



# Home and Local Area

Short-answer questions: Medellin's Metrocable | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

## 1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. What makes transport difficult in hilly neighbourhoods?
2. How can better transport change a local area?
3. Should public transport connect poorer areas first?
4. What public places would improve your neighbourhood?

### Exercise 1 at a glance

Read one factual text. Answers are in the text. Copy exact words and check the question carefully before choosing your answer.

## 2. Read for overall understanding

Read the text. How did the Metrocable affect some neighbourhoods in Medellin?

### Medellin's Metrocable

Medellin is a Colombian city built in a valley, with many neighbourhoods climbing up steep hillsides. For years, people living high above the centre had long and difficult journeys to work, school or medical appointments. Buses could be slow on narrow roads, and walking up the hills was tiring. Some residents felt physically close to the city but socially and economically far away from its opportunities.

In 2004, Medellin opened its first Metrocable line. It was an aerial cable car system connected to the city's metro network. Instead of being a tourist ride, it was designed as public transport for residents who lived in hillside communities. The cabins could move above steep streets and crowded roads, which made them suitable for places where building a normal railway would have been difficult.

The cable cars helped reduce travel time for many passengers. A journey that once involved slow buses or long walks could become a shorter trip down the hill to the metro. This made it easier for residents to reach jobs, education and services in other parts of the city. A shorter journey also meant that some people had more time for family, study or rest.

The transport project was linked to wider changes in public space. In some areas, the city also built parks, schools, libraries and pedestrian routes near stations. These improvements were meant to make neighbourhoods safer and more connected, not only easier to leave. The stations became places where residents could meet, use services or simply feel that their area was being included in the city's future.

The Metrocable did not remove every problem. Some communities still faced poverty, violence or a lack of jobs. Critics also point out that transport alone cannot solve deep inequality. However, the project showed that transport can be part of social planning. A cable car line can give people access to the city while also bringing attention and investment to their local area.

The design of the system also changed how people outside these neighbourhoods viewed them. Stations made hillside communities more visible on the city map. Visitors, planners and journalists began to travel to areas that had previously been ignored or described mainly through crime. This attention did not solve poverty, but it helped challenge the idea that poor neighbourhoods should remain disconnected.

For local residents, reliability mattered as much as the image of the project. A cable car that runs frequently can reduce the uncertainty of daily travel. If people know how long a journey will take, they can arrive at work on time, attend classes more regularly or plan appointments more confidently. This practical reliability is one reason the system became part of ordinary daily life.

Other cities have studied Medellin's example because it used a technology often associated with mountains or tourism in a new way. Similar systems have appeared in other Latin American cities, but Medellin remains one of the best-known examples. In Medellin, the cable cars became a daily link between homes on the hillsides and opportunities in the wider city.

### 3. Strategy focus

#### Avoid nearby distractors

A paragraph may mention several places, problems or results. Check exactly what the question asks before choosing your answer.

### 4. Exam-style short-answer questions

Answer the questions using words from the text.

1. What made cable cars suitable for some hillside areas? [1]

---

2. What was the first Metrocable line connected to? [1]

---

3. What did a shorter journey give some people more time for? Give one detail. [1]

---

4. What did the city build near some stations? Give one example. [1]

---

5. What do critics say transport alone cannot solve? [1]

---

6. According to the text, what are three ways the Metrocable or station projects affected local neighbourhoods? [3]

---

---

---

### 5. Vocabulary notebook

Underline five useful words or phrases. Check their meaning, then record them in your vocabulary notebook.

### 6. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: What transport improvement would help your local area most?

2. Summary: Summarise the Metrocable in about 50 words.

3. Creative task: Draw or describe a station area that would improve a neighbourhood.

4. Research: Find another city that uses cable cars for public transport.

# Home and Local Area

Short-answer questions: Medellin's Metrocable

## 4. Exam-style short-answer questions

1. they could move above steep streets and crowded roads
2. the city's metro network
3. Any one from: family; study; rest.
4. Any one from: parks; schools; libraries; pedestrian routes.
5. deep inequality
6. Any three from: reduced travel time; easier to reach jobs; easier to reach education; easier to reach services; made neighbourhoods safer and more connected; brought attention and investment.

## Notes for checking

1. Answers should be short and clearly based on the text.
2. Accept bracketed or optional wording if the meaning is clear.
3. For the final question, learners need three separate details.