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International Car Free Day

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21 September, 2005

THE ARTICLE

International Car Free Day

BNE: September 22 is a day on which, hopefully, humans will deplete the ozone layer by a tad less than on other days. Why? It is International Car Free Day, which is celebrated the world over by more than 100 million people in about 1,500 cities. The global event is a day for motorists to forsake their gas guzzlers, lessen their contributions to global warming and perhaps get some exercise instead. It is aimed at getting commuters out of the habit of automatically using their cars and coaxing them into considering more environmentally sound alternatives. This year 34 nations are hosting an "In Town Without My Car" day, including most of Europe, Japan, Brazil, Canada and Venezuela. Many cities will close off entire roads to cars.

In Europe, the day forms part of European Mobility Week (EMW) and has the theme "clever commuting". The EMW website* states: "European citizens will have the opportunity to enjoy a full week of events dedicated to sustainable mobility. The objective is to facilitate widespread debate on the necessity for changes in behavior in relation to mobility and in particular the use of the private car." Clever commuting aims "to promote sustainable trips to workplaces and schools by encouraging alternative modes of transport...to reduce traffic congestion, transport-related greenhouse gases and improve the health and quality of life." Participating this year has added poignancy, as it is the year of implementation of the Kyoto Protocol.

* <http://www.mobilityweek-europe.org/index>

WARM-UPS

1. MY CAR HISTORY: In pairs / groups, talk about your history with the car. Can you remember the family car when you were a child? How important is the car to you now? What happy or unhappy memories do you have in cars? Do you like watching car programmes on TV?

2. MODES OF TRANSPORT: In pairs / groups, talk about your feelings towards each mode of transport. From today, will you use any of them more or less to help reduce the amount of greenhouse gases pumped into the environment? Why (not)?

- car
- train
- bus
- street car / tram
- bicycle
- horse
- skateboard
- feet

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

September 22 / humans / the ozone layer / motorists / global warming / commuters / habits / mobility / cars / traffic congestion / Kyoto protocol

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. INTERNATIONAL CAR FREE DAY: In pairs / groups, write down three reasons why International Car Free Day is an excellent idea and three reasons why you think it will not work. Change partners and tell each other your ideas. Discuss whether International Car Free Day is an excellent idea or not.

5. CARS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with cars. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. INTERNATIONAL DAYS: Which of the following international events would you join? Talk about them in pairs / groups.

- a. International Car Free Day
- b. World Nude Bicycle Ride Day
- c. Leave Your Gun At Home Day
- d. Smile At All Strangers Day
- e. No Television Day
- f. Give Lots Of Money To Charity Day
- g. Exercise Day
- h. Speak English All Day Day

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Many cars will be given away free to poor people on Car Free Day. T / F
- b. Over 100 million people in about 1,500 cities will celebrate this day. T / F
- c. The day will coax motorists into rethinking their commuting habits. T / F
- d. More than one hundred countries are hosting Car Free Day. T / F
- e. The day forms part of Europe's Mobility Week. T / F
- f. The theme in Europe this year is "Clever Computing". T / F
- g. Car Free Day hopes to reduce indigestion and stomach gases. T / F
- h. Poignancy is added this year because of the Kyoto Protocol. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| a. deplete | promote |
| b. tad | maintainable |
| c. guzzlers | bottlenecks |
| d. coaxing | correct |
| e. sound | intensity |
| f. sustainable | fraction |
| g. facilitate | means |
| h. modes | decrease |
| i. congestion | persuading |
| j. poignancy | devourers |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. deplete the ozone layer by a tad | of the Kyoto Protocol |
| b. celebrated the world | their gas guzzlers |
| c. is a day for motorists to forsake | out of the habit |
| d. is aimed at getting commuters | mobility |
| e. cities will close off | less than on other days |
| f. the day forms part | widespread debate |
| g. events dedicated to sustainable | modes of transport |
| h. facilitate | entire roads to cars |
| i. encouraging alternative | over |
| j. the year of implementation | of European Mobility Week |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

SYNONYM FILL: Place the number of the synonym group in the correct gap (It is not important to guess a correct word - any of the synonyms from each group could be put into the relevant gap).

International Car Free Day

BNE: September 22 is a day on which, hopefully, _____ will deplete the ozone layer by a _____ less than on other days. Why? It is International Car Free Day, which is celebrated the world over by more than 100 million people in about 1,500 cities. The global event is a day for motorists to _____ their gas guzzlers, lessen their contributions to global warming and perhaps get some exercise instead. It is aimed at getting commuters out of the habit of automatically using their cars and _____ then into considering more environmentally sound alternatives. This year 34 nations are hosting an "In Town Without My Car" day, including most of Europe, Japan, Brazil, Canada and Venezuela. Many cities will close off entire roads to cars.

In Europe, the day forms part of European Mobility Week (EMW) and has the theme "clever commuting". The EMW website states: "European citizens will have the opportunity to enjoy a full week of events dedicated to sustainable mobility. The _____ is to facilitate widespread _____ on the necessity for changes in behavior in relation to mobility and in particular the use of the private car." Clever commuting aims "to promote sustainable trips to workplaces and schools by encouraging _____ modes of transport...to reduce traffic congestion, transport-related greenhouse gases and improve the health and quality of life." Participating this year has added poignancy, as it is the year of _____ of the Kyoto Protocol.

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1
objective
aim
goal
intention | 2
implementation
start
actualization
realization | 3
humans
mankind
man
we | 4
alternative
substitute
other
different |
| 5
forsake
abandon
desert
kiss goodbye | 6
coaxing
persuading
urging
inducing | 7
debate
discussion
consideration
reflection | 8
tad
fraction
smidgen
portion |

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'ozone' and 'layer'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. SYNONYM FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the synonym fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "CAR FREE DAY" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about International Car Free Day.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| • hopefully | • theme |
| • celebrated | • dedicated |
| • forsake | • debate |
| • habit | • promote |
| • sound | • modes |
| • entire | • poignancy |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What were your initial thoughts on this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of International Car Free Day?
- d. Will you leave your car at home or choose a different way of getting to work or school?
- e. Do you think these kinds of events have much of an impact or are they just gimmicks?
- f. Do you think all city centers should be closed to traffic?
- g. Do you think there should be a limit of 1,000cc on engine sizes?
- h. What do you think of the idea of a weekly no car day?
- i. Some cities leave thousands of free bicycles for anyone to use. Would this reduce car use in your city?
- j. In London you have to pay about \$7 to drive into the city center. Is this a good idea?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Why do you think the USA, India and China aren't participating in International Car Free Day?
- d. Do you think motorists can be coaxed into using alternative modes of transport?
- e. Would you buy a gas guzzler or a fuel efficient car?
- f. Do you think motorists will be angry by roads closed on this day?
- g. Do you need to change your behavior in relation to mobility?
- h. Do cars add to your quality of life?
- i. Do you think the Kyoto Protocol will save the environment?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

OZONE SAVERS: In pairs / groups, talk about the following ideas to save the ozone layer. Would you participate in all of them? Which would be difficult and why?

IDEA	PARTICIPATE?	DIFFICULTIES
Car Free Day		
No Electricity Day		
Buy Nothing Day		
Plant A Tree Day		
Recycle Everything Day		

Change partners and share your ideas. Tell each other how the difficulties you thought of might be overcome.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

International Car Free Day

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In Europe, the day _____ part of European Mobility Week (EMW) and has the theme "clever _____". The EMW website states: "European citizens will have the opportunity to enjoy a full week of events _____ to sustainable mobility. The objective is to _____ widespread debate on the necessity for changes in behavior in relation to mobility and in particular the use of the private car." Clever commuting aims "to _____ sustainable trips to workplaces and schools by encouraging alternative modes of transport...to reduce traffic _____, transport-related greenhouse gases and improve the health and quality of life." Participating this year has added _____, as it is the year of implementation of the Kyoto Protocol.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about International Car Free Day. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. OZONE LAYER: Make a poster about the ozone layer and how it is being depleted. Include recommendations on how to protect it. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all have similar ideas?

4. YOUR DAY: Think of an idea for an international day of action. Outline the aims and what you want people of the world to do (or not do). Tell your ideas to your classmates in the next lesson. Who had the best idea?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. T d. F e. T f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| a. deplete | decrease |
| b. tad | fraction |
| c. guzzlers | devourers |
| d. coaxing | persuading |
| e. sound | correct |
| f. sustainable | maintainable |
| g. facilitate | promote |
| h. modes | means |
| i. congestion | bottlenecks |
| j. poignancy | intensity |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. deplete the ozone layer by a tad | less than on other days |
| b. celebrated the world | over |
| c. is a day for motorists to forsake | their gas guzzlers |
| d. is aimed at getting commuters | out of the habit |
| e. cities will close off | entire roads to cars |
| f. the day forms part | of European Mobility Week |
| g. events dedicated to sustainable | mobility |
| h. facilitate | widespread debate |
| i. encouraging alternative | modes of transport |
| j. the year of implementation | of the Kyoto Protocol |

SYNONYM FILL:

International Car Free Day

BNE: September 22 is a day on which, hopefully, ---3--- will deplete the ozone layer by a ---8--- less than on other days. Why? It is International Car Free Day, which is celebrated the world over by more than 100 million people in about 1,500 cities. The global event is a day for motorists to --5--- their gas guzzlers, lessen their contributions to global warming and perhaps get some exercise instead. It is aimed at getting commuters out of the habit of automatically using their cars and ---6--- then into considering more environmentally sound alternatives. This year 34 nations are hosting an "In Town Without My Car" day, including most of Europe, Japan, Brazil, Canada and Venezuela. Many cities will close off entire roads to cars.

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