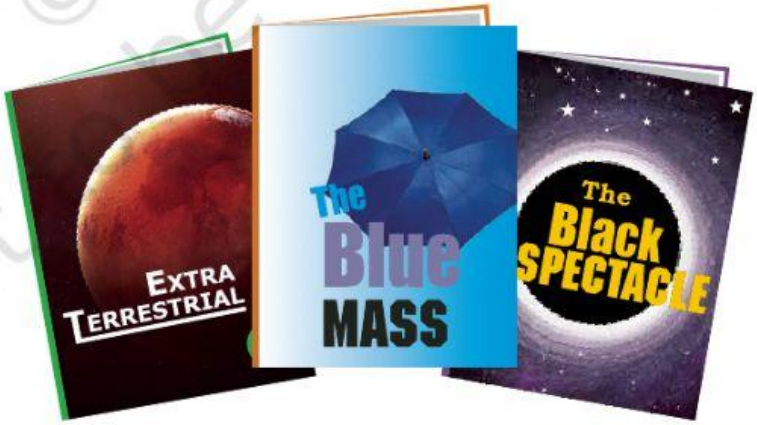
Unit 1

Let's begin

Here are some jackets of books. Discuss with your partner which of these look like jackets of science fiction books. Why do you think so? Give some reasons.



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Reading Comprehension

Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow.

Text I

The Future Cars

The story 'The Fun They Had' takes us to the world of the future where children study in a virtual classroom. The learning is through computer software or the Internet, or by a robotic teacher. Many exciting new technologies would continue to transform the world and improve human welfare. Here are two of them. When these become reality, the then generation may ask with surprise, "People were driving the cars!"

virtual: carried out, accessed, or stored by means of a computer, especially over a network

Self-driving Cars

Self-driving cars exist today that are safer than human-driven cars in most driving conditions. Over the next 3–5 years they will get even safer and be in the mainstream.

Just as cars reshaped the world in the 20th century, so will self-driving cars in the 21st century. In most cities, about 20–30% of usable space is taken up by parking spaces, and most cars are parked about 95% of the time. Self-driving cars will be in almost continuous use (most likely hailed from a smartphone app), thereby, dramatically reducing the need for parking. Cars will communicate with each other to avoid accidents and traffic jams, and riders will be able to spend commuting time on other activities like work, education and socialising.

commute: travel some distance between one's home and place of work on a regular basis

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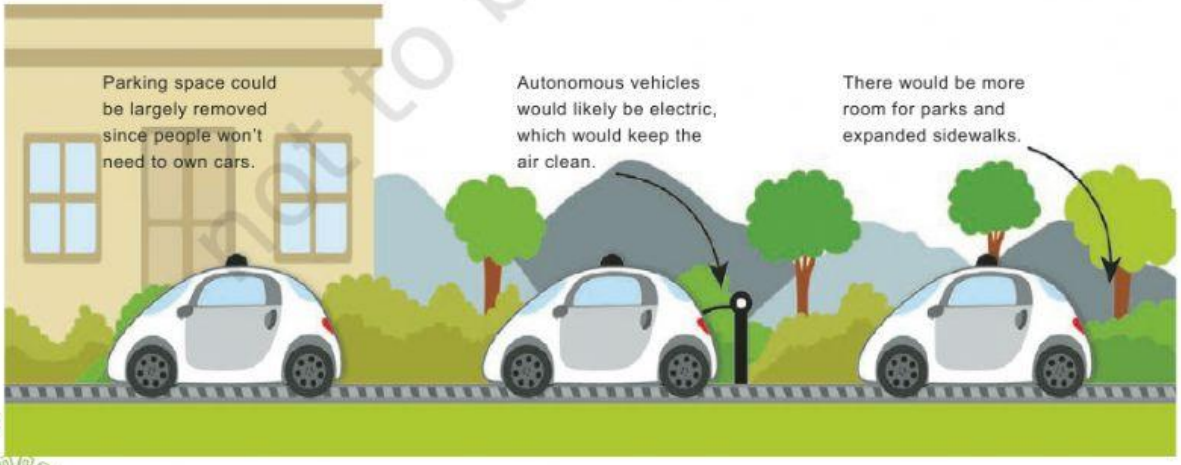

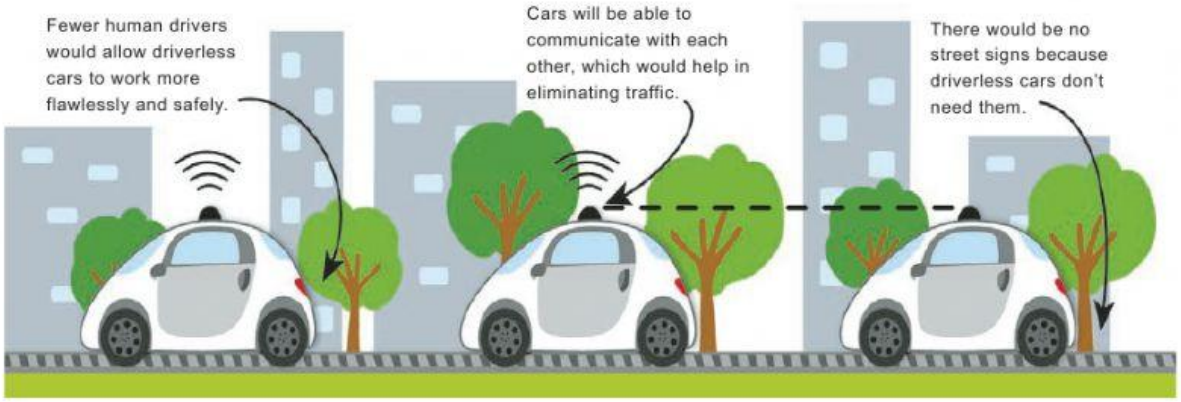

Drones and Flying Cars

"Roads? Where we're going we don't need... roads?" Dr Emmet Brown

GPS (Global Positioning System) which started out as a military technology is now being used to hail taxis, get mapping directions, etc. Likewise, drones had started out as a military technology, but are increasingly being used for a wide range of consumer and commercial applications.

For example, drones are being used to inspect critical infrastructure like bridges and power lines, to survey areas struck by natural disasters, and many other creative uses like fighting animal poaching. There are startups that use drones to deliver medical supplies to remote villages that can't be accessed by road.

There is also a new wave of startups working on flying cars including two funded by the cofounder of Google, Larry Page. Flying cars use the same advanced technology used in drones but are large enough to carry people. Due to advances in materials, batteries and software, flying cars will be significantly more affordable and convenient than today's planes and helicopters.

(Adapted from '11 reasons to be excited about the future of technology', by Chris Dixon, 19 Aug. 2016, Business Insider India)

1. How will the self-driving cars or driverless cars be safe?

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_____

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2. What do you understand by 'cars will communicate with each other'?

_____

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_____

3. What are the advantages of self-driving cars?

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4. What is the use of GPS?

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5. What is a drone? What are its advantages?

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6. Which technology will be used in flying cars?

_____

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_____

7. How will the flying cars be more convenient than planes and helicopters?

_____

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_____

Fun fact

Common Suffixes that make nouns

-sion

depress — depression
impress — impression

-er

found — founder
teach — teacher

Fun fact

Adjectives ending in ED

Used to describe how a person feels

–ed

Tired
Confused
Relaxed
Satisfied
Shocked

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