

Congestion charge

Level

Intermediate / Upper intermediate

Tasks

- Discussing whether or not students would pay a congestion charge
- Completing an extract from a report with the missing figures
- Scanning and reading an article on ideas for reducing traffic
- Identifying words in the article from their definitions
- Discussing issues connected with reducing traffic arising from the article

How to use the lesson

- 1 Check if the students remember when the City of London introduced a charge for driving a car into the city centre (2003). Hand out the worksheet and ask students who would pay such a charge and who would prefer to leave their car at home and commute. Elicit reasons.
- 2 Ask students to consider the effect on businesses in London: do they think that the introduction of such a charge would be popular with shops and local businesses? Ask students to complete the extract from the article on the London congestion charge with the four figures.

- 3 Ask students to scan paragraph 3 of the article to see if they were correct.

Answers

Of 500 companies surveyed about the charge, 49% believe the scheme works, 16% think it is not working and 35% are undecided. Actual traffic levels in London have fallen by 20%.

- 4 Ask students to read the article again and identify in the article any ideas for traffic reduction.

Answers

*employers to allow staff to work from home occasionally or to adjust their hours (paragraph 2)
extending the congestion charge (paragraph 3)
using satellite-tracking devices fixed to cars to implement pay-as-you-drive charges (paragraph 3)*

- 5 Ask students to find words in the article from the definitions listed.

Answers

(a) to scrap (b) commuters (c) irritable (d) to adjust (e) gridlock

- 6 Ask students to work in groups to discuss their answers to the questions. Monitor the discussion. Ask some students to report their ideas to the class, then hold a class feedback session.

Related websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

<http://www.cclondon.com/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/london/congestion/>

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/10/1016_TVhypercar.html

<http://www.eto.org.uk/twork/index.htm>