

# An air powered car

## Topic

Energy sources, an air powered car

## Learning outcomes

- infer meaning of vocabulary from context
- Use vocabulary for discussing alternative energy sources
- Develop speaking skills

## Age group

Aged 13-17

## Level

B1 +

## Time

60 minutes

## Materials

- An air powered car student worksheet
- Extra optional links to updated stories about the CAT car:  
[http://www.greencarreports.com/news/1096772\\_tata-airpod-compressed-air-car-to-launch-in-hawaii-this-year-report](http://www.greencarreports.com/news/1096772_tata-airpod-compressed-air-car-to-launch-in-hawaii-this-year-report)  
<http://blog.caranddriver.com/deflated-peugeot-citroen-shelves-its-air-hybrid-technology/>

## Introduction

During this lesson students will read and develop their understanding of a text about a new environmentally friendly car. They will then try to infer the meaning of some of the vocabulary in the text. They will finally have the opportunity to develop their understanding of issues related to alternative energy sources and exchange views on this subject.

**Procedure**

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|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Pre-reading task (5-10 mins)</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put students into pairs / small groups and ask them to make a list of 'alternative' energy sources. Set a 2-minute time limit for this to make it competitive.</li> <li><b>Possible ideas</b>, but accept any reasonable responses: solar power, methane, wind power, sea power.</li> <li>Write examples up on the board and see if students can explain a little about them. Write up and clarify any new vocabulary.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>2. Reading task (5 mins)</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell students that there is a new car that is powered only by air. Ask them if they believe you.</li> <li>Ask students to read the text and decide if they think it is factual or fictional. Set a strict time limit of two minutes for this so that they don't start to focus on every word, but simply read quickly to get the gist.</li> <li>Once they have had 2 minutes, ask them to turn to the person next to them and tell them what they think.</li> <li>Ask students to put their hands up if they think it is factual or fictional, then tell them the correct answer (It is <b>FACTUAL!</b>)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Alternative reading task</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find a picture of the car (you can do this easily on the internet), and get students to work in pairs to predict information about it:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Price? (£7,000)</li> <li>Power source? (<i>compressed air</i>)</li> <li>Top speed? (65 mph)</li> <li>Invented in which country? (France)</li> <li>Maximum distance without refuelling? (120 minutes)</li> <li>Possible problems? (slow to refuel unless you buy an expensive refuelling station)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Then give them the text and tell them to check their predictions.</li> </ul>            |
| <b>3. Reading comprehension task (10- 15 mins)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give out worksheet A.</li> <li>Ask students to read the text again and make notes about the significance of the items on the list within the text.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

- Once they have completed the task ask them to compare answers with the person next to them. This will give them the opportunity to refer back to the text and perhaps correct their own mistakes.

- Do a brief feedback session.

**Answers:**

1. Guy Negre – the person who invented the car.
2. Six years – the amount of time spent developing the car.
3. 120 miles – the distance the car can travel on one tank of air.
4. 65 mph – the maximum speed of the car.
5. £7,000 – the price of the car.
6. Four to five hours – the time needed to refuel the car.
7. £70,000 – the price of a high speed refuelling station
8. Taxi companies – main customers for the car.

**5. Vocabulary task (10 mins)**

- Tell students to look at the second part of Worksheet A.
- Ask them to find which of the bold words in the text is being defined (they can optionally do this in pairs.)
- Do a brief feedback session.

**Answers:**

- a. a difficult time – crisis
- b. being shown – on display
- c. container for fuel – tank
- d. facts that may not be true – claims
- e. people who disagree with something – critics
- f. powered by – run on
- g. to have enough money to buy something – to afford
- h. made to seem bigger or more important than they are
- i. commented – pointed out
- j. unbelievable – too good to be true

**6. Post text discussion (15-20 mins)**

- Give the students Worksheet B. Ask them to first to read it and think about whether they agree with the sentences or not.

- Then put the students into pairs / groups to discuss the sentences and decide whether they **all** agree or disagree with them. If they don't all agree, they must change / rewrite the sentences so that **all** the people in the group can agree or disagree. You could do a brief review of language for agreeing and disagreeing before starting this activity.
- Once they've done this you could ask them to regroup and compare with some new classmates or you could open up the debate to the whole class.
- Optionally and if you have access to computers you could ask students to do some research to find out what the current status of air powered cars is.  
For example: Are any companies currently developing them? Which countries have trialled these cars? What problems have developers had?
- Students could reflect on if they think air powered cars will ever become popular and widely used. This could also be set as a homework activity.

**Contributed by**

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