

Driving

Task 1 – Think about driving

Ask and answer these questions in pairs:

- Do you drive?
- Would you like to drive in the future?
- What sort of car would you like to have?
- What qualities do you think make a good driver?
- How old do you have to be to drive in your country? Do you think it's the right age?
- Do you have to do a theory test and a practical test?
- How much does it cost to have driving lessons?

Task 2 – Driving survey

Think of some questions to ask your classmates about driving. Here are a few examples to help you start:

- “Do you have a driving license?”
- “Would you like to learn how to drive?”
- “Did you pass your test first time?”
- “Do you think you will be a good driver?”
- “Do you think there is too much traffic here in?”

Write five questions for the survey and then ask your classmates. You can make notes of extra information to help you remember. At the end you will share the information with the class.

Questions	Positive Responses	Negative Responses
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Task 3 – Too many cars?

Discuss these questions:

- Do you think there are too many cars where you live?
- Is there good public transport in your town or city?
- Does everyone have the right to own a car?
- Do you think that cars should be banned from the centre of large cities? Why (not)?
- When was the last time you were in a traffic jam?

Task 4 – London congestion charges

Did you know that drivers now have to pay to bring their cars into central London? The traffic congestion in the city centre was so bad that the mayor introduced a new scheme.

Read the text below about the situation in London. There are some numbers missing from the text. When you read the text for the second time, try to put the numbers into the correct places.

60 130 15 7 11.50 6.00 8.5

In 2003, the Mayor of London decided to try and improve the traffic situation in the city centre. He introduced 'Congestion Charging' which means that drivers who want to go into the centre of London have to pay a charge of (a) £____ every time they bring their car into the zone or drive through it. The congestion charging zone is (b) ____ square miles and the charge is only applicable between (c) ____ am and (d) ____ pm Monday to Friday.

Drivers who need to enter the congestion charge zone regularly can buy weekly, monthly or annual passes, so if you live outside the zone but work inside it and want to take your car to work, it can be very expensive.

The Mayor wanted to reduce traffic in centre of London by (e) ____ % and raise at least (f) £____ million a year which would be used to improve the public transport system in London. Although the scheme has not managed to raise as much as expected it is generally considered to have improved the congestion in the centre.

Environmental groups and many London residents are in favour of the scheme, but there are many people opposed to it too. Some people feel that the alternatives to driving in the city, such as using buses, underground or taxis, are not adequate. Many people think that before penalising motorists for using their own transport, the public transport options should be upgraded.

Other cities in the UK and around the world have been watching London carefully to see if the scheme is working. In London about (g) ____% of the population use public transport whilst in other

cities the figure is much lower.

The overall feeling seems to be that the scheme is a success. It will be interesting to see which other cities in the UK and in the world will follow London's example and introduce congestion schemes.

- Do you think the congestion charge sounds like a good idea?
- Do you think the scheme is popular? Why /not?
- Can you think of any other ways to reduce traffic in busy city centres?
- Do you think other cities around the world will follow this example? Why/ not?

Task 5 – London traffic role play

Work in groups of four. Imagine you are one of these people. Take a few minutes to think about your new character and the type of things he / she may say. Then discuss the issues with the other people.

You are the new mayor of London. You want to improve the traffic situation in the capital and believe that the only way to do this is to introduce a complete ban on cars in the city centre.

You live in the centre of London and have a passion for expensive cars. You love your cars and use them all the time. You hate walking and would never consider using public transport. You hate the idea of banning cars in the city centre and would have to move if the plan goes ahead.

You are a member of the environmental group Friends of the Earth and believe that cars should be banned worldwide. You believe that people who own cars are very selfish and that car fumes and pollution caused by vehicles on the road are the main threat to the world's environmental health.

You are a train driver on the London Underground. You think that the underground service is the major alternative to private cars, but you are not happy with the system and believe it needs major improvements. You do not believe the underground is safe enough to carry more passengers and you want more pay for your work.

Task 6 – Lost in the city

Do you often get lost?

Are you good at following directions?

Use a map of your town and listen to your teacher giving you directions. Then practise giving directions to your partner.