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## **UN boss arrives at work in solar taxi**

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### **Contents**

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| The Article                | 2  |
| Warm-ups                   | 3  |
| Before Reading / Listening | 4  |
| While Reading / Listening  | 5  |
| Listening Gap Fill         | 6  |
| After Reading / Listening  | 7  |
| Student Survey             | 8  |
| Discussion                 | 9  |
| Language Work              | 10 |
| Writing                    | 11 |
| Homework                   | 12 |
| Answers                    | 13 |

## THE ARTICLE

United Nations chief Ban Ki-moon showed the world the future of green transport on September 12 when he used a solar-powered taxi to get to work. The Solartaxi is the invention of Swiss engineer Louis Palmer. Mr Ban hoped his zero-emission commute would promote the use of alternative energy sources in our day-to-day life. He was very excited and positive about his carbon-neutral journey to work, saying: "I hope that this Solartaxi, one of the alternative sources of energy, can give some good messages to the people around the world that we need to be creative; we need to be practical; we need to really address these energy issues and also address the climate change issues." The Secretary General added: "This is a fantastic experience. I hope I can enjoy another ride."

The Solartaxi is currently on a worldwide tour to highlight the need for more environmentally-friendly technologies. The tour's climax will be in December, when the energy-saving vehicle arrives in Poznan, Poland. The Polish city is hosting a conference on climate change. This gathering is part of preparations for a bigger meeting in Copenhagen in 2009, which will attempt to replace the Kyoto Protocol. Mr Palmer was very enthusiastic about Mr Ban's trip in his Solartaxi. He said his taxi showed that there are solutions to reversing the damage humankind is doing to the planet. He congratulated the UN for its efforts: "As climate change doesn't stop at borders, it's a global problem and the UN is playing a central role in the fight to stop global warming," he said.

# WARM-UPS

**1. TAXIS:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about taxis. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*United Nations / green transport / solar power / zero emissions / carbon neutral / environmentally friendly / energy saving / climate change / global warming*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. SOLARTAXIS:** Are Solartaxis the answer? Write your thoughts on the solutions below to save energy. Would your life change? Share your ideas with your partner(s).

| Solutions                            | My thoughts | How my life would change |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Solartaxis                           |             |                          |
| Bicycles only in cities              |             |                          |
| No electricity use in daylight hours |             |                          |
| Wind-up computers                    |             |                          |
| No airplanes, just ships             |             |                          |
| Vegetarianism for all                |             |                          |

**4. ALTERNATIVE ENERGY:** Students A strongly believe that scientists will find many alternative sources of energy and we can live as we do today; Students B strongly believe we will run out of energy, damage the Earth and live in poverty. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

**5. GOING GREEN:** Rank the following technologies in order (you choose what kind of order). Change partners to share and discuss your ranking.

\_\_\_\_\_ solar power

\_\_\_\_\_ hydro-electricity

\_\_\_\_\_ wind power

\_\_\_\_\_ nuclear power

\_\_\_\_\_ wave power

\_\_\_\_\_ biofuels

\_\_\_\_\_ thermal energy

\_\_\_\_\_ carbon capture & storage

**6. CARBON:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'carbon'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. New York City has bought 2,500 solar-powered taxis.                      | T / F |
| b. The inventor of the Solartaxi comes from Switzerland.                    | T / F |
| c. Ban Ki-moon said creativity was needed to fight climate change.          | T / F |
| d. The UN Secretary General never wants to take the Solartaxi again.        | T / F |
| e. The Solartaxi is on a tour of the world to highlight green technologies. | T / F |
| f. A conference in Poland will replace the Kyoto Protocol.                  | T / F |
| g. The Solartaxi inventor was upset with the UN for not doing more.         | T / F |
| h. The impact of climate change rarely crosses borders.                     | T / F |

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

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. chief     | a. high spot |
| 2. invention | b. part      |
| 3. commute   | c. presently |
| 4. practical | d. journey   |
| 5. address   | e. creation  |
| 6. currently | f. sensible  |
| 7. climax    | g. undoing   |
| 8. gathering | h. boss      |
| 9. reversing | i. meeting   |
| 10. role     | j. tackle    |

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

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. zero-  | a. conference on climate change |
| 2. carbon-                                      | b. these energy issues          |
| 3. alternative sources                          | c. stop global warming          |
| 4. we need to really address                    | d. friendly technologies        |
| 5. This is a fantastic                          | e. of energy                    |
| 6. highlight the need for more environmentally- | f. at borders                   |
| 7. The Polish city is hosting a                 | g. humankind is doing           |
| 8. solutions to reversing the damage            | h. experience                   |
| 9. climate change doesn't stop                  | i. neutral                      |
| 10. the fight to                                | j. emission                     |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

United Nations \_\_\_\_\_ Ban Ki-moon showed the world the future of green transport on September 12 when he used a \_\_\_\_\_-powered taxi to get to work. The Solartaxi is the invention of Swiss engineer Louis Palmer. Mr Ban \_\_\_\_\_ his zero-emission commute would promote the use of alternative energy sources in our day-to-day life. He was very excited and \_\_\_\_\_ about his carbon-\_\_\_\_\_ journey to work, saying: "I hope that this Solartaxi, one of the alternative sources of energy, can give some good messages to the people around the world that we \_\_\_\_\_ to be creative; we need to be practical; we need to really \_\_\_\_\_ these energy issues and also address the climate change issues." The Secretary General added: "This is a \_\_\_\_\_ experience. I hope I can enjoy another ride."

*address*

*need*

*solar*

*positive*

*fantastic*

*chief*

*neutral*

*hoped*

The Solartaxi is currently on a worldwide \_\_\_\_\_ to highlight the need for more environmentally-friendly technologies. The tour's climax will be in December, when the energy-saving \_\_\_\_\_ arrives in Poznan, Poland. The Polish city is \_\_\_\_\_ a conference on climate change. This gathering is part of preparations for a bigger meeting in Copenhagen in 2009, which will \_\_\_\_\_ to replace the Kyoto Protocol. Mr Palmer was very enthusiastic about Mr Ban's \_\_\_\_\_ in his Solartaxi. He said his taxi showed that there are solutions to reversing the \_\_\_\_\_ humankind is doing to the planet. He congratulated the UN for its \_\_\_\_\_: "As climate change doesn't stop at borders, it's a global problem and the UN is playing a \_\_\_\_\_ role in the fight to stop global warming," he said.

*damage*

*vehicle*

*central*

*attempt*

*tour*

*hosting*

*efforts*

*trip*

## **LISTENING:** Listen and fill in the spaces.

United Nations chief Ban Ki-moon showed the world \_\_\_\_\_ green transport on September 12 when he used a solar-powered taxi \_\_\_\_\_. The Solartaxi is the invention of Swiss engineer Louis Palmer. Mr Ban hoped his zero-emission commute would \_\_\_\_\_ alternative energy sources in our day-to-day life. He was very excited and positive about his carbon-neutral journey to work, saying: "\_\_\_\_\_ Solartaxi, one of the alternative sources of energy, can give some good messages to the people around the world that we need to be creative; we need to be practical; we \_\_\_\_\_ address these energy issues and also address the climate change issues." The Secretary General added: "This is a fantastic experience. \_\_\_\_\_ another ride."

The Solartaxi is currently on a worldwide tour to highlight \_\_\_\_\_ environmentally-friendly technologies. The tour's climax will be in December, when the energy-saving \_\_\_\_\_ Poznan, Poland. The Polish city is hosting a conference on climate change. This gathering \_\_\_\_\_ preparations for a bigger meeting in Copenhagen in 2009, which will attempt \_\_\_\_\_ Kyoto Protocol. Mr Palmer was very enthusiastic about Mr Ban's trip in his Solartaxi. He said his taxi showed that there are solutions to reversing the damage humankind \_\_\_\_\_ planet. He congratulated the UN for its efforts: "As climate change doesn't stop at borders, it's a global problem and the UN is playing \_\_\_\_\_ the fight to stop global warming," he said.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| <b>carbon</b> | <b>neutral</b> |
|---------------|----------------|

- 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. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. 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. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• future</li><li>• Swiss</li><li>• day-to-day</li><li>• need</li><li>• address</li><li>• enjoy</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• tour</li><li>• climax</li><li>• hosting</li><li>• attempt</li><li>• reversing</li><li>• borders</li></ul> |
|--|---|

# STUDENT TAXI SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about taxis in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

|      | STUDENT 1<br>_____ | STUDENT 2<br>_____ | STUDENT 3<br>_____ |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Q.1. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.2. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.3. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.4. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.5. |                    |                    |                    |

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# ALTERNATIVE ENERGY DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'solar'?
- c) What do you think the future of green transport is?
- d) Why is there only one solar-powered taxi in the world? Shouldn't we have millions of them?
- e) Do you think Ban Ki-moon's commute will raise awareness of alternative energies?
- f) What do you know about the term 'carbon neutral'?
- g) Will we be creative enough to save the planet?
- h) What are the most serious climate change issues we need to address?
- i) Do you think it would feel different riding in the Solartaxi?
- j) How can you be more efficient in your energy use?

*UN boss arrives at work in solar taxi - 15th September, 2008*  
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# ALTERNATIVE ENERGY DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What other environmentally-friendly technologies do you know about?
- c) What really happens at conferences on climate change?
- d) What would you say if you gave a speech at a climate change conference?
- e) What do you know about the Kyoto Protocol? Has it worked?
- f) What damage to the Earth needs to be reversed? Is it too late?
- g) What is the UN doing to fight global warming?
- h) Has global warming affected your country or your life?
- i) What is the most promising alternative energy?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Solartaxi inventor Louis Palmer?

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# LANGUAGE

United Nations chief Ban Ki-moon (1) \_\_\_\_\_ the world the future of green transport on September 12 when he used a solar-powered taxi to (2) \_\_\_\_\_ to work. The Solartaxi is the invention of Swiss engineer Louis Palmer. Mr Ban hoped his zero-emission commute would promote the use (3) \_\_\_\_\_ alternative energy sources in our day-to-day life. He was very excited and positive about his carbon-(4) \_\_\_\_\_ journey to work, saying: "I hope that this Solartaxi, one of the alternative sources of energy, can give some good messages to the people around the world that we need to be (5) \_\_\_\_\_; we need to be practical; we need to really address these energy issues and also address the climate change issues." The Secretary General added: "This is a fantastic experience. I hope I can enjoy (6) \_\_\_\_\_ ride."

The Solartaxi is (7) \_\_\_\_\_ on a worldwide tour to highlight the need for more environmentally-friendly technologies. The tour's climax will be in December, when the energy-saving vehicle (8) \_\_\_\_\_ in Poznan, Poland. The Polish city is hosting a conference on climate change. This gathering is part of preparations (9) \_\_\_\_\_ a bigger meeting in Copenhagen in 2009, which will attempt to replace the Kyoto Protocol. Mr Palmer was very (10) \_\_\_\_\_ about Mr Ban's trip in his Solartaxi. He said his taxi showed that there are solutions to (11) \_\_\_\_\_ the damage humankind is doing to the planet. He congratulated the UN for its efforts: "As climate change doesn't stop at borders, it's a (12) \_\_\_\_\_ problem and the UN is playing a central role in the fight to stop global warming," he said.

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |                   |                |              |               |
|-----|-------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1.  | (a) showed        | (b) showing    | (c) shown    | (d) showered  |
| 2.  | (a) arrive        | (b) reach      | (c) get      | (d) take      |
| 3.  | (a) to            | (b) of         | (c) by       | (d) at        |
| 4.  | (a) newt          | (b) neuter     | (c) neural   | (d) neutral   |
| 5.  | (a) create        | (b) creation   | (c) creative | (d) created   |
| 6.  | (a) another       | (b) the other  | (c) other    | (d) others    |
| 7.  | (a) current       | (b) currant    | (c) currency | (d) currently |
| 8.  | (a) gets          | (b) arrives    | (c) reaches  | (d) comes     |
| 9.  | (a) with          | (b) on         | (c) for      | (d) in        |
| 10. | (a) enthusiastic  | (b) enthusiasm | (c) enthuse  | (d) enthused  |
| 11. | (a) reversal      | (b) reversing  | (c) reversed | (d) reserve   |
| 12. | (a) international | (b) Earth      | (c) planet   | (d) global    |

# WRITING:

Write about **climate change** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

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# 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 out more about the Solartaxi. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. CLIMATE CHANGE:** Make a poster about the effects of climate change. Include ideas on how to reverse these effects. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. SOLAR INVENTION:** Write a magazine article about a new solar-powered invention. Include imaginary interviews with the inventor and a person it will help.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. DIARY / JOURNAL:** You are an inventor. Write about one day in your life. How have your inventions changed the world? Read your entry to your classmates in the next lesson.

**6. LETTER:** Write a letter to the inventor of the Solartaxi Louis Palmer. Ask them three questions about his new invention. Make three suggestions on what he should invent next. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

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

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. chief     | a. boss      |
| 2. invention | b. creation  |
| 3. commute   | c. journey   |
| 4. practical | d. sensible  |
| 5. address   | e. tackle    |
| 6. currently | f. presently |
| 7. climax    | g. high spot |
| 8. gathering | h. meeting   |
| 9. reversing | i. undoing   |
| 10. role     | j. part      |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. zero-  | a. emission                     |
| 2. carbon-                                      | b. neutral                      |
| 3. alternative sources                          | c. of energy                    |
| 4. we need to really address                    | d. these energy issues          |
| 5. This is a fantastic                          | e. experience                   |
| 6. highlight the need for more environmentally- | f. friendly technologies        |
| 7. The Polish city is hosting a                 | g. conference on climate change |
| 8. solutions to reversing the damage            | h. humankind is doing           |
| 9. climate change doesn't stop                  | i. at borders                   |
| 10. the fight to                                | j. stop global warming          |

## GAP FILL:

### UN boss arrives at work in solar taxi

United Nations **chief** Ban Ki-moon showed the world the future of green transport on September 12 when he used a **solar**-powered taxi to get to work. The Solartaxi is the invention of Swiss engineer Louis Palmer. Mr Ban **hoped** his zero-emission commute would promote the use of alternative energy sources in our day-to-day life. He was very excited and **positive** about his carbon-**neutral** journey to work, saying: "I hope that this Solartaxi, one of the alternative sources of energy, can give some good messages to the people around the world that we **need** to be creative; we need to be practical; we need to really **address** these energy issues and also address the climate change issues." The Secretary General added: "This is a **fantastic** experience. I hope I can enjoy another ride."

The Solartaxi is currently on a worldwide **tour** to highlight the need for more environmentally-friendly technologies. The tour's climax will be in December, when the energy-saving **vehicle** arrives in Poznan, Poland. The Polish city is **hosting** a conference on climate change. This gathering is part of preparations for a bigger meeting in Copenhagen in 2009, which will **attempt** to replace the Kyoto Protocol. Mr Palmer was very enthusiastic about Mr Ban's **trip** in his Solartaxi. He said his taxi showed that there are solutions to reversing the **damage** humankind is doing to the planet. He congratulated the UN for its **efforts**: "As climate change doesn't stop at borders, it's a global problem and the UN is playing a **central** role in the fight to stop global warming," he said.

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - a    2 - c    3 - b    4 - d    5 - c    6 - a    7 - d    8 - b    9 - c    10 - a    11 - b    12 - d