

An imaginary road trip to the airport

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Having waited patiently for 20 minutes the taxi edges its way past the accident. The rush hour traffic is terrible. It is a Friday afternoon. Further up we take the slip road that takes us to a junction where there is a large STOP sign. We do! Then once a car has crossed in front of us along the road we cross it, continuing our journey towards the airport. We arrive at a roundabout where we take the second left. Driving on, we pass through several sets of traffic lights. We pass a couple of zebra crossings. Not to mention some pelican crossings. At a T-Junction there is a 'Give Way' sign. We turn left. We pass a petrol station where many cars are filling up with petrol or diesel. The prices seem to be still going up. I spot a hypermarket – Tesco. We then drive down another dual carriageway. The airport is getting closer. Some idiot decides to overtake. The driver cuts in front of the taxi. At the airport another mini roundabout. We take the third exit then park in a taxi arrival area. After paying the driver I look at my watch. I have arrived just in time to meet my friend.

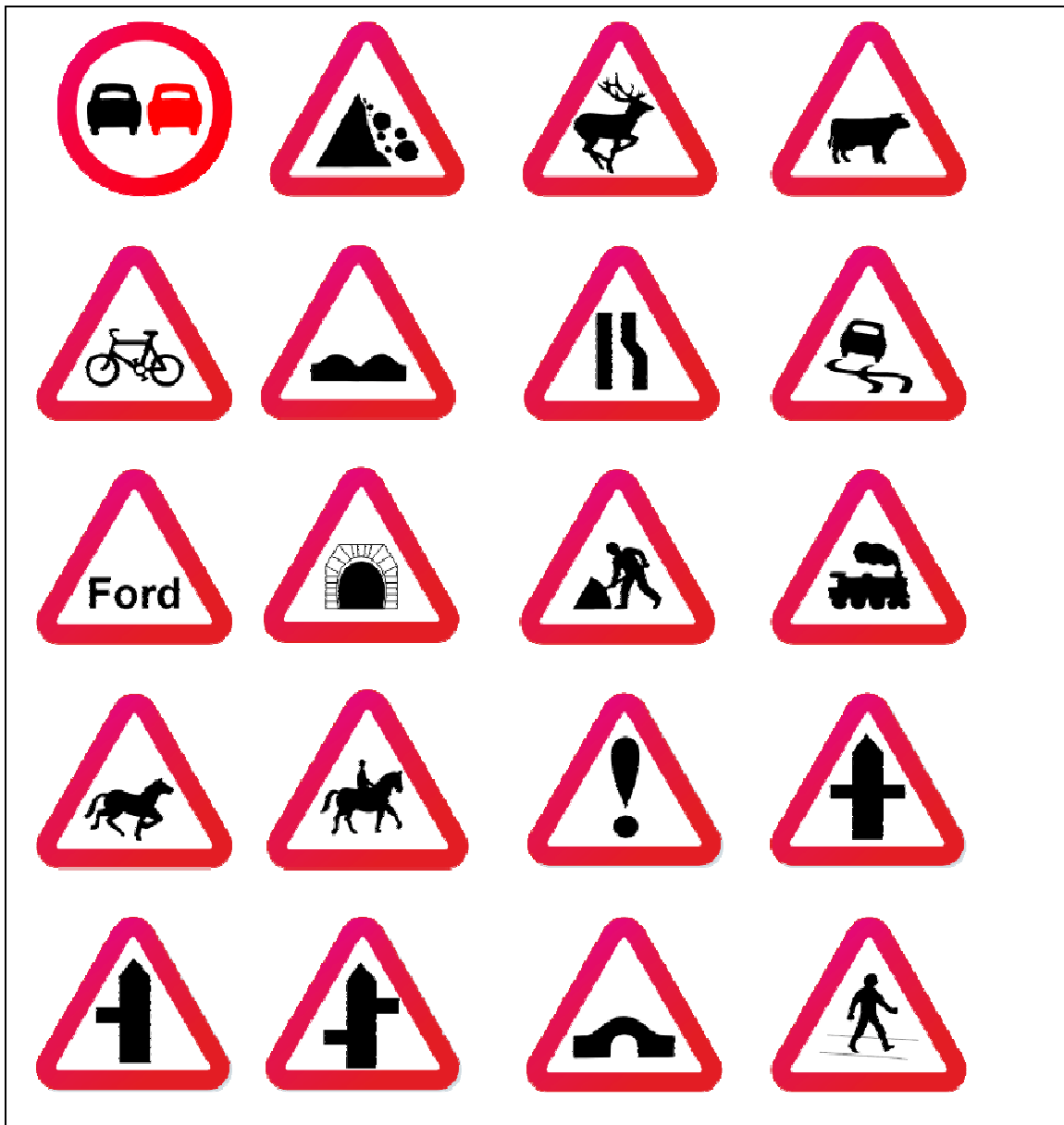
Incidentally, the idea of this English lesson came to me whilst sitting in a taxi as I drove from one English lesson to another, as I don't have a car. The driver asked me the name of the road we were on. I told him in British English we call it a 'motorway'. It was a two lane motorway, which, if not a motorway, in England we would call 'a dual carriageway'.

Category: Driving / Road journey / Taxi

Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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Explain the following road signs...

On the board draw the following traffic signs

- 1) A 'Give Way' road sign
- 2) A 'no entry' road sign
- 3) A 'road works' road sign
- 4) A 'set of traffic lights' road sign
- 5) A double bend ahead road sign
- 6) A 'STOP' road sign
- 7) A '30 mph' road sign
- 8) A 'No U turn' road sign
- 9) An 'elderly couple crossing' road sign
- 10) A road sign of your choice

EXERCISES

1. **Road signs:** Think of three road signs you know. Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) **Discuss the article**

6. **The article:** In pairs choose five things from the article. Write them below. Add five similar ideas of your own. Then explain their meanings. Discuss together.

| From the article | Your ideas |
|------------------|------------|
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 |
| 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 5 |

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. **Let's roleplay 1: Traffic FM:** In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Traffic FM* radio studio. Today's interview is about: *Crazy drivers*.

| | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|---------------|
| 1 | A tourist | 3 | A driver |
| 2 | An ambulance driver | 4 | A taxi driver |

The teacher will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

8. **Let's think!** In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with 'A road trip'. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

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9. **Let's roleplay 2:** In pairs. You are in a bar in your town/city. Start a conversation about 'An imaginary road trip' you did recently. 5-minutes.

10. **Let's do 'The Article Quiz':** Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Where is the author going?
- 2) What types of crossings are mentioned?
- 3) What is a roundabout?
- 4) What is 'rush hour'?
- 5) What is a T-Junction?

Student B

- 1) What is a motorway?
- 2) What is a dual carriageway?
- 3) Explain what is a pelican crossing and a zebra crossing.
- 4) What happened on the motorway?
- 5) Who cuts in front of whom?

11. **Your driving lessons and driving test:** In pairs, discuss when you took your driving lessons and driving test.

12. **Idiots on the road:** In pairs, discuss the idiots who cause accidents on the roads. Discuss any accidents caused by idiots driving, for example, people driving with mobile phones who may cause accidents, bad driving, etc...

13. **Bad weather:** In pairs, discuss driving in bad weather.

14. **Let's play a game: Chinese whispers:** In pairs/small groups up to four. Look at the article carefully. One of you has to tell the other the story of the imaginary road trip to the airport to the other person. If there are three of you the first two should do their exercise away from the other(s). The second person tells the third, etc... Finally, the last person can then re-tell the story to the group! 10 minutes
The teacher can judge the game.

15. **A road trip:** In pairs – Each choose from one of the different road trips below. Describe to your partner what you saw along the way...

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) A road trip from home to the office2) A road trip from the office to the airport3) A road trip to the supermarket4) A drive in the country5) A drive in the city |
|---|

The teacher will choose some pairs to listen to their road trip in front of the class.

16. **Let's write an e-mail:** Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **An imaginary road journey.** Your e-mail can be read out in class.

17. **Sentence starters:** Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

a) The taxi _____

b) At the roundabout _____

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DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What do you think of fluorescent coats being worn outside a vehicle where an accident has taken place?
- 3) Are there many road works in your town/city?
- 4) What is the pothole situation like in your town/city?
- 5) Are the road signs vastly different in your town/city to those in Britain?
- 6) What is rush hour driving like in your town/city?
- 7) When did you last go for a drive in the country?
- 8) What was your most memorable road journey? Explain.
- 9) Have you ever met a friend at an airport?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) When did you pass your driving test?
- 3) Should older drivers retake their driving test at 65?
- 4) Are older drivers better at driving than younger drivers?
- 5) Do you know any idiot drivers?
- 6) What are the driving conditions like in your town/city?
- 7) Is the infrastructure good in your town/city? Explain.
- 8) What road improvements would you want done in your town/city?
- 9) Has this been a difficult lesson in English to use road related vocabulary?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

Note: In the UK there are different forms of road crossing. I mentioned zebra and pelican crossings. These days there are pelican, puffin, toucan, and Pegasus crossings. A Belisha beacon is black and white striped pole with a flashing round orange light on. These are found next to traditional zebra crossings in the UK. They are being replaced by the more modern puffin and toucan crossings! (Note the bird names used!) Look on Google to see for yourself!

SPEAKING

Let's play a game: A road journey

Allow 10 minutes – As a class / small groups – in a circle in a clockwise direction...

I went on a road journey and I saw...

Repeat the previous things seen then add one more...

Forget one and you are eliminated!

The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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Having waited patiently for 20 minutes the taxi edges its way past the accident. The rush hour traffic is terrible. It is a Friday afternoon. Further up we take the slip road that takes us to a (1)____ where there is a large STOP sign. We do! Then once a car has crossed in front of us along the road we cross it, continuing our (2)____ towards the airport. We arrive at a (3)____ where we take the second left. Driving on, we pass through several sets of traffic lights. We pass a couple of zebra crossings. Not to mention some pelican crossings. At a T-Junction there is a 'Give Way' sign. We turn left. We pass a petrol station where many cars are filling up with petrol or diesel. The prices seem to be still going up. I spot a (4)____ – Tesco. We then drive down another dual carriageway. The (5)____ is getting closer. Some idiot decides to (6)____. The driver cuts in front of the taxi. At the airport another mini roundabout. We take the third exit then park in a taxi (7)____ area. After paying the driver I look at my watch. I have arrived just in time to meet my (8)_____.

fluorescent

nasty

vehicle

delay

several

ambulance

idiot

motorway

arrival

journey

hypermarket

airport

friend

overtake

junction

roundabout

GRAMMAR:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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I

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it

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us

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

| | | | |
|----|------------|----|------------------|
| 1 | vehicle | 11 | fluorescent |
| 2 | exit | 12 | interestingly |
| 3 | diesel | 13 | imaginary |
| 4 | motorway | 14 | junction |
| 5 | attendance | 15 | roundabout |
| 6 | currently | 16 | hypermarket |
| 7 | several | 17 | dual carriageway |
| 8 | accidents | 18 | incidentally |
| 9 | imaginary | 19 | passenger |
| 10 | just | 20 | idiots |

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: An imaginary road trip to the airport: Today, let's talk about traffic signs and travelling around town in a vehicle. In order to help you I am going to take you on an 'imaginary' road trip to the airport. Sit back – here we go...

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