

Virtual Walking Tour Exercise

Description

Imagine yourself standing on a street corner. You have just arrived by bus to a new downtown neighbourhood. It is early evening and the sun is about to set. There are some people out enjoying the evening air. You have come to check out a show at a nearby cinema located a few blocks away. The show has been highly recommended by friends. This part of town is unfamiliar to you but this is the only place showing this film. The show starts in 30 minutes, which you hope, will be ample time to arrive.

Part One – Starting the Journey

Starting your way down the sidewalk you see an area map that provides information about the neighbourhood. You are now headed in the right direction. The sidewalk is narrow and difficult to navigate due to the variety of patios, sandwich boards, poles and street fixtures. You also encounter a number of obstacles stretched across the sidewalk that require you to move onto the busy roadway. Curb cuts for driveways result in the walkway being frequently uneven.

Part Two – The Intersection

Arriving at a four way intersection you wait for the light to cross. You must make two crossings to reach the opposite street corner to continue your journey. An audible signal is provided at the crossing along with a countdown clock: it is a very short countdown. Ramps from the street curb are only provided on three of the four street corners. Looking around for the street names to verify you are headed in the right direction you see that there is only one hanging from a post on the opposite corner.

Part Three – Arriving at your Destination

Turning away from the street, you see the cinema is located a few hundred meters away through a park. The park has scattered lamps for light although some have been neglected and are now burnt out. There are few people around. Reaching the cinema you are almost at your destination. The entrance is a few steps up from street level where a group of youth are hanging out on the street beside the doors. Going inside you approach the box office. Show times and ticket prices are listed on a screen hung behind the ticket counter.

Roles

Role	Description
Youth with Low Vision	You are a young person age 18-25. You have limited range of sight including level of detail. You cannot drive. Otherwise you are fully mobile. Technology comes easy to you including the smart phone that travels with you everywhere.
Elderly person	You are an elderly woman or gentlemen who enjoys being out in the community. You are slow moving due to extensive arthritis. Technology has never been your thing. You do not carry a phone with you.
The Individual	You are a social person and enjoy being active in your community. You feel uncomfortable in isolated or dimly lit spaces. You have no mobility limitation and are comfortable with technology.
The Recent Immigrant	You have recently arrived in Canada from China and are still getting used to your new country. Your English is still basic but you are working hard to improve. Getting out in your community is key to becoming more proficient. At the same time you are still adapting to the customs and norms of your new country.
Tech Savvy on Four Wheels	You are bound to a wheel chair but it does not hold you back. You are comfortable with technology and adept at using your smart phone as a tool along with many other technological aids.
Parent with Stroller	You are an urban parent raising a young child. Your stroller is packed with all the items you need to care for your little one. This means the stroller can be heavy and not easy to lift. It can also be challenging to move through tight spaces.