

# www.newsflashenglish.com

The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 30/03/15

## Driverless Cars

Today, let's talk about driverless cars. Would you go in one? Moreover, would you feel safe in one? The subject is hopefully a good talking point!

Google recently introduced us to their driverless car. To begin with they are building 100 of them. Their project has been several years in the making. It is a step forward in car technology.

The Google cars have no steering wheel or pedals and will, for the moment, have a top speed of 25mph (40km/h). Inside the car there is a start button and an emergency stop button. The vehicle has two seats. There is also an array of sensors that allow the vehicle's computer to determine its location and surroundings. According to Google, it can 'see' several hundred metres ahead.

Negative points are that the new Google car cannot stop when a police officer flags it down, nor can it spot potholes or recognize temporary traffic signals. It has yet to prove itself in snow or rain.

In the UK driverless cars are set to hit the roads this summer. These 'golf buggy' style cars will pave the way for others to follow. The British government is keen to become a leader in this new industry and is pumping money into developing it further. Critics however, including Britain's Institute of Engineering and Technology, have warned these cars could be vulnerable to hacking attacks.

When will fully autonomous cars hit the road? That's the question many in the auto business are, for now, giving different answers on. Automakers are busy working on developing complex systems that will allow cars to drive themselves. In fact, the race is on to build driverless cars.

### SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three things you know about *Driverless Cars*. Go round the room swapping details with others.

### LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

### READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

### SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

**1) The article** – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

**2) The article** - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

**3) Article quiz** - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

#### Student A questions

- 1) What is a Google car?
- 2) What speed will the Google car reach?
- 3) What does 'critic' mean?
- 4) Name the institution.
- 5) What are the negative points about the Google driverless cars?

#### Student B questions

- 1) What does 'autonomous' mean?
- 2) The race is on to do what?
- 3) How far can the Google car 'see'?
- 4) How many driverless cars are Google building?
- 5) What could be vulnerable from whom?

**Category: Technology / Driverless Cars / Google Cars**  
**Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate**

### WRITING / SPEAKING

*In pairs.* On the board write as many words as you can to do with '**Driverless Cars**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

### WRITING / SPEAKING

*In pairs* – Think of three advantages about driverless cars. Write them below. Discuss!

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**Add** three disadvantages of driverless cars. Discuss together.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

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

### SPEAKING 1

*In pairs* – Student A thinks driverless cars are a good idea. Student B disagrees. 2 mins.

### SPEAKING 2

*In pairs* – Start a conversation about driverless cars. 2 mins.

*The teacher* will choose some students to listen to their discussion in front of the class.

### DISCUSSION

#### Student A questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) What do you think of driverless cars?
- 3) How do you envisage driverless cars ten years from now?
- 4) Are driverless cars safe? Explain.
- 5) Would you go in a driverless car? Explain.
- 6) Would you feel safe in a driverless car? Explain.
- 7) Is your country developing driverless cars?
- 8) Will driverless cars be electric or other fuel?
- 9) Are you for or against driverless cars?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

### SPEAKING - DISCUSSION 1

*Allow 3-5 minutes* – As a class.

*Discuss and consider the following...*

**Driverless Cars** – More driving overall and higher energy use – The suburban sprawl could expand – Safety and regulatory concerns – Legal challenges – Big disruptions in the labour market – Privacy issues i.e. data sharing

### SPEAKING - DISCUSSION 2

*Allow 5-10 minutes* – As a class.

*Discuss and consider the following...*

**Driverless Cars** – Self-driving cars would save lives – Driverless cars will become more fuel efficient – Commutes would become quicker and less stressful – Self-driving cars could make walking and biking more appealing – Self-driving cars could make the transition to electric vehicles easier – More and more people will be able to drive – Driverless cars will waste less fuel on things like looking for parking – Driverless cars could make car-sharing more popular – Driverless cars could bring in billions of money in benefits

*The teacher* can moderate the sessions.

### DISCUSSION

#### Student B questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Are driverless cars open to hacking?
- 3) When will fully autonomous cars hit the road?
- 4) Are driverless trains safer than driverless cars? Explain.
- 5) What happens in a driverless car when the computer fails?
- 6) Will we see more semi-driverless cars like the new Tesla S?
- 7) What other makes of driverless car do you know?
- 8) Will driverless cars become the norm?
- 9) Would you like to ride in a Google driverless car?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

## GAP FILL: READING

### Driverless Cars

Today, let's talk about driverless cars. Would you go in one? Moreover, would you feel safe in one? The subject is hopefully a good talking point!

Google recently introduced us to their driverless (1)\_\_. To begin with they are building 100 of them. Their project has been several years in the making. It is a step forward in car (2)\_\_.

The Google cars have no (3)\_\_ or (4)\_\_ and will, for the moment, have a top speed of 25mph (40km/h). Inside the car there is a start button and an emergency stop (5)\_\_. The vehicle has two seats. There is also an (6)\_\_ of (7)\_\_ that allow the vehicle's computer to determine its (8)\_\_ and surroundings. According to Google, it can 'see' several hundred metres ahead.

***steering wheel / car / array / location / button / technology / pedals / sensors***

Negative points are that the new Google car cannot stop when a police officer flags it down, nor can it spot potholes or recognize temporary traffic signals. It has yet to prove itself in snow or rain.

In the UK (1)\_\_ cars are set to hit the roads this summer. These 'golf buggy' (2)\_\_ cars will pave the way for others to follow. The British government is keen to become a (3)\_\_ in this new industry and is pumping money into developing it further. (4)\_\_ however, including Britain's Institute of Engineering and Technology, have warned these cars could be (5)\_\_ to hacking attacks.

When will fully (6)\_\_ cars hit the road? That's the question many in the auto business are, for now, giving different answers on. Automakers are busy working on developing (7)\_\_ systems that will allow cars to drive themselves. In fact, the (8)\_\_ is on to build driverless cars.

***vulnerable / complex / race / autonomous / driverless / critics / leader / style***

## GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

### Driverless Cars

Today, let's talk about driverless cars. Would (1)\_\_ go in one? Moreover, would you feel safe (2)\_\_ one? The subject is hopefully a good talking point!

Google recently introduced us to their driverless car. To begin with they are building 100 of them. Their project has been several years in (3)\_\_ making. It is a step forward in car technology.

The Google cars have no steering wheel (4)\_\_ pedals and will, for the moment, have a top speed of 25mph (40km/h). Inside the car there is a start button and an emergency stop button. The vehicle has two seats. There is also an array (5)\_\_ sensors that allow the vehicle's computer to determine (6)\_\_ location (7)\_\_ surroundings. According to Google, (8)\_\_ can 'see' several hundred metres ahead.

***it / in / of / or / and / its / the / you***

Negative points are that the new Google car cannot stop when a police officer flags it down, (1)\_\_ can it spot potholes or recognize temporary traffic signals. It has (2)\_\_ to prove itself in snow or rain.

In the UK driverless cars are set to hit the roads this summer. These 'golf buggy' style cars will pave the way for others to follow. The British government is keen to become a leader in this new industry and is pumping money (3)\_\_ developing it further. Critics (4)\_\_, including Britain's Institute of Engineering and Technology, have warned (5)\_\_ cars (6)\_\_ be vulnerable to hacking attacks.

(7)\_\_ will fully autonomous cars hit the road? That's the question many in the auto business are, for now, giving different answers on. Automakers are busy working on developing complex systems (8)\_\_ will allow cars to drive themselves. In fact, the race is on to build driverless cars.

***that / when / these / into / could / however / nor / yet /***

## GAP FILL: LISTENING

### Driverless Cars

Today, let's talk about driverless cars. Would you go in one? Moreover, would you feel safe in one? The subject is hopefully \_\_\_\_\_!

Google recently introduced us to their driverless car. To begin with they are building 100 of them. Their project has been several years in the making. It is a step forward \_\_\_\_\_.

The Google cars have no steering wheel or pedals and will, \_\_\_\_\_, have a top speed of 25mph (40km/h). Inside the car there is a start button and an \_\_\_\_\_. The vehicle has two seats. There is also an array of sensors that allow the \_\_\_\_\_ determine its location and surroundings. According to Google, it can 'see' several hundred metres ahead.

Negative points are that the new Google car cannot stop when a police officer flags it down, nor can it spot \_\_\_\_\_ temporary traffic signals. It has yet to prove itself in snow or rain.

In the UK driverless cars are set to hit the roads this summer. These 'golf buggy' style cars will pave the way for others to follow. The \_\_\_\_\_ is keen to become a leader in this new industry and is pumping money into developing it further. Critics however, including Britain's Institute of Engineering and Technology, have warned these cars could be vulnerable \_\_\_\_\_.

When will \_\_\_\_\_ hit the road? That's the question many in the auto business are, for now, giving different answers on. Automakers are busy working on developing complex systems that will allow cars to drive themselves. In fact, the race is on to \_\_\_\_\_.

**www.newsflashenglish.com**

Copyright David Robinson 2015 (V1)

## WRITING/SPELLING

### WRITING / SPEAKING

**1) On the board** – *As a class / In pairs* - List 20 things about **Driverless Cars**. *Five minutes. Discuss together.*

**2) Sentence starters** - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) Driverless cars \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Google cars \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) The future \_\_\_\_\_

**3) Homework** - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **Driverless Cars**. Your email can be read out in class.

### GAP FILL READING

- 1) car
- 2) technology
- 3) steering wheel
- 4) pedals
- 5) button
- 6) array
- 7) sensors
- 8) location

### ANSWERS

- 1) driverless
- 2) style
- 3) leader
- 4) critics
- 5) vulnerable
- 6) autonomous
- 7) complex
- 8) race

### SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) driverless
- 2) emergency
- 3) button
- 4) steering wheel
- 5) several
- 6) pedals
- 7) temporary
- 8) golf buggy
- 9) critics
- 10) autonomous

### SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

**Pass = 12**

**Good = 15**

**Very good = 18**

**Excellent = 20**

- 11) business
- 12) question
- 13) complex
- 14) themselves
- 15) negative
- 16) recognize
- 17) yet
- 18) array
- 19) moreover
- 20) hopefully

Driverless Cars – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015