

What are the most effective ways to get cars out of cities?

Level 1: Elementary/Pre-Intermediate – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes different ways of dealing with traffic congestion in different countries and assesses their effectiveness.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

Key:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. reward | 6. promote |
| 2. experiment | 7. switch |
| 3. carpool | 8. congested |
| 4. shuttle | 9. bike lane |
| 5. campus | 10. whopping |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Ask students to work individually to answer the questions and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. The answers given are suggested answers. Students may answer correctly in different ways, e.g., in item 4 they may say 'It has replaced them with bike lanes and walkways', or similar.

Key:

- 73%
- 6–12%
- in Bremen (Germany) and Genoa (Italy)
- a free public-transport pass and shuttle connections to campus
- Rotterdam
- free public-transport passes
- residents
- 20%
- It has removed them.
- in February, 2003

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of traffic congestion and to encourage students to think about which places manage this problem the best. Ask students which factors determine whether a city is 'green' (e.g., control of air pollution, traffic management, public transport, etc.). You could also ask them to suggest the 'greenest' cities in their own country and those towns or cities where improvements need to be made. This will tie in with the theme of the article they are about to read.

Key:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Copenhagen | 4. New York City |
| 2. Chicago | 5. Auckland |
| 3. Dar es Salaam | 6. London |

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Note that *carpool* is normally a noun but is used as a verb in the text. The word *shuttle* can also be used in air travel for a short, frequent flight between two nearby cities. Labelling a bus or train journey a 'shuttle service' implies that the journey is made at regular intervals. The use of the word *whopping* indicates that the speaker or writer is surprised by the size or amount of something, e.g., 'a whopping pay rise'.

4. Key language

- a. Students can check their answers by finding these words in the text. Note that the word *decrease* has the same form in both the noun and the verb. The same is true of *increase*. The noun forms of these two words are stressed on the first syllable, while the verb forms are stressed on the second.

Key:

- reduction
- introduction
- decrease
- connection
- commuter
- employee

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5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas. Make sure they say why they agree or disagree with the statement.

6. In your own words

- a. There is a lot of information on the internet about ways to reduce congestion in cities. Encourage students to find at least two ways that are not mentioned in the article (e.g., the UK Park and Ride system).