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World's first flying car makes its debut

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20th March, 2009

THE ARTICLE

The world's first flying car took to the skies on March 18. Its name is the Transition, because it can switch between the road and the sky. The car that looks like a plane that looks like a car took off from a small airport in New York. The "roadable aircraft" is from a Boston based company called Terrafugia, which means "escape from land" in Latin. The designer and Terrafugia CEO Carl Dietrich has spent the past decade working on the project. In 2006 he won a \$30,000 design award from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He said his inspiration was to do something about America's crowded highways and airports. Dietrich said: "This flight is a symbol of a new freedom in aviation. It's what enthusiasts have been striving for since 1918."

The two-seater Transition can take off and land at airports and drive on any road. The US government said it is officially a light sport aircraft and not a car. The flying car has wings that fold up for use on the road. It is around 5.8 metres long and 2 metres wide. Terrafugia hopes to start selling the Transition in 2011. The selling price will be between \$150,000 and \$200,000. There are already more than forty orders for it. Dietrich is excited about the Transition's future. He told reporters: "This breakthrough changes the world of personal mobility. Travel now becomes a hassle-free integrated land-air experience." It is not yet clear whether traffic police or air traffic control will handle the dozens, perhaps hundreds or thousands, of flying cars.

WARM-UPS

1. CARS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about cars. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your 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.

flying / skies / airports / land / escaping / the past decade / inspiration / aviation / taking off / wings / orders / breakthroughs / personal mobility / hassles / police

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

3. WORLD'S FIRSTS: Do you like seeing advances in technology? Complete the table. Talk about what you wrote with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you found out.

First	Advantages	Life-changing because...
Flying car		
Time machine		
Space resort		
No sleep pill		
English learner		
Wrinkle-free cream		

4. SKY ROADS: Students A **strongly** believe everyone flying cars would be dangerous and are a bad idea; Students B **strongly** believe flying cars would be great and save lots of time. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. FLYING CARS: What do you think are the advantages of a flying car? Rank the following in order. Change partners and talk about your ranking.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| _____ reduce traffic jams on roads | _____ fun |
| _____ increase personal mobility | _____ good as ambulances |
| _____ reduce traveling time | _____ good for those in rural areas |
| _____ reduced need for airplanes | _____ help revive the car industry |

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

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. The world's first flying car will soon make its debut flight. | T / F |
| b. The name of the company that made the car means "free in the sky". | T / F |
| c. The designer has spent 10 years developing the flying car. | T / F |
| d. The designer wanted to ease congestion on roads and in airports. | T / F |
| e. The flying car can accommodate two pilots and four passengers. | T / F |
| f. America's government classified the flying car as a small aircraft. | T / F |
| g. There are 40,000 orders for the flying car. | T / F |
| h. Air traffic controllers will be responsible for regulating the flying cars. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. transition | a. motivation |
| 2. looks like | b. deal with |
| 3. inspiration | c. problem |
| 4. enthusiasts | d. legally |
| 5. striving | e. collapse |
| 6. officially | f. change |
| 7. fold up | g. fans |
| 8. breakthrough | h. resembles |
| 9. hassle | i. discovery |
| 10. handle | j. aiming |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. The world's first flying car took | a. for since 1918 |
| 2. it can switch between the road | b. of personal mobility |
| 3. Dietrich has spent the past decade | c. crowded highways |
| 4. do something about America's | d. and not a car |
| 5. It's what enthusiasts have been striving | e. and the sky |
| 6. The two-seater Transition can | f. to the skies |
| 7. it is officially a light sport aircraft | g. air experience |
| 8. There are already more than forty | h. take off and land |
| 9. This breakthrough changes the world | i. working on the project |
| 10. a hassle-free integrated land- | j. orders for it |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

The world's first flying car _____ to the skies on March 18. Its name is the Transition, because it can _____ between the road and the sky. The car that looks like a plane that looks like a car took off from a small airport in New York. The "roadable aircraft" is from a Boston _____ company called Terrafugia, which means "escape from land" in Latin. The designer and Terrafugia CEO Carl Dietrich has spent the past _____ working on the project. In 2006 he won a \$30,000 design award from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He said his _____ was to do something about America's _____ highways and airports. Dietrich said: "This flight is a _____ of a new freedom in aviation. It's what enthusiasts have been _____ for since 1918."

crowded

based

striving

took

decade

symbol

switch

inspiration

The two-seater Transition can _____ off and land at airports and drive on any road. The US government said it is officially a light sport _____ and not a car. The flying car has _____ that fold up for use on the road. It is around 5.8 metres long and 2 metres wide. Terrafugia _____ to start selling the Transition in 2011. The selling price will be between \$150,000 and \$200,000. There are already more than forty _____ for it. Dietrich is excited about the Transition's future. He told reporters: "This breakthrough changes the world of personal _____. Travel now becomes a _____ -free integrated land-air experience." It is not yet clear whether traffic police or air traffic _____ will handle the dozens, perhaps hundreds or thousands, of flying cars.

wings

hassle

hopes

take

control

orders

aircraft

mobility

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

The world's first flying car _____ March 18. Its name is the Transition, because it can switch between the road and the sky. The car that looks like a _____ car took off from a small airport in New York. The "roadable aircraft" is from a Boston based company called Terrafugia, which means "escape from land" in Latin. The designer and Terrafugia CEO Carl Dietrich _____ decade working on the project. In 2006 he won a \$30,000 design award from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He said his inspiration _____ about America's crowded highways and airports. Dietrich said: "This flight _____ freedom in aviation. It's what enthusiasts have been striving for since 1918."

The two-seater Transition _____ airports and drive on any road. The US government said it is officially a light sport aircraft and not a car. The flying car has wings _____ on the road. It is around 5.8 metres long and 2 metres wide. Terrafugia hopes to start selling the Transition in 2011. The selling _____ \$150,000 and \$200,000. There are already more than forty orders for it. Dietrich is excited about the Transition's future. He told reporters: "This breakthrough changes the _____. Travel now becomes a hassle-free integrated land-air experience." It is not yet clear whether traffic police or air traffic control _____, perhaps hundreds or thousands, of flying cars.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'flying' and 'car'.

flying	car
---------------	------------

- 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">• skies• switch• based• decade• crowded• symbol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• seater• fold• orders• personal• free• dozens
--	---

STUDENT FLYING CAR SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about flying cars 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.

FLYING CAR 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 'flying car'?
- c) What do you think of the idea of cars that can fly?
- d) Would you buy a flying car?
- e) What are the risks and benefits of flying cars?
- f) Do you think flying cars mean science fiction has come true?
- g) Do you think 'Transition' is a good name for the new flying car?
- h) Do you think the flying car will solve congestion on roads and at airports?
- i) What kind of driving / flying license or test would you need for the flying car?
- j) What are you striving for right now?

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FLYING CAR DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you like reading about new breakthroughs and inventions?
- c) How would a flying car change your lifestyle?
- d) Do you think people would still get angry with other drivers in the sky?
- e) What kind of traffic signals would they need in the sky?
- f) Do you think governments would have to rethink power lines?
- g) Would you worry about cars flying over your house?
- h) Who should regulate the flying cars, the police or air traffic controllers?
- i) What do you think of the expression "roadable aircraft"?
- j) What questions would you ask Terrafugia CEO Carl Dietrich?

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LANGUAGE

The world's first flying car (1) _____ to the skies on March 18. Its name is the Transition, because it can switch between the road and the sky. The car that looks like a plane that looks like a car took (2) _____ from a small airport in New York. The "roadable aircraft" is from a Boston based company called Terrafugia, which (3) _____ "escape from land" in Latin. The designer and Terrafugia CEO Carl Dietrich has spent the past decade working (4) _____ the project. In 2006 he won a \$30,000 design award from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He said his inspiration was to do something (5) _____ America's crowded highways and airports. Dietrich said: "This flight is a symbol of a new freedom in aviation. It's what (6) _____ have been striving for since 1918."

The two-seater Transition can take off and land at airports and drive on any road. The US government said it is (7) _____ a light sport aircraft and not a car. The flying car has wings that fold (8) _____ for use on the road. It is around 5.8 metres long and 2 metres wide. Terrafugia hopes to start selling the Transition in 2011. The selling price will be between \$150,000 and \$200,000. There are already more than forty (9) _____ for it. Dietrich is excited about the Transition's future. He told reporters: "This breakthrough changes the world of (10) _____ mobility. Travel now becomes a hassle-(11) _____ integrated land-air experience." It is not yet clear whether traffic police or air traffic control will (12) _____ the dozens, perhaps hundreds or thousands, of flying cars.

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

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. | (a) taken | (b) taking | (c) took | (d) take |
| 2. | (a) on | (b) off | (c) up | (d) away |
| 3. | (a) means | (b) meaning | (c) meant | (d) meanie |
| 4. | (a) onto | (b) into | (c) to | (d) on |
| 5. | (a) by | (b) upon | (c) about | (d) over |
| 6. | (a) enthusiast | (b) enthusiasm | (c) enthusiasts | (d) enthusiastic |
| 7. | (a) official | (b) officially | (c) officialdom | (d) office |
| 8. | (a) up | (b) on | (c) at | (d) by |
| 9. | (a) ordered | (b) orders | (c) ordering | (d) order |
| 10. | (a) personal | (b) personality | (c) personalize | (d) persons |
| 11. | (a) cost | (b) payment | (c) choice | (d) free |
| 12. | (a) handler | (b) handling | (c) handles | (d) handle |

WRITING:

Write about **flying cars** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

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 the Transition flying car. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. BREAKTHROUGHS: Make a poster about different breakthroughs of the past two decades that changed your life. What would you do without these breakthroughs? Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. FLYING CAR: Write a magazine article about the Transition flying car. 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 Terrafugia CEO Carl Dietrich. Ask him three questions about his "roadable aircraft". Give him three ideas on what he should invent next and why. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. transition | a. change |
| 2. looks like | b. resembles |
| 3. inspiration | c. motivation |
| 4. enthusiasts | d. fans |
| 5. striving | e. aiming |
| 6. officially | f. legally |
| 7. fold up | g. collapse |
| 8. breakthrough | h. discovery |
| 9. hassle | i. problem |
| 10. handle | j. deal with |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. The world's first flying car took | a. to the skies |
| 2. it can switch between the road | b. and the sky |
| 3. Dietrich has spent the past decade | c. working on the project |
| 4. do something about America's | d. crowded highways |
| 5. It's what enthusiasts have been striving | e. for since 1918 |
| 6. The two-seater Transition can | f. take off and land |
| 7. it is officially a light sport aircraft | g. and not a car |
| 8. There are already more than forty | h. orders for it |
| 9. This breakthrough changes the world | i. of personal mobility |
| 10. a hassle-free integrated land- | j. air experience |

GAP FILL:

World's first flying car makes its debut

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The two-seater Transition can **take** off and land at airports and drive on any road. The US government said it is officially a light sport **aircraft** and not a car. The flying car has **wings** that fold up for use on the road. It is around 5.8 metres long and 2 metres wide. Terrafugia **hopes** to start selling the Transition in 2011. The selling price will be between \$150,000 and \$200,000. There are already more than forty **orders** for it. Dietrich is excited about the Transition's future. He told reporters: "This breakthrough changes the world of personal **mobility**. Travel now becomes a **hassle**-free integrated land-air experience." It is not yet clear whether traffic police or air traffic **control** will handle the dozens, perhaps hundreds or thousands, of flying cars.

LANGUAGE WORK

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