# Car Smart

by Nina Bowman

## Overview

This book explores the problem of air pollution caused by cars. It describes new kinds of cars and fuels that help reduce air pollution and suggests simple, everyday ways to help to clear the air. (Big idea: People need to stop polluting the air.)

## Suggested purposes

This book supports the following **comprehension strategies:**
- identifying the main ideas  MI
- summarising the main ideas.  SUM

It supports the following **non-fiction strategies:**
- using photographs to get information
- using captions to get information
- using bullet points to list ideas
- using a glossary (boldface type).

## Key vocabulary

The vocabulary that is focused on includes:
- Anchor words – *air, clean, pollution*
- Content words – *electricity, energy, fuel, petrol, scientists, sun, traffic, train, world*
- High-frequency words – *all, from, how, little, made, make, not, some, that, there, they, too, us*

## Features of the text

- Non-fiction features:
  - cover flap, which provides support for identifying the big ideas and anchor words
  - the topic (reducing air pollution), which expands on pages 12 and 13 of the anchor book *Helping Planet Earth*
  - preview question on the back cover
  - specialised vocabulary
  - photographs and captions
  - bullet points
  - colourful layout
  - captions
  - glossary (boldface type)
- Word study:
  - initial consonant blends – "cl-", "sp-", "tr-", "sk-", "sm-", "fr-", "sc-"
  - final consonant blend – "st"
  - digraph sounds – "th", "ch", "wh"
  - contractions – *let's, doesn't, that's, don't*
- Question marks, exclamation marks, colon

## Setting the scene

If you have already introduced the topic using the whole-class lesson plan and the anchor book (*Helping Planet Earth*), you can review the discussion and show the students pages 12 and 13 of the anchor book.

Talk about pollution caused by cars. Discuss breathing dirty air and fresh air. Prompt the students by using the vocabulary in the book.

- *What are some signs of pollution caused by cars?*
- *What could be done about this pollution?*

## ELL support

ELL students benefit when connections are made between new information and information they have learned. When you're planning a lesson, it's important to think of explicit ways to make these connections.

## Introducing the book

**Front cover** – Discuss the photograph. *How would you describe this car?* Read aloud the title and the author's name.

**Back cover** – Read aloud the preview question. Help the students to make connections with their own experiences.

**Using the flap** – Read aloud the text on the flap, and (if relevant) remind the students that they have read this in *Helping Planet Earth*. Read aloud the anchor words on the other side. Tell the students that they can point out the words when they find them in the book. Ask them to leave the flap open as they read.

**Title page** – Discuss the photograph. Prompt the students to think about what the air is like in rural areas. Read aloud the title. *What might this book be about?*

## The first reading

MI **Page 2** – **(Main idea)** *How do you know what the following pages will be about?* (the heading) Point to the photograph. *Which word describes what you can see?* (traffic) Read aloud the caption. *What is the purpose of the caption?* (to add information beyond the main text, to explore the topic in more detail)

MI **Page 3** – Point to the photograph. *Who is this man? What is he doing?* (fixing the car so that it won't pollute the air) **(Main idea)** *What is the main idea on pages 2 and 3?* (We need cars that don't pollute the air.)

**Pages 4 and 5** – Help the students use the headings to assess what these pages are about. Explain that "fuel" is in bold because it alerts us to an important idea that is defined in the glossary. *Find "fuel" in the glossary. Why do you think page 4 is green?* (Green makes us think of nature and taking care of the environment.) *Why do you think page 5 is yellow?* (Yellow is like a spark of electricity.) *What do the captions tell you?* SUM **(Summarising)** *How are these cars "smart" or better for the air?* (Small cars use less fuel. Electric cars don't pollute.) Explain that electric cars need to be recharged instead of filled with fuel.

**Pages 6 and 7** – Help the students use the headings to assess what these pages are about. Look up "solar", SUM "energy", and "hybrid" in the glossary. **(Summarising)**

*Why are these cars "smart"?* Remind the students about the electric car on the previous page. *This car is similar to the electric car. Cars that run on electricity are better for the air.*

**Pages 8 and 9** – Help the students use the heading to assess what these pages are about. Look up "fuel" in the glossary. *What does the caption tell you? How is this bus smart?* **(Main idea)** *What is the main idea on these* MI *pages?* (Scientists are making fuels that are better for the air.) Discuss some of the fuels that are currently used (oil, diesel, petrol). *These are not clean fuels. If you were a scientist, what kinds of things would you try?*

**Pages 10 and 11** – **(Main idea)** Discuss the MI photograph on page 10. *What does it show?* (a way to reduce air pollution) *Why has the author used a colon?* Explain that a colon signals a list of ideas. In this list, a bullet point is in front of each idea. Bullets tell us to look at each idea separately. *What does the "thumbs-up" symbol mean?* (something good) **(Summarising)** *What* SUM *is the main idea? What message is the author giving us?* (Everybody can help reduce air pollution.) *If we drive smart cars, develop clean fuels, and use cars less often, how will we help planet Earth?*

## Vocabulary activity

### Focus word: smart

1. Turn to page 3 and read: *How can we clean up the air? We can be car smart!*

2. *Say "smart" with me.*

3. Explain that "smart" means clever or intelligent. Being smart means finding a better way of doing things. We often use "smart" to describe people or even animals. It can also describe machines – a "smart" machine can do a job really well. "Smart" can also describe how somebody or something looks. When you look smart, you look clean and tidy. When something looks smart, it stands out because it looks fresh and bright.

4. Give examples of how "smart" can be used.

   - *My dog is very smart. He can learn a new trick in no time at all.*
   - *It's smart to ask for directions when you're lost.*
   - *My brother looks very smart in his new T-shirt.*
   - *My grandad has painted his house a smart green colour.*
   - *I have a smart cell phone that also works as an alarm clock.*

5. Which of these things can be smart?

   - *a bicycle*
   - *a new kind of computer*
   - *an old, faded pair of jeans*
   - *a recycling centre*
   - *an inventor*

   Have the students discuss with a partner, giving reasons for their answers.They can also discuss the following questions:

   - In what way are you smart? Describe it.
   - What kind of animal is smart? Why?

6. *What is the word we've been learning that means finding a better way of doing things? Say "smart" with me.*

## English language learners' activity

### Language objective: Using a graphic organiser to understand the main points

- Revisit the title. *Why has the author used "smart"?*
- *What does "smart" mean?* Review the definition of "smart" in the vocabulary activity.
- *"Smart" means clever or intelligent. "Smart" also means a better way of doing something. How are the cars in this book smart?* The students can share their ideas with a partner.
- *How are smart cars different from the cars most people drive?* The students can share their ideas with a partner.

- Tell the students that you're going to draw a Venn diagram to help them think about how regular cars are different from smart cars.
- Draw the Venn diagram on the board. Review how to record information on a Venn diagram. Label one circle "smart cars" and the other "regular cars". Highlight the outer circles in the same colour. Highlight the intersection in a different colour.
- *What makes smart cars smart?* List the characteristics in the appropriate circle.
- *What makes regular cars different?* List the characteristics.
- *How are smart and regular cars the same?* List the characteristics.
- Review the information on the Venn diagram. Support the students to summarise the main points. "Smart cars are smart because_____. They are smarter than regular cars because _____."

## Ideas for revisiting the text

### 1. Review and check

- Listen as the students reread the text, observing their fluency and decoding strategies.
- Review the anchor and content words. Check that the students know what each word means and how it is used.

### 2. Stop and learn

#### a. Decoding/word attack activity

Practising "ar"
- Write "smart" and "car" on the board. Explain that these words have an "ar" sound.
- Make a list of "ar" words on the board (jar, bar, far, scar, star, tar). Put them on the word wall.

BLM – Practising writing "ar" words
Have the students write the words beside the pictures, then complete the sentences.

#### b. Comprehension activity

Have the students reread the book and summarise the main idea in each section. Some possible summaries are:
- pages 2 and 3 – We need to make cars that are better for the air.
- pages 4 to 7 – Cars that use less fuel don't pollute the air as much.
- pages 8 and 9 – Clean fuels are better for the air.
- pages 10 and 11 – You can help keep the air clean, too.

BLM – Recalling the main ideas from the text
   Have the students look through the book and find the reasons why the cars are described as "smart" (use less fuel, use solar energy, use electricity, use a combination of fuel and electricity, and use clean fuels). They can list these around the word web, then complete the sentences below.

c. Writing activities

Have the students:
- write a story about a smart car that saved the day
- design an advertisement for a smart car
- design a smart car of the future, label its features, and give it a title.

## 3. Suggestions for further activities
- Make a list of times the students have travelled by car. Ask the students if they could have used an alternative means of transport, such as walking, cycling, or taking a bus.