Show your student a spidergram with the word 'home' in the middle and eight arrows pointing to eight pictures with the following phrases below 'finding a home', 'types of dwelling', 'suburban living', 'flat-sharing', 'family style and structure', 'the sense of exile' and 'homelessness'. Get your students to read the captions and describe the pictures in pairs. Once they have finished, get some students focus on different issues they will encounter in the following sessions. Write the captions on the board and ask your learners to tell you what they know about each particular issue, what they think about it and so on. Since there are so many immigrant's children in my class, the caption 'the sense of exile' is often a delicate but also very interesting issue to talk about. Then continue with a short exercise involving some new vocabulary:

Ten things you should know before moving into a new home. Complete the ten sentences with the words listed below: animals, apartment, children, friendly, highway, hospital, rent, repair, stairs, windows.

It's a fact nowadays that most people will move to a new location many times in their lives. Below are ten important things to consider before choosing to move into a new home.

1. **Location** means *where* the home is. For example, is it located near your work, school, or perhaps a *hospital*...

2. **Affordability** means *your ability to pay* the monthly *rent*... or (if you want to buy the home) mortgage payments.

3. **Neighbourhood** means *the area around home*. Are your neighbours *friendly*...? Is the area clean? Is there much crime?

4. **Sunlight**, of course, means *the natural light from the sun*. Does the home have many *windows*...?

5. **Security** means *safety*. An *apartment*... On the third floor is probably safer than one on the ground floor.

6. **Age** means *how old* the home is. You may have to spend lots of money to *repair*... An old home.

7. **Noise**, of course, can be a problem. You probably don't want to live next to a noisy *highway*...

8. **Elevators** are important if you are injured or elderly and can't walk up *stairs*...

9. **Pets** are not allowed in some rented homes, but some small *animals*... Like fish might be okay.

10. **Size** is something to think about, especially if you plan to have more *children*... in the future.
Step three: ask and tell

Introduce some culture input about dwellings like the following:

- **City apartments & flats**: With the rising cost of property, city centre apartments have become a form of dwelling generally only available to richer people. In Britain flats are often found in large houses that have been converted into smaller separate dwellings, ranging from ‘bedsits’ to much larger ones. In a modern city like New York you can find elegant old apartments, chic loft conversions and ultra-modern ‘dead-tech’ apartments in skyscrapers.

- **Cottages**: they were once the typical dwellings of peasants in Britain and Ireland. With thick walls and thatched roof, most of them have been modernised now and look much more attractive. They are often rented by city-dwellers for a quiet country holiday. Some cottages have been converted into bed and breakfast accommodation for tourist. In the US, they are generally called lodge.

- **Suburban houses**: All cities have suburbs, but the idea of suburban living began in the US. The typical American suburban house is a modern, usually spacious dwelling with a front and back yard. Mass produced, these houses are more or less identical, built along roads that often extend for miles in every direction. In the UK are architecturally more varied.

- **Terraced housing**: a product of 19th-century industrial society, terraced houses are a common feature in many industrial towns. After the Second World War, many of them were demolished to construct detached and semi-detached houses but in recent years some terraces have been renovated to provide attractive but affordable housing for young professionals, as well as rented accommodation for students.

- **Tower-blocks & housing estates**: built to replace terraces, housing estates began to appear in Britain during the early 20th century providing state-owned accommodation for poorer families. They were often constructed on the outskirts of cities. Now they often host vulnerable sections of society, although the sense of living in a closed neighbourhood can also create a stronger sense of community. The US equivalent of housing estates are known as ‘the projects’.

- **Trailer parks**: trailer parks, semi-permanent camping grounds designed mainly for mobile and motor homes, are usually found on the outskirts of American cities, and poorer people live there. Mobile homes are prefabricated houses that can be moved from one place to another; motor homes are self-contained vehicles. Although extremely small, motor homes remain symbolic of the desire for freedom of movement that is such an important aspect of American culture.

Now ask your student which type of dwelling ...

1. are coming back into fashion? **terraced houses**
2. are found in the countryside? **cottage, detached house**
3. seem temporary? **mobile homes, motor homes**
4. were mainly built during the 19th century? **terraced housing**
5. used to be large houses? **city apartments, bedsits**
6. are generally owned by the government? **housing estate / projects**
7. can be transported from one place to another? **mobile homes, motor homes**

8. are likely to be inhabited by high-earning urban professionals? **city apartments, terraced houses, suburban houses**

9. are often for the vulnerable sections of society? **housing estate / projects**

10. tend to be extremely repetitive? **terraced houses, suburban houses, housing estates/projects**.

After being sure that your students are able to make the difference between one dwelling and another you are ready to jump to this dynamic task that involve speaking and socialise with others.

Prepare a certain amount of pictures depicting different kind of dwellings. Find two or three A5 pictures of flats, for example (this one was taken by me during in New York City):

Do the same with bedsits, detached houses, projects/housing states, mobile homes, loft conversion and terraced houses. A enough copies for everyone and hand one to each student, explain them to hide it from everyone. After a moment of observation they have to stand up and ask questions about the dwelling the other has, they must interact without using the words of bedsits, mobile homes, etc. after ten minutes of talking, ask them to stop and to gather according to the type of accommodation in 2 minutes. There should be seven different groups. Ask them to show the picture. The group with all the members and the same type of dwelling will be the winner.

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