
- b** Do you think it is a good idea for cities to have a mixture of Western and Eastern cultures? Why / Why not?
- c** Would you want to live in Singapore? Why / Why not?