

## It's not a helicopter: can this electric aircraft transform New York air travel?

### Level 1: Elementary

#### 1 Warmer

a. Discuss the following questions in pairs.

- How do people travel to work in your town or city?
- What do you think is good or bad about using helicopters to travel around a city?

#### 2 Key words

a. Find the words from the box in the article. Then complete the definitions with the words.

futuristic  
aircraft

common  
silent

produces  
essential

journey  
subway

- \_\_\_\_\_ means necessary or very important.
- \_\_\_\_\_ means looking very modern, like something from the future.
- A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ is a train system that goes under the ground in a city.
- A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ is a vehicle that can fly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ means the same as 'makes' or 'creates'.
- A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ is a trip from one place to another.
- \_\_\_\_\_ means happening often.
- When something is \_\_\_\_\_, there is no sound or noise at all.

b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity.

- New York's \_\_\_\_\_ is one of the biggest in the world.
- That factory \_\_\_\_\_ thousands of cars every year.
- The library was completely \_\_\_\_\_ with no noise at all.
- Water and food are \_\_\_\_\_ for life.
- The new airport in Beijing has a very \_\_\_\_\_ design – it looks very modern.

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6. Rain is very \_\_\_\_\_ in London, especially in winter.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ from Manchester to London takes about two hours by train.
8. Helicopters and planes are different types of \_\_\_\_\_.

**b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity. You might have to change the form of the word.**

1. The police found new \_\_\_\_\_, so they finally understood what happened.
2. After moving to a new city, she wanted to make friends and build a new \_\_\_\_\_.
3. He was \_\_\_\_\_ in the accident, so he could not play football for two months.
4. When nobody called me back, I started to \_\_\_\_\_ that they were angry with me.
5. There was a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ in the group because one person did all the work and the others did very little.
6. She decided to \_\_\_\_\_ at the school because she wanted to help the children.
7. His \_\_\_\_\_, like lying and being selfish, made it hard for people to trust him.
8. I decided to \_\_\_\_\_ to my cousin because we had not spoken for a long time.
9. Kindness and honesty are \_\_\_\_\_ that can make a friendship stronger.
10. You could see the \_\_\_\_\_ in the garden because nobody watered the plants or cleaned the paths.

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*Joby Aviation says its 'quiet' aircraft travels to Manhattan from JFK in 10 minutes at a 'premium car service' price*

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- 1 It's not a bird or a plane, and it isn't a helicopter. But some New Yorkers saw an aircraft flying around the city recently that could change travel in New York.
- 2 Joby Aviation's new machine flew from JFK airport in Queens to Manhattan. It looks futuristic (like a helicopter and a drone) and can fly at up to 200 miles per hour.
- 3 It can travel from JFK to Manhattan in about 10 minutes, a journey that takes more than an hour in a car, and about the same by bus or train. Importantly, Joby says it is quieter than a helicopter. But one of the important things to know is that it is not a helicopter.
- 4 "It's an aircraft," Eric Allison, from Joby Aviation, told the Guardian. "It takes off and lands like a helicopter ... and when it's flying over a city, it's almost silent," Allison said.
- 5 Helicopters are common in New York. People can take helicopters to JFK – and they take about the same amount of time to get there – and tourist helicopters fly around Manhattan all the time. But Joby believes their aircraft will change New York air travel.

- 6 However, there are New York groups who want to stop helicopter noise and flights that aren't essential. Stop the Chop, a group from New York, have put up with "loud helicopter noise over our homes, parks and open spaces" for years.
- 7 Joby may be better for the environment. The group say that each helicopter produces 950lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> per hour (a car produces 22lbs per hour) – the Joby won't produce any. It is also quieter than a helicopter. However, it does make a lot of noise when it takes off and lands.
- 8 But can this aircraft really be good for New Yorkers? Or is it only going to change how rich people get around New York? We'll have to wait to find out because the Joby isn't flying yet. When it does, the price of a flight from Manhattan to JFK airport will be about 200 dollars.
- 9 The Joby may be quieter than a helicopter, but for now, most New Yorkers are stuck with the subway.

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#### 3 Comprehension check

a. Decide if the statements are True or False according to the information in the article.

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| 1. The journey from JFK airport to Manhattan by car takes about ten minutes.       | True / False |
| 2. Tourist helicopters can't fly over Manhattan.                                   | True / False |
| 3. The Joby produces more CO <sub>2</sub> than a car.                              | True / False |
| 4. A flight on the Joby from Manhattan to JFK airport will cost about 200 dollars. | True / False |
| 5. The Joby aircraft is quiet when it takes off and lands.                         | True / False |

#### 4 Key language

a. Match the phrasal verbs from the article to the correct definitions.

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| 1. find out    | a. (of an aircraft) to leave the ground                           |
| 2. get around  | b. to discover or learn something                                 |
| 3. put up with | c. to travel from one place to another (often in a city)          |
| 4. stuck with  | d. to manage to deal with something that is annoying or difficult |
| 5. take off    | e. to have to continue using something even though it's old       |

b. Complete the sentences with the phrasal verbs from the previous activity.

- I can't \_\_\_\_\_ the noise from the party! It's so loud!
- The plane is ready to \_\_\_\_\_, so please turn off your phones.
- We're \_\_\_\_\_ this old car until we can afford a new one.
- It's easy to \_\_\_\_\_ the city by bike because there are lots of cycle paths.
- I need to \_\_\_\_\_ what time the meeting starts tomorrow.

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#### 5 Discussion

a. Discuss these questions.

1. Would you like to travel in an aircraft like the Joby? Why or why not?
2. What do you think is the best way to travel in a big city: by car, by bike, by train or on foot? Why?

#### 6 In your own words

a. Work in groups. Follow the instructions to debate the topic below.

#### City Council Debate: Should the Joby Fly in Our City?

**Scenario:** Your city council is deciding whether to approve Joby Aviation's service. Two groups present their case 'for' or 'against' to the council, which is the third group or the teacher. The council will then vote on approving Joby in the city.

**Arguments for:** faster journeys, better for the environment, quieter, time saved; good for business

**Arguments against:** questionable how 'green' it really is; concerns about job losses and competition for taxis; concerns over safety

**Step 1:** Prepare your arguments for or against the idea.

**Step 2:** Present your arguments to the council

**Step 3:** The council votes on whether they are 'for' or 'against' the Joby Aviation service and presents their reasons.