

Cars of the future

Paragraph 1

For many years, a driverless car was just an idea. Many people thought that a car with no driver that can drive on city streets, very close to people, was impossible to make. But science and computers have changed that. Several companies now say they are close to building a car that will be safe to drive on city streets. Buses and even planes may be driverless too. If all this is true, it will change our world.

Paragraph 2

It all began in Germany in the 1980s. An inventor built a car that travelled hundreds of kilometres without a driver. Since then computers have improved a lot and designers have improved these kinds of cars. They can now go faster and more safely around streets. Lots of companies wanted to be the first to produce a reliable 'driverless' vehicle. One company even built a special 'city' with streets and buildings, but no people of course, to test their new cars. Now, companies are testing driverless cars in big cities, but always with a trained driver in the vehicle.

Paragraph 3

Of course there are some important things to consider: speed, cost and, most importantly, safety. It's certain that there will be more traffic problems as cars will be moving more slowly. But one thing is sure. We will have 'intelligent' cars within a few years. In fact, we have them already, but companies need time to test them before they can sell them to customers. They must make sure that the streets are safe with these cars. One company has built a driverless car that has driven over half a million kilometres without accidents.

Paragraph 4

Many modern cars already drive themselves in some ways. For example, they can park and stop very quickly if there is danger. They have very advanced computers to make them safer. Every year there is something new. But there is one thing they still need — a driver. The final change will come when we don't need to drive at all. We will simply get in the car and tell it where to go. That day may be very near.

Paragraph 5

Driverless cars will bring advantages. For example, we will have lots of free time as we travel. But we will also have to make big decisions. Should driverless cars always be on the same roads as normal cars? Will there be age limits to 'drive' these cars? Will we need a special driving licence? Will children be able to 'drive' to school alone? These questions may sound strange today but with driverless cars we will soon need some answers and some new laws.

1. Choose the best title for each paragraph from A-F below and write the letter in the box. There is one more title than you need.

- A The importance of testing
- B The dream that became possible
- C Important things to think about
- D The last step
- E The cost of cars of the future
- F Competing to succeed



2. Are the statements True or False? (T/F)

- A The writer says that driverless public transport is a possibility.
- B The first driverless car was made in the 20th century.
- C Companies are already testing driverless cars in cities.
- D Driverless cars will make traffic worse at first.
- E Some advanced cars today already park in the same way that driverless cars do.
- F The writer thinks that driverless cars will follow the same driving rules as now.
- G Driverless cars and traditional cars will not use the same roads.
- H There will be two kinds of driving licences in the future.

3. Complete the sentences with information from the text.

1. For a long time the idea of a car with no driver was simply _____.
2. The city that the company built to test their cars didn't have any _____.
3. Until companies _____, we cannot buy driverless cars.
4. One company's driverless car has travelled with no _____ for long distances.
5. As cars drive themselves, _____ for 'drivers' may not be necessary.

LISTENING

True or false? (T/F)

- 1 When did Inspire Kids start?
- 2 Where are there Inspire Kids centres?
- 3 What is Inspire Kids planning to do?
- 4 What does Inspire Kids need?
- 5 Inspire kids needs people with skills in _____, _____ or _____.
- 6 What will Inspire Kids provide?
- 7 How many hours do you have to work? _____ a week.
- 8 How old do you need to be to work?
- 9 If you're not old enough? You can help to _____.
- 10 Why does Inspire Kids need money? To _____.

