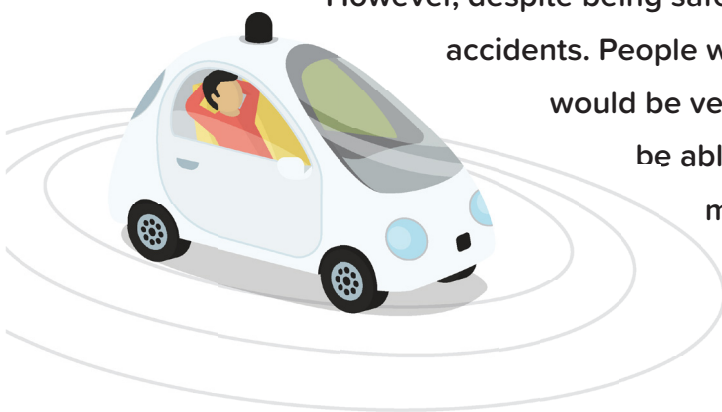# Self-driving Cars

Imagine the excitement of passing your driving test. You would have the freedom to drive anywhere you like. Now imagine having that same freedom to go anywhere, without having to take a test or even get behind the wheel. All you'd need to do is get in a car and say where you wanted to go. The car would do all of the driving for you! This may sound crazy but it could become a reality in the future. In fact, companies such as Google and Tesla have been designing and testing self-driving cars for over ten years. Many experts predict that by 2050 our roads will be very different.

So what exactly is a self-driving car? Put simply, a self-driving car is a car that drives by itself. Humans do not even need to help. These intelligent cars use sensors to understand what's around them. These sensors, along with their onboard computers, allow the car to safely complete a journey.

As a passenger in a self-driving car, all you would need to do is sit back and relax. No one needs to sit behind a wheel or even stay awake. Whilst you have your feet up, you may also be safer than you would be in a car driven by a human. In fact, pedestrians are also more likely to be safer. This is because most traffic accidents are caused by human error. Humans can get tired, distracted and may also misjudge timings or distances. A self-driving car is programmed to follow the rules, identify obstacles and react instantly to avoid collisions. If self-driving cars really do become the norm, we can probably expect to see fewer traffic related injuries and deaths.

However, despite being safer, self-driving cars can still be involved in accidents. People will still need to be careful around traffic. It would be very dangerous to think that cars will always be able to stop. If a car is travelling at speed, it may not be possible for an accident to be avoided. Educating people, especially young children, about road safety will

still be extremely important.

Although the future of self-driving cars is yet to be paved out, there is no doubt that they're on the way. Some people may be very excited by this. Others may be more unsure. Would you be happy to just sit back and enjoy the ride?

Questions

1 Name the two companies that have been designing and testing self-driving cars.

_____

2 Which modal verb could replace 'could' in the sentence below without changing its meaning?

This may sound crazy but it 'could' become a reality in the future. (tick)

☐ will

☐ may

☐ should

☐ won't

3 For how long have companies been designing and testing self-driving cars?

_____

4 What does the phrase **'have your feet up'** suggest about the passengers in the car? (tick)

☐ They don't have to do anything.

☐ They feel very tense and worried.

☐ They have to work hard to drive the car.

☐ They are very rude to put their feet on the furniture.

5 Why could self-driving cars be safer than normal cars? (tick)

☐ Passengers just need to sit back and relax.

☐ Self-driving cars have inbuilt safety equipment.

☐ Humans make mistakes when they are driving.

☐ Pedestrians would stay away from self-driving cars.

6 Which word in paragraph 3 means 'to make an incorrect estimation'?

_____

7 'If self-driving cars really do become the norm, we can probably expect to see fewer traffic related injuries and deaths.'

Which word in the sentence above tells us that we can't be certain that self-driving cars will lead to fewer traffic related injuries and deaths?

_____

8 Why do people still need to be careful around traffic? (tick)

☐ People may not be educated about road safety.

☐ Self-driving cars are dangerous.

☐ Self-driving cars travel at speed.

☐ It may not always be possible for self-driving cars to avoid accidents.

9 Why do you think that the author has ended the article with a question? (tick)

☐ The author doesn't know anything about self-driving cars.

☐ The author wants to test the reader.

☐ The author wants to encourage the reader to think and reflect.

☐ The author wants the reader to reply.

10 Put the number 1-4 in each box to order the four main themes of this text.

☐ Self-driving cars use sensors to detect what is around them.

☐ Self-driving cars are being developed and could replace normal cars in the future.

☐ Teaching people about road safety will still be very important.

☐ Self-driving cars could be safer for passengers and pedestrians.

Score: ☐

Answers

1 Name the two companies that have been designing and testing self-driving cars.

Google and Tesla

2 Which modal verb could replace 'could' in the sentence below without changing its meaning?

☑ may

3 For how long have companies been designing and testing self-driving cars?

over ten years

4 What does the phrase 'have your feet up' suggest about the passengers in the car?

☑ They don't have to do anything.

5 Why could self-driving cars be safer than normal cars?

☑ Humans make mistakes when they are driving.

6 Which word in paragraph 3 means 'to make an incorrect estimation'?

misjudge

7 Which word in the sentence tells us that we can't be certain that self-driving cars will lead to fewer traffic related injuries and deaths?

probably

8 Why do people still need to be careful around traffic?

☑ It may not always be possible for self-driving cars to avoid accidents.

9 Why do you think that the author has ended the article with a question?

☑ The author wants to encourage the reader to think and reflect.

10 Put the number 1-4 in each box to order the four main themes of this text.

2 Self-driving cars use sensors to detect what is around them.

1 Self-driving cars are being developed and could replace normal cars in the future.

4 Teaching people about road safety will still be very important.

3 Self-driving cars could be safer for passengers and pedestrians.