

CARS Teaching Notes – by Lindsay Clandfield

Level: Intermediate-Upper Intermediate

Aim: Students learn the vocabulary of cars and common two part verbs that are associated with cars and tell an anecdote about driving.

Warmer- A running dictation

Take the texts below and reproduce them bigger on a piece of paper (copy them out or enlarge them). Put the texts on a far wall, or in the hall. Divide the class into groups of three or four and assign each group a text. Each group nominates a runner. This person must go and look at the text, come back and dictate it to the others. They cannot write anything down. They can go back as many times as they need to. The first group to finish is the winner.

When all the students have finished, give them the original text to compare with and correct any mistakes. Can they identify what the texts are about? (they are advertisements for cars).

Text 1:

Arriving in dealerships in May, the 2003 Forester offers more aggressive exterior styling, a longer list of standard equipment, more safety features, improved seats, more interior storage space and larger front brakes.

Text 2:

Nissan continues to offer the unsupercharged 170 horsepower 3.3 litre V6 powerplant - a gutsy valve engine that's well-suited to off-road adventures, and is also somewhat quieter than the supercharged engine.

Text 3:

The latest GTI comes standard with A/C, cruise control, power windows and locks, CD player, anti-lock brakes, traction control, and anti theft system, speaks volumes about the market segment that VW is targeting.

Title. PUT THE PEDAL TO THE METAL!

Ask the students what they understand with this slang expression. It means to press the accelerator (gas pedal) all the way down to the floor of the car. In American English, the word metal is pronounced “medal”, making the two words rhyme. Another slang expression for this is to “floor it”.

Stage 1 Parts of a Car.

Hand out the worksheets. Assign each student a letter A or B. Tell the As to work with other As and the Bs to work with Bs (groups of 2,3 or 4 it doesn't matter at this stage). Give each group a dictionary and tell them to find the meaning of the seven words in their corresponding box. When they all understand, pair students off AB AB AB for the second part of the activity. Make sure that the students understand the 3 rules! When they have finished, ask them to label the parts of the car that they can see on the worksheet.

Variation: Bring in pictures of cars and ask students to label different parts. This might lead to them expanding the vocabulary even further.

Stage 2 What kind of driver are you?

Instruct students, still working in the same groups, to do the next exercise. After they have put the prepositions in the correct spaces, instruct them to find out if their partner is a good driver or not. They do this by asking and answering the questions. This gives the students a chance to personalise the vocabulary. Note: If a student doesn't drive, they could answer for someone in their family who does.

ANSWERS: 1.over 2.on 3.in 4.through 5.down 6.at 7.at 8.on

Stage 3 Driving anecdote

This exercise works best if you prepare an example yourself. Take one of the subjects and tell the class a short anecdote about it. Try to do this as naturally and authentically as possible. Then instruct them to prepare a similar anecdote, choosing from the subjects in the box. When they are ready, they tell it to a partner. Circulate and take down notes on their language use during this fluency work. When they have finished, focus on errors/interesting things you took notes about.

For homework, students write up their anecdote. This gives them a chance to work on accuracy.

Alternative option for Stage 3. Role Play

You could substitute the anecdote activity for a role play. There are three possible role plays below.

ROLE PLAY 1

- A. You are 11 years old. You are fighting with your sister (or brother) in the back of the car.
- B. You are 9 years old. You are fighting with your brother (or sister) in the back of the car.
- C. You are the mother. You are sitting in the front of the car. You want the two children to stop fighting.

ROLE PLAY 2

- A. You are learning to drive. You are very nervous.
- B. You are A's father. You are teaching A how to drive. You are a very impatient person.

ROLE PLAY3

A. You are a mechanic. You see that many things are wrong with A's car (the brakes are bad, the wipers don't work well, the headlight is broken). You want to fix all the problems. You also need the money.

B. You are bringing your car to A's garage because one of the headlights is broken. You don't want pay for anything else.