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London starts new bike hire scheme

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1007/100731-london.html>

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THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1007/100731-london.html>

London started its first major bike hire scheme on July 30th. Transport For London (TFL), the agency responsible for moving people around England's capital, put 5,000 bicycles in 400 different locations around the city. The idea is to cut traffic, reduce pollution and provide a greener way of getting around London's streets. The scheme had a few teething problems on its first day as people could not lock the bikes properly once they had finished riding them. As a gesture of goodwill, London Mayor Boris Johnson announced all rentals on the first day would be free of charge. The bikes are available for free for the first 30 minutes but costs go up steeply thereafter. Renters have to pay \$1.60 for the first hour and \$78 for 24 hours. The bikes are clearly designed for very short trips.

TFL says it sees a "cycle revolution" happening in London. It predicts there will be around 40,000 new cycle journeys every day on the rental bikes. Mr Johnson says he wants to see a return to the turn of the 20th century, when 20 per cent of journeys in London were made by bicycle. The scheme has received a lot of positive feedback in the first two days. Many Londoners believe it is a great alternative to London's overcrowded and overpriced trains and buses. One commuter, Andy Clark, told the Reuters news agency: "It's a great idea. I've seen it operating in Paris and Barcelona and thought why don't we have one?" The Londonist Blog said the bikes were very sturdy and were "designed to withstand a beating from both careless cyclists and drunken vandals".

London starts new bike hire scheme – 31st July, 2010

WARM-UPS

1. BIKES: Walk around the class and talk to other students about bikes. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

London / transport / capital city / traffic / pollution / teething problem / free of charge / revolution / 20th century / positive feedback / overcrowded / commuter / cyclists

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. TRANSPORT: What are the pros and cons? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

Transport	Pros	Cons
Bicycle		
Train		
Car		
Airplane		
Taxi		
Motor bike		

4. BICYCLE: Students A **strongly** believe everyone should use bicycles to get around to help save the planet; Students B **strongly** believe they shouldn't. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. CYCLING: What's best about it? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- Good for jobs in the cycling industry
- Good for the environment
- Good for our health
- Helps reduce road deaths
- Creates a more positive society
- Creates more parking space for cars
- Encourages family fun
- Allows us to see more of our town

6. TRANSPORT: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'transport'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1007/100731-london.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. London's transport authority is going to rent a bike to every Londoner. T / F
- b. London's bike rental service is to ease congestion on the city's roads. T / F
- c. A big problem is that the bicycles cannot be locked. T / F
- d. It costs almost \$80 to rent one of the bikes for a day. T / F
- e. Around 40,000 journeys a day will be made on the rental bikes. T / F
- f. Around a fifth of all London journeys were on bicycles 100 years ago. T / F
- g. The bike rental scheme got mainly negative comments when it started. T / F
- h. The bikes are designed to allow drunk people get home easily. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. major | a. forecasts |
| 2. locations | b. project |
| 3. scheme | c. survive |
| 4. gesture | d. substitute |
| 5. steeply | e. act |
| 6. predicts | f. big |
| 7. positive | g. expensive |
| 8. alternative | h. sharply |
| 9. overpriced | i. places |
| 10. withstand | j. supportive |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. responsible for | a. of positive feedback |
| 2. provide a greener way | b. overpriced trains |
| 3. The scheme had a few | c. goodwill |
| 4. a gesture of | d. the 20th century |
| 5. clearly designed | e. moving people around |
| 6. the turn of | f. withstand a beating |
| 7. received a lot | g. teething problems |
| 8. a great | h. for very short trips |
| 9. overcrowded and | i. alternative |
| 10. designed to | j. of getting around |

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WHILE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1007/100731-london.html>

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

London started its first _____ bike hire scheme on July 30th. Transport For London (TFL), the _____ responsible for moving people around England's capital, put 5,000 bicycles in 400 different locations around the city. The idea is to _____ traffic, reduce pollution and provide a greener way of getting around London's streets. The scheme had a few _____ problems on its first day as people could not lock the bikes properly once they had finished _____ them. As a gesture of goodwill, London Mayor Boris Johnson announced all rentals on the first day would be free of _____. The bikes are available for free for the first 30 minutes but costs go up _____ thereafter. Renters have to pay \$1.60 for the first hour and \$78 for 24 hours. The bikes are _____ designed for very short trips.

charge
teething
agency
clearly
riding
major
steeply
cut

TFL says it sees a "cycle revolution" happening in London. It _____ there will be around 40,000 new _____ journeys every day on the rental bikes. Mr Johnson says he wants to see a return to the _____ of the 20th century, when 20 per cent of journeys in London were made by bicycle. The scheme has received a lot of positive _____ in the first two days. Many Londoners believe it is a great _____ to London's overcrowded and overpriced trains and buses. One _____, Andy Clark, told the Reuters news agency: "It's a great idea. I've seen it operating in Paris and Barcelona and thought why don't we have one?" The Londonist Blog said the bikes were very _____ and were "designed to withstand a beating from both careless cyclists and _____ vandals".

alternative
turn
sturdy
commuter
feedback
predicts
drunken
cycle

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LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1007/100731-london.html>

London started its _____ scheme on July 30th. Transport For London (TFL), the agency responsible _____ around England's capital, put 5,000 bicycles in 400 different locations around the city. The idea is to cut traffic, reduce pollution _____ way of getting around London's streets. The scheme had a few teething problems _____ people could not lock the bikes properly once they had finished riding them. As a gesture of goodwill, London Mayor Boris Johnson announced all rentals on the first day would _____. The bikes are available for free for the first 30 minutes but costs go up steeply thereafter. Renters have to pay \$1.60 for the first hour and \$78 for 24 hours. The bikes _____ very short trips.

TFL says it sees a "cycle revolution" happening in London. It predicts _____ 40,000 new cycle journeys every day on the rental bikes. Mr Johnson says he wants to see _____ of the 20th century, when 20 per cent of journeys in London were made by bicycle. The scheme has received a _____ in the first two days. Many Londoners believe it _____ to London's overcrowded and overpriced trains and buses. One commuter, Andy Clark, told the Reuters news agency: "It's a great idea. I've seen it operating in Paris and Barcelona and thought why don't we have one?" The Londonist Blog said the bikes _____ were "designed to _____ from both careless cyclists and drunken vandals".

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AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1007/100731-london.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'hire' and 'scheme'.

hire	scheme
-------------	---------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• first• 400• cut• lock• 30• short	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40,000• 20• positive• commuter• operating• designed
---	--

STUDENT BIKES SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1007/100731-london.html>

Write five GOOD questions about bikes in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

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BIKES DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'London'?
- c) What do you think of the bike rental scheme?
- d) What transport problems are there in your town?
- e) Would you use the rental bicycles?
- f) Should there be a law requiring all towns and cities to provide rental bicycles?
- g) Should there be a law requiring all towns and cities to provide free bicycles for people to use?
- h) What are the best ways of reducing traffic and pollution?
- i) What are the pros and cons of cycling around cities?
- j) What do you think bus and taxi drivers think about an extra 5,000 bikes on London's streets?

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BIKES DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you think a "cycle revolution" will happen?
- c) How would a city be different if 20 per cent of all journeys were made by bicycle?
- d) What can London do to encourage more people to cycle?
- e) Are you a "green" commuter or traveller?
- f) What other alternatives are there to city trains and buses?
- g) What are your earliest memories of bicycles?
- h) What do you think of the cost of renting London's rental bikes?
- i) What are the best and worst things about bikes?
- j) What questions would you like to ask London mayor Boris Johnson?

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LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1007/100731-london.html>

London started its first (1) _____ bike hire scheme on July 30th. Transport For London (TFL), the agency (2) _____ for moving people around England's capital, put 5,000 bicycles in 400 different locations around the city. The idea is to cut traffic, reduce pollution and provide a (3) _____ way of getting around London's streets. The scheme had a few teething problems on its first day as people could not lock the bikes properly once they had finished riding them. As a (4) _____ of goodwill, London Mayor Boris Johnson announced all rentals on the first day would be free (5) _____ charge. The bikes are available for free for the first 30 minutes but costs go up steeply thereafter. Renters have to pay \$1.60 for the first hour and \$78 for 24 hours. The bikes are (6) _____ designed for very short trips.

TFL says it sees a "cycle revolution" happening in London. It predicts there will be around 40,000 new cycle journeys every day on the rental bikes. Mr Johnson says he wants to see a return to the (7) _____ of the 20th century, when 20 per cent of journeys in London were (8) _____ by bicycle. The scheme has received a lot of positive feedback in the first two days. Many Londoners believe it is a great alternative (9) _____ London's overcrowded and overpriced trains and buses. One (10) _____, Andy Clark, told the Reuters news agency: "It's a great idea. I've seen it (11) _____ in Paris and Barcelona and thought why don't we have one?" The Londonist Blog said the bikes were very sturdy and were "designed to withstand a beating from both (12) _____ cyclists and drunken vandals".

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) majors | (b) major | (c) majority | (d) majored |
| 2. | (a) responsive | (b) responsibility | (c) responsible | (d) responses |
| 3. | (a) greener | (b) greenish | (c) greenie | (d) greens |
| 4. | (a) pasture | (b) moisture | (c) posture | (d) gesture |
| 5. | (a) for | (b) by | (c) of | (d) at |
| 6. | (a) clearly | (b) dearly | (c) merely | (d) eerily |
| 7. | (a) twist | (b) passed | (c) movement | (d) turn |
| 8. | (a) had | (b) made | (c) ridden | (d) transported |
| 9. | (a) by | (b) at | (c) from | (d) to |
| 10. | (a) computer | (b) transporter | (c) commuter | (d) communist |
| 11. | (a) operations | (b) operating | (c) operation | (d) operations |
| 12. | (a) careless | (b) carelessly | (c) carless | (d) caress |

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HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about London's bike rental scheme. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. BIKES: Make a poster about bicycles. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. CYCLING: Write a magazine article about cycling in the city. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against it.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to London mayor Boris Johnson. Ask him three questions about the rental bike scheme. Give him three ideas to make it better. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. F d. T e. T f. T g. F h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. major | a. big |
| 2. locations | b. places |
| 3. scheme | c. project |
| 4. gesture | d. act |
| 5. steeply | e. sharply |
| 6. predicts | f. forecasts |
| 7. positive | g. supportive |
| 8. alternative | h. substitute |
| 9. overpriced | i. expensive |
| 10. withstand | j. survive |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. responsible for | a. moving people around |
| 2. provide a greener way | b. of getting around |
| 3. The scheme had a few | c. teething problems |
| 4. a gesture of | d. goodwill |
| 5. clearly designed | e. for very short trips |
| 6. the turn of | f. the 20th century |
| 7. received a lot | g. of positive feedback |
| 8. a great | h. alternative |
| 9. overcrowded and | i. overpriced trains |
| 10. designed to | j. withstand a beating |

GAP FILL:

London starts new bike hire scheme

London started its first **major** bike hire scheme on July 30th. Transport For London (TFL), the **agency** responsible for moving people around England's capital, put 5,000 bicycles in 400 different locations around the city. The idea is to **cut** traffic, reduce pollution and provide a greener way of getting around London's streets. The scheme had a few **teething** problems on its first day as people could not lock the bikes properly once they had finished **riding** them. As a **gesture** of goodwill, London Mayor Boris Johnson announced all rentals on the first day would be free of **charge**. The bikes are available for free for the first 30 minutes but costs go up **steeply** thereafter. Renters have to pay \$1.60 for the first hour and \$78 for 24 hours. The bikes are **clearly** designed for very short trips.

TFL says it sees a "cycle revolution" happening in London. It **predicts** there will be around 40,000 new **cycle** journeys every day on the rental bikes. Mr Johnson says he wants to see a return to the **turn** of the 20th century, when 20 per cent of journeys in London were made by bicycle. The scheme has received a lot of positive **feedback** in the first two days. Many Londoners believe it is a great **alternative** to London's overcrowded and overpriced trains and buses. One **commuter**, Andy Clark, told the Reuters news agency: "It's a great idea. I've seen it operating in Paris and Barcelona and thought why don't we have one?" The Londonist Blog said the bikes were very **sturdy** and were "designed to withstand a beating from both careless cyclists and **drunken** vandals".

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - b 2 - c 3 - a 4 - d 5 - c 6 - a 7 - d 8 - b 9 - d 10 - c 11 - b 12 - a

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