**Reading passage:**

**Country vs City: Where Is Better to Live?**

**The Case for Living in The Country**

**1. It's cheap.**You have to actively try to spend more than $20 on a meal, even a good one. A movie still costs single digits. No one has a clue or cares what brand of clothing you're wearing, let alone whether your shoes, purse or belt are this year's season or last. And did I mention housing? You can live in a real house with multiple bedrooms, multiple bathrooms and a garage. Maybe even a pool. And you can own it for under $200,000. Yup, you read that right. I didn't leave off any zeros.

**2. There's space** – for you, for your dog, for your kids, between you and your annoying neighbors. An ad on the NY subway sums up: "Raising a baby in an NYC apartment is like growing an oak tree in a thimble（顶针）." In the city, you live on top of each other. Your kids and your dog barely know what grass is. In the country, you have something called a yard. You run around, kick a football and chase fireflies. You go sledding and build snowmen on fresh snow that hasn't been trodden by hundreds of others. You can actually identify constellations because you see lots of them each night. You are fascinated by a lot more interesting animals than squirrels, and your dog acts like a dog, you don't have to carry around bags for its poop.

**3. You aren't reliant on public transit.** You don't have to push your way onto an overcrowded subway car only to find yourself squashed next to someone who smells or elbows you. You aren't late because there's been a delay and some robot-like voice has to tell you about it over and over on the speaker. You can drive yourself where you want, when you want. Even if there's traffic (and there isn't much outside of cities), you can usually find another way to go. You are in control, and there's plenty of (free) parking.

**4. You don't get suspicious when people are nice to you.** People say hello and "how are you" and generally mean it. You go to the grocery store and have a decent chance of seeing at least someone you know. Your doctor actually calls you back the same day you call with a concern. People don't size you up constantly based upon your job, social status or income. Volunteer work isn't something you do for your resume. You feel a part of a genuine community, not just one peon （苦工）out of millions.

**The case for living in the city**

**1. Walking. It's a thing.** Forget about having to spend a quarter of your paycheck on a car. And forget about spending two hours a day stuck in traffic. Living in the city means that walking is often an option. And if it's not, commuting by public transport makes you feel like you're part of the world: you and others are on the same boat, so to speak, taking time to pause and read, or listen to music, before reaching work or going home. And, from London to Paris, Amsterdam to Vancouver, chances are you will be also be lucky enough to be able to bike everywhere – making you both fitter and happier.

**2. The entire world is (almost) on your doorstep.** I don't know about you, but it would be a shame to die on the way to the hospital – or give birth on the side of a road. Which probably won't happen in the city. You can order anything from online stores and – miracle! – receive it the next day. Museums, galleries, libraries are easily accessible, a lot of them free. And food: enough said. Who likes to have the choice only between a grim pub serving dismal burgers or fish-and-chips and the local Subway branch at the back of a derelict （废弃的）mall? Not me.

**3. It teaches you tolerance.** The world is a diverse place – and in the city, you learn that fast. There's a reason New Yorkers are considered to be the most thick-skinned people on earth: nothing fazes（烦扰）them, because no one has time to be fazed and they've seen it all anyway. Someone is rude to on the subway? Move along. Someone cuts you while queuing in the supermarket? Get ahead and get even. But cities also teach patience and empathy because, after all, you're all in this together. Compromise is in the very fabric of city living. Neighbours complaining about your Saturday party? You have to reach an agreement. People who don't act, think, or speak like you do? Kids who annoy you by listening to rap music in the bus? They share your space, too. And you, theirs. It's an imperfect and fragile microcosm, which, no matter its many drawbacks, seems to work. Almost like magic.

**4. The countryside is not like living in *Gilmore Girls*（美剧名）**. If you think the countryside is like living on the idyllic（田园诗般的） *Gilmore Girls' set*, you're mistaken. True country-living means backbreaking work, including thankless chores performed before dawn. Here in Sydney, I pop to the corner shop to get eggs at midnight if I want. And if you're not a true back-to-the-lander living on a 120-acre farm in the middle of nowhere, you then have to live in a community where everything you do will be scrutinized （仔细检查）. Privacy will be hard to maintain. No such thing will happen in the city, where people couldn't care less whether you like to walk around with your pet snake or wear mini-skirts in sub-freezing weather. Short of （除了…之外）becoming a hermit, if you're a private individual or an introvert, city life is for you.

**Answer the following questions.**

1. How much will a movie probably cost you if you live in the countryside?
2. What does the writer intend to show by quoting "Raising a baby in an NYC apartment is like growing an oak tree in a thimble."?
3. What means of transportation can you use in the countryside?
4. Apart from public transit and private car, what other means of transportation can city people use?
5. What are city people supposed to do if their neighbors complain to them about their behavior?
6. What is hard to maintain in the countryside but easy to keep in the city?

**Key:**

1. Less than $10.
2. City is crowded. / There isn’t much space in the city. / In the city , you live on top of each other.
3. Private car.
4. Walking and biking.
5. Compromise and reach an agreement.
6. Privacy.