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UNIT 4

Getting from A to B



一桥飞架南北，天堑变通途。

——毛泽东

*A bridge will fly to span the north and south,
turning a deep chasm into a thoroughfare.*

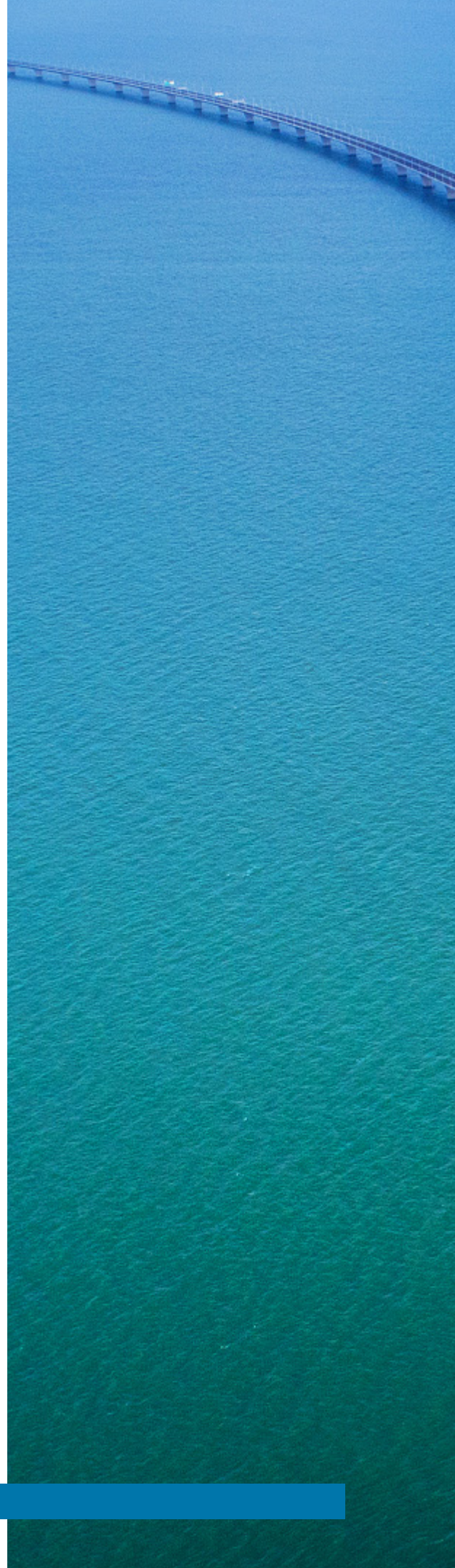
—Mao Zedong

*Public transportation is like a magnifying glass
that shows you civilization up close.*

—Chris Gethard

In this unit, you will learn to:

- use words and expressions related to transportation
- identify minimal pairs with vowels and consonants
- know different kinds of transportation
- talk about China's achievements in transportation





- 1** The following words in Column A will appear in the listening practices in this unit. Get familiar with them by matching them with their definitions in Column B.

A	B
1 autonomous	a a strong vehicle with large wheels, used for pulling farm machinery
2 capacity	b the ability to move or travel around easily
3 tractor	c the business of transporting things such as goods to the place where they are needed
4 mobility	d (of a vehicle) that has the technology to drive itself without a person in control
5 logistics	e the journey to work every day
6 one-way	f the problem of too much traffic in a place
7 pedestrian	g traveling from one place to another but not back again
8 commute	h to move into a small space with the result that it is full
9 cram	i the number of things or people that a container or space can hold
10 congestion	j a person walking in the street and not traveling in a vehicle

- 2** Listen to the following sentences and fill in the blanks with what you hear.

- 1 It was a(n) _____ trip for her since she decided not to come back again.
- 2 Each stadium had a seating _____ of about 50,000.
- 3 The reason was traced to a combination of transport _____ and capacity constraints.
- 4 It could detect _____ and navigate its way around parked cars.
- 5 I can hear the sound of a(n) _____ plowing in the field nearby.
- 6 Which is better, shorter _____ time or lower rent? It's a tough choice.
- 7 We all managed to _____ into his car.

- 8 _____ frequently reduces traffic to walking pace.
- 9 They are trying to develop _____ vehicles that could be used in combat.
- 10 An electric wheelchair has given her greater _____.

3 Transportation plays a major role in our daily life. As transportation systems have developed over time, there are several choices for us to get from one place to another. Watch a video clip about transportation and then discuss the following questions in small groups.

- 1 What means of transportation are mentioned in the video clip?
- 2 What are the functions of transportation in daily life?
- 3 Besides the means of transportation mentioned in the video clip, do you know any other means? List them.



Learning the Skills

Pretest

Listen to some words and circle the words you hear. Each word will be read twice.



- | | | | | | |
|----|---------|--------|----|-------|-------|
| 1 | bought | boat | 2 | late | let |
| 3 | bed | bad | 4 | feel | fill |
| 5 | luck | look | 6 | heart | hot |
| 7 | heat | hit | 8 | cheap | chip |
| 9 | thin | thing | 10 | light | right |
| 11 | leaf | leave | 12 | face | faith |
| 13 | breathe | breeze | 14 | west | vest |
| 15 | price | prize | | | |

Listening Skill

Identifying Minimal Pairs

Minimal pairs are two words that are pronounced almost in the same way, but they have one sound that makes them different. The sound can be a vowel or a consonant. For example, in English, “pill” and “bill” are a minimal pair and so are “pill” and “till,” “till” and “kill,” or “bed” and “bad,” “sad” and “said,” and so on. The words in a minimal pair have completely different, often unrelated definitions. So it's important to be able to hear the differences between sounds in order to catch the meaning accurately and avoid misunderstanding. Below are some common minimal pairs which would cause confusion in listening. Listen to their pronunciations and pay special attention to the differences between the similar vowel sounds and consonant sounds.

Minimal pairs with vowel sounds

- /ɪ/ and /i:/
sin-seen bin-bean fill-feel fit-feet
slip-sleep grin-green chip-cheap did-deed

- /e/ and /eɪ/
wet-wait pen-pain sell-sale test-taste
well-whale get-gate west-waist fell-fail
- /e/ and /æ/
men-man said-sad bed-bad lend-land
send-sand kettle-cattle dead-dad merry-marry
- /æ/ and /ʌ/
bat-but ran-run dam-dumb ankle-uncle
flash-flush track-truck fan-fun lamp-lump
- /əʊ/ and /ɔː/
so-saw boat-bought drone-drawn folk-fork
note-nought poke-pork show-shore snow-snore

Minimal pairs with consonant sounds

- /n/ and /ŋ/
thin-thing sin-sing win-wing ban-bang
kin-king ton-tongue pin-ping bun-bung
- /l/ and /r/
alive-arrive fly-fry light-right long-wrong
collect-correct lead-read load-road play-pray
- /f/ and /v/
fan-van ferry-very leaf-leave fast-vast
safe-save belief-believe file-vile staff-starve
- /s/ and /θ/
sing-thing mouse-mouth face-faith sick-thick
sort-thought seem-theme some-thumb sank-thank
- /ð/ and /z/
with-whizz clothe-close (v.) clothing-closing teething-teasing
breathe-breeze lathe-laze then-Zen bathe-baize

Tips

- A good way to distinguish the two words in a minimal pair is to pay attention to the organs of speech, such as lips, teeth, tongue, etc., which can make different sounds.
- If you cannot distinguish the two words clearly, you can use the context which will give you a clue to what the speaker is saying.

Practice

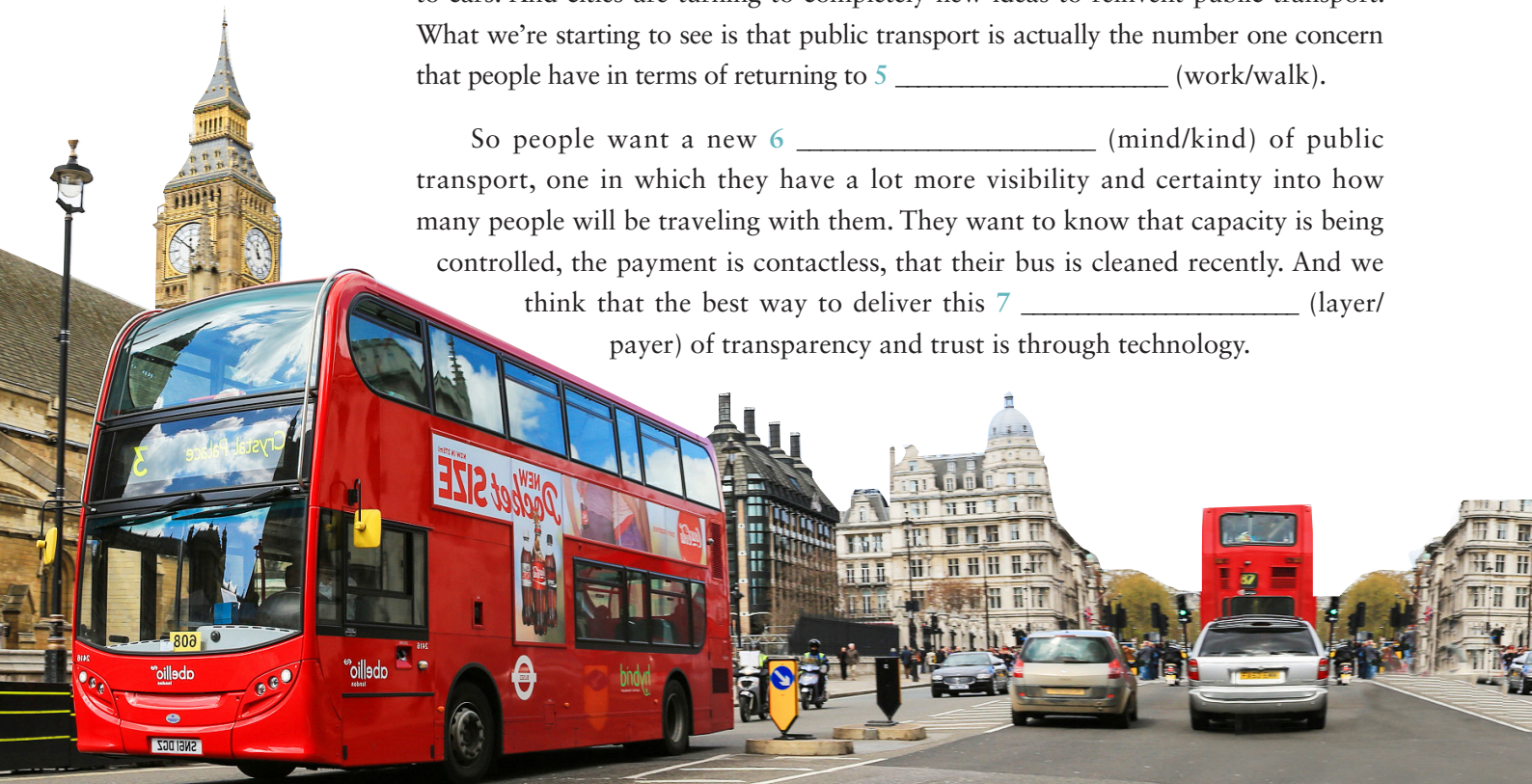
1 Listen to the following sentences and fill in the blanks with what you hear.

- 1 Don't _____ to that _____.
- 2 He is _____ and that tree is _____.
- 3 _____ is at the _____.
- 4 That is the _____ I have seen.
- 5 This is _____ and that's her _____.
- 6 The _____ is in the _____.
- 7 Turn _____ at the _____ in the lighthouse.
- 8 I like to _____ to _____.

2 Listen to a passage about the new normal of work commute and fill in the blanks by choosing the words you hear.

Public transport isn't dead, but it's going to need to change. The question is: How? Scenes like this were once the **1** _____ (form/norm): 2 million people a day **2** _____ (creamed/crammed) onto the New York subway, 5 million on London's underground. That disappeared seemingly overnight. Transport for London says demand is down 85%. Health concerns instead have taken a front **3** _____ (seat/sit). Above ground across Europe and the U.S., bike sales have **4** _____ (soared/poured). There's also been a return to cars. And cities are turning to completely new ideas to reinvent public transport. What we're starting to see is that public transport is actually the number one concern that people have in terms of returning to **5** _____ (work/walk).

So people want a new **6** _____ (mind/kind) of public transport, one in which they have a lot more visibility and certainty into how many people will be traveling with them. They want to know that capacity is being controlled, the payment is contactless, that their bus is cleaned recently. And we think that the best way to deliver this **7** _____ (layer/payer) of transparency and trust is through technology.



Active Listening

Topic 1

Autonomous Cars

Listen to a news report and choose the best answer to each of the following questions.

- Which of the following is NOT the promise of autonomous vehicles?
 - Less traffic.
 - Less pollution.
 - Less noise.
 - Fewer deadly accidents.
- Which of the following is NOT among the four test environments mentioned in the news report?
 - High-speed area.
 - Rural road.
 - Tunnel.
 - Highway.
- Which of the following is NOT mentioned in the news?
 - Huge test tracks are being built to teach autonomous vehicles how to be safe.
 - Virtual pedestrians are involved in the testing.
 - Researchers and engineers have solved the problems that are keeping autonomous vehicles off public roads.
 - The speaker believes that the pain points for normal driving today are the traffic jam problem, commute problem, and parking problem.
- According to the news, what could possibly be connected over the 5G cellular networks?
 - Vehicles.
 - Pedestrians and bicycles.
 - Something in the logistical chain.
 - All of the above.
- What do we learn from the news about autonomous vehicles?
 - They act more quickly than people on the streets.
 - They can deliver packages to your door in the future.
 - They can only be applied to the taxi service or trucking.
 - They will run into unusual or tricky obstacles without human control.

Topic 2

What Is Bike Sharing?

1 Watch a video clip and decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F).

- 1 Bike sharing is still very new to Americans.
- 2 You can take as many rides as you want during your access period for no additional cost.
- 3 Bikes checked out longer than half an hour will start to collect usage fees.
- 4 If you are in a store running errands, the bike will be locked up.
- 5 The service team ensures a right number of bikes at each station at appropriate time.

2 Watch the video clip again and fill in the blanks with what you hear.

What Is Bike Sharing?



RIDE

- Purchase access to the system.
- The ride should be as short as **1** _____.
- Riders can avoid usage fees by **2** _____ into a station and immediately back out.



RETURN

- Return your B-cycle to any station, and watch for the signals as the bike has been **3** _____.
- Being able to return bikes at any station makes it easy to **4** _____ and connect to public transit.



REPEAT

- Take as many rides as you want with your access pass, but keep every ride short.
- Restrictions on **5** _____ keep bikes available for all riders.

Topic 3**City of Vancouver: Transportation 2040**

1 Watch a video clip and fill in the blanks with what you hear.

Time	Transportation
Over the past 25 years	Major investments in walking, 1 _____, and transit have turned Vancouver into one of the world's most 2 _____ cities.
Over the past 15 years	The number of cars entering the city every day has 3 _____, even though there are many more people, jobs, and trips overall.
During the Olympic Games in 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vancouver accommodated over 40% more trips into downtown but with 30% fewer 4 _____.• Trips on foot, bikes, and transit 5 _____.
2040	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put 6 _____ by making walking safer and more enjoyable.• Create 7 _____ that support vibrant communities and commercial life.• Manage 8 _____ and support programs like 9 _____.• Build 10 _____.• Invest in fast and reliable transit.

2 Watch the video clip again and answer the following questions.

1 What does “The City of Vancouver’s Transportation 2040 Plan” provide?

2 What makes Vancouver a walkable city?

3 Why does Vancouver decide not to build a freeway in the plan?

- 3** Dictation: Listen to the following passage. Altogether the passage will be read to you four times. During the first reading, which will be done at normal speed, listen and try to understand the meaning. For the second and third readings, the passage will be read sentence by sentence, or phrase by phrase, with intervals of 15 seconds. The last reading will be done at normal speed again and during this time you should check your work.

A large rectangular area with a light blue border and horizontal ruling lines, intended for writing the dictation response. The area is empty and occupies most of the page below the instructions.

Sharing Your Ideas

China's Achievements in Transportation

In recent years, a number of China's technological innovations have been making their moves in the world. Among them, four stand out with a reputation of China's "Four New Great Inventions" in modern times, which have made the daily life of the public more and more convenient. Watch a video clip about China's Four New Great Inventions. Work in small groups and discuss why China could take a pride in transportation. You can follow the guidance below:

- What do you know about the high-speed train of China?
- What do you know about the bike sharing system in China? What advantages does it have?
- What do you think of these changes in China's transportation?

Useful expressions for your reference

- less time-consuming
- at the speed of
- the first choice for people to travel
- promote economic development
- scan a QR (Quick Response) code
- occupy the streets
- indispensable living appliances
- coin the new term of
- make the daily life of the public more and more convenient
- Chinese high-speed trains not only...but also...
- By combining...and..., China's bike sharing system provides the public with...
- China is demonstrating its prominence in...via...
- The lives of Chinese citizens are becoming...

