

A living room on a skateboard: how electric vehicles are redefining the car

Level: Elementary

1 Warmer

a. Circle the words in *italics* that make the sentences true.

1. *Petrol / diesel / electric / hybrid* cars are best for the planet.
2. *Petrol / diesel / electric / hybrid* cars cost the most money.
3. Most people here have a *petrol / diesel / electric / hybrid* car.
4. *Petrol / diesel / electric / hybrid* cars are the cars of the future.
5. I have a *petrol / diesel / electric / hybrid* car.

2 Key words

a. Write the words from the wordpools next to the definitions below. Then find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

design

growing

replace

shape

space

1. the outer form of something _____
2. use something for doing the same job as something that was used before

3. the way that something is made so that it works in a certain way or has a certain look

4. an area for something _____
5. getting bigger and larger _____

digitization

emissions

fewer

materials

reducing

6. substances, especially gas, that go into the air _____
7. making something smaller or less in size, amount, importance, etc. _____
8. a smaller number than before _____
9. substances, especially ones used for a particular purpose, such as bricks, plastic, metal, etc.

10. the integration of digital technologies into everyday life _____

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b. Use some of the key words above to complete these sentences.

1. No one thought that the email would completely _____ the traditional business letter.
2. Squares, circles, and triangles are types of _____.
3. There are _____ students in our class this year: 15 instead of 18.
4. We are _____ the cost of our services by fifty per cent.
5. The new hotel has a very unusual shape and _____.

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Jasper Jolly

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- 1 A mechanic from 100 years ago would probably understand how a petrol car from today works. An internal combustion engine at the front turns the wheels, and the driver sits behind a steering wheel.
- 2 Electric cars change everything. The shape of the car is different because there is no large engine, exhaust gas handling, or driveshaft. Soon, digital technology will replace everything from rear-view mirrors to the human driver. The car industry is seeing many changes.

'The skateboard'

- 3 There is a new design freedom. Look at the front of a Tesla – it doesn't need a grille to give air to the engine.
- 4 Electric cars have a "skateboard" design, with a flat bed of batteries and wheels and motors at either end. Electric motors are smaller than internal combustion engines, so they don't need a large bonnet in front of the driver.

More interior space

- 5 The skateboard means electric cars are a few centimetres taller. Many carmakers started with large sports utility vehicles (SUVs) first so they can put in more batteries. But there is also more space for passengers.
- 6 In combustion engine cars, "the mechanics needed a lot of space," says Mark Adams, design director for Vauxhall-Opel.
- 7 Adams say the electric cars could finally stop car companies making bigger and bigger SUVs. "The days of the growing cars are gone," he says.
- 8 Citroën already has a smaller option: the Ami is a tiny, simple two-seater car for cities. In the UK, it will cost under £8,000.

Fewer car parts

- 9 Zero exhaust emissions is one big change. Reducing waste is another. This is possible by using fewer parts with fewer complicated mixes of materials.
- 10 A car's front grille can contain 10 to 15 pieces. Not having a grille makes it easier to recycle the car. BMW's i Vision Circular is made with only seven materials – all recyclable.

Forget the steering wheel

- 11 Future cars will probably not need a steering wheel. Driverless cars are already on the roads.
- 12 Changing "one big thing changes 100 smaller things", Adams says. Less driving means cars will need fewer buttons and controls.
- 13 Digitalization will have an even bigger effect on car design than electrification.

Living room on wheels

- 14 Hyundai's concept Seven car has lounge chairs that turn. Hyundai calls the car a "living space on wheels".
- 15 Some new cars will be like a moving room, where drivers will be able to do other things such as watch films, play games, or video call.

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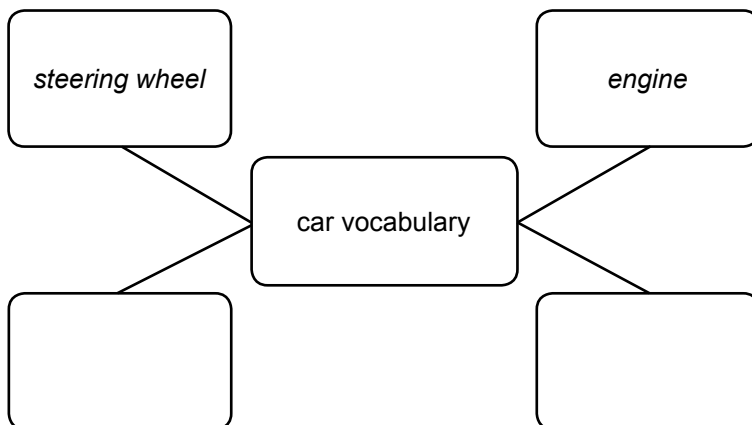
3 Understanding the article

a. Are these statements True or False according to the article? Correct any that are false.

1. The batteries make electric cars a little bit taller than similar non-electric cars.
2. Electric cars need larger engines than non-electric cars.
3. There is not much space for passengers in electric cars.
4. Electric cars have fewer emissions and are easier to recycle.
5. Electrification has a bigger effect on car design than digitization.
6. The cars of the future will have the size and shape of a living room.

4 Car and vehicle vocabulary

a. Find all the car words in the article. Write them onto the mind map.



b. Add other car words that you know.

c. Look at the car photos. Describe and compare these two cars with a partner.



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5 Discussion

a. Discuss the questions.

- When you were a child, what did people think cars of the future would be like?

When I was a child, people thought that cars of the future ...

- What was your first car?

My first car was a ... I got it in ...

- What car would you like to have now?

I would like to have a ... because ...

6 In your own words

a. Your task is to get people to change from petrol cars to electric cars.

Make an interesting and informative poster or advert telling your audience at least ten good things about electric cars.

Title: Ten reasons to change to an electric car