

Reading

Electric Cars Around the Globe

Cars have reshaped our world since they first rolled off mass-production lines in the early twentieth century. One- and two-thousand-year-old Roman roads have been replaced by highways. Longer and wider bridges **span** rivers. The sharp division between **urban** and **rural** landscapes has been replaced by **suburban sprawl**, town and country linked by eight-lane expressways with stop-and-go traffic. Gas¹ stations are everywhere. Countries with oil reserves are enormously rich and powerful. After a century, the romance with internal combustion engines is on the wane. As the price of oil rises, the reserves of irreplaceable oil are **consumed**, and exhaust **fumes hamper** life in **urban** areas, alternatives to gas-powered vehicles are becoming more attractive.

In the early twentieth century in North America, electric cars shared the roads with gas-fueled cars, but after a short time, gas-fueled cars became the **standard**. Although electric cars were quieter, cleaner, and easier to start, they were not able to travel the required distances, and their **plodding** speed failed to capture the imagination.

Lately, in Europe and in Asia, where commuting distances are shorter and gas is more expensive than in the United States, electric cars have grown in popularity. Electric recharging stations are appearing in cities. The government of China has offered **monetary incentives** to car manufacturers for each electric car they manufacture as well as to the people who purchase the electric cars. Taxi drivers in Tokyo have **embraced** electric vehicles. Major car manufacturers, including Mitsubishi, Nissan, Toyota, and Mercedes Benz, all offer electric cars everywhere but in North America.

In North America, slow, short-ranged electric vehicles with a high initial cost have thus far appealed to a limited audience. An American electric car that **appeared** briefly in the 1990s had a cruising speed of twenty-five miles per hour and could travel eighty-five miles on a single **charge**. Since then, battery technology has improved **markedly**. More recently, a North American company introduced an electric sports car that can travel 300 miles on a single **charge** and **accelerate** from 0 to 60 mph in 3.7 seconds, similar to the best sports car. The hope is that North Americans will **embrace** the new technology when they see an electric car as **appealing** as a conventional sports car.

Other American auto manufacturers are marketing electric cars as they do in Europe, as **commuter** cars. The design of many of these cars is innovative: Some are made of light composites and seat only two

¹BrE: Petrol

people. One is a three-wheeler that is **classified** as a motorcycle. Another electric car, the Tango, is five inches narrower than a large motorcycle and seats two, one behind the other. Four of these vehicles fit in a single parking space. The vehicle is marketed as a great way to drive between lanes of stopped traffic.

All electric cars will help to reduce exhaust and greenhouse gases; some will do it with greater **flair** than others.

Answer the questions about **Electric Cars Around the Globe**.

Questions 1-7

Complete the summary using words from the list below.

Cars have had enormous effects on the way our world looks. The landscape is now covered with highways and big bridges. New **1**..... neighborhoods have developed between the cities and the rural areas. Cars are also causing serious problems. Oil is expensive, and we have already **2**..... a lot of oil that cannot be replaced. Gas-powered cars also pollute the air with their **3**..... . In the early days, both electric and gas-powered cars were common, but people felt that electric cars did not have the flair that gas-powered cars had. For example, electric cars traveled at a more **4**..... speed. Gas-powered cars became more popular, and now they are the **5**..... . However, there is a renewed interest in electric cars, and they have been **6**..... by people in many countries around the world. Manufacturers are developing electric cars to sell to **7**..... in both Europe and North America, because these cars are a good way to get to work.

accelerated
commuters
consumed

embraced
fumes
hampered

incentives
plodding
standard

suburban
urban

ESSENTIAL WORDS FOR THE IELTS

My Words

Write the words that are new to you. Look them up in the dictionary and write their definitions.

Words

Definitions

Word Families

noun	appeal	The appeal of an electric car is that it doesn't cause pollution.
verb	appeal	A car that uses less gasoline would appeal to commuters.
adjective	appealing	Electric cars are appealing to many people.

noun	class	The new class of electric cars is very different from the electric cars of the early twentieth century.
noun	classification	The classification of a car as a sports car can make it more appealing to certain people.
verb	classify	If you classify your car as a commercial vehicle, you will need to get a special license ¹ .

noun	commuter	Commuters are worried about the increase of traffic on the highways.
noun	commute	I have an hour-long commute to work every day.
verb	commute	Many people commute from the suburbs to their jobs in the city.

noun	consumer	Consumers of gasoline are paying higher and higher prices.
noun	consumption	As the price of oil increases, consumption may go down.
verb	consume	Electric cars are attractive because they don't consume gasoline.

¹BrE: licence

ESSENTIAL WORDS FOR THE IELTS

noun	mark	The new hybrid vehicles have made their mark with consumers.
verb	mark	The twenty-first century marked a renewed interest in electric cars.
adjective	marked	In the past, before cars became common, the difference between urban and rural areas was more marked.
adverb	markedly	The popularity of electric cars has grown markedly over the past few years.

noun	money	Although cars cost a great deal of money, many people own them.
adjective	monetary	As gasoline becomes more expensive, monetary reasons will cause more people to be interested in buying electric cars.
adverb	monetarily	Electric cars may be out of reach for some people monetarily.

Word Family Practice

Choose the correct word family member from the list below to complete each blank.

Car manufacturers are developing a **1**..... of electric car especially for **2**..... . These cars are quite small and may have room for only one or two people. They are not intended for carrying large loads or many passengers. Their main purpose is to get the driver to and from work. Because of their small size, they **3**..... little energy. They are **4**..... because they cost much less **5**..... than larger cars to run. In fact, there is a **6**..... difference in fuel costs between these new small cars and the larger cars that we are used to seeing.

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. class | classification | classify |
| 2. commuters | commutes | commute |
| 3. consumer | consume | consumption |
| 4. appeal | appeals | appealing |
| 5. monetarily | monetary | money |
| 6. marked | markedly | mark |

Dictionary Skill

Different Meanings

Many words have more than one meaning.

Read the definitions below. Then read the sentences and write the letter of the correct definition for each sentence.

QUESTIONS 1-2

ap-peal [a-PEEL]

A *verb.* to be of interest

B *verb.* to ask a court of law to hear a case again

- _____ 1. The driver didn't agree that he was guilty of speeding and planned to *appeal* to the court to change the decision.
- _____ 2. A car that is inexpensive to buy and easy to maintain would *appeal* to many people.

QUESTIONS 3-4

charge [CHARJ]

A *noun.* the amount of power a battery can store

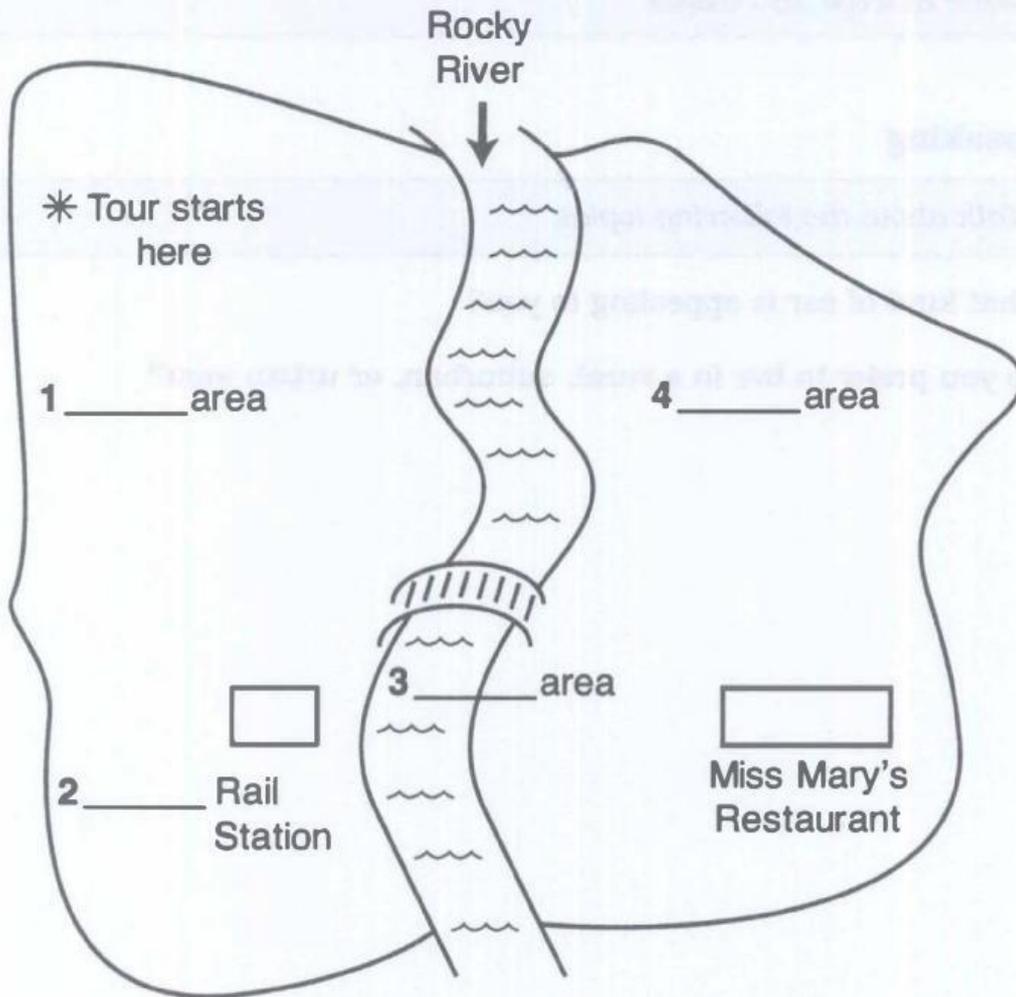
B *noun.* the price of a service or purchase

- _____ 3. The *charge* for car repairs is often quite high.
- _____ 4. This car can travel about 100 miles on one battery *charge*.

Listening

CD 1
Track
10

Listen to the talk. Look at the map labeled 1-4.
Complete the labels.



Unit 3