



## THE DEBATE SHOW

You are going to listen to a debate about speed cameras on the roads of Britain. Complete the exercises below. Try not to read the text until you have completed the exercises. Remember, you can listen as many times as you need to, so don't worry if it seems difficult to understand when you listen for the first time.

### I. BEFORE YOU LISTEN.

Match the words in A with the definitions in B. Use a dictionary to check your answers.

A

B

deterrent

adjective to describe where people live outside of the city centre

tackling

very big

critical

likely to cause death; lethal

suburban

making a determined effort to deal with a problem

huge

something that can cause danger

deadly

stop a car quickly and suddenly

threat

legally

within the law

very important or significant

brake sharply

a measure taken to stop people doing something wrong



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### 2. LISTEN TO THE DEBATE.

Who makes the following points, Michael (M) or Lucy (L)?

- a) Speeding cameras cause accidents. M
- b) Speed cameras act as a deterrent for people who drive too quickly. \_\_\_
- c) Speed is rarely is the cause of accidents. \_\_\_
- d) The law should be obeyed. \_\_\_
- e) Speed cameras do not take into account road and weather conditions. \_\_\_
- f) Warning signs before speed cameras are dangerous. \_\_\_

### 3. LISTEN AGAIN.

Choose the correct response to the questions below.

1) The Debate Show takes place:

- a) daily
- b) weekly
- c) we don't know

2) According to Lucy, excessive speed makes it hard to keep a car:

- a) under control
- b) out of control
- c) remote control



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- 3) Which of the following does Michael NOT mention when talking about the causes of road accidents?
- a) alcohol
  - b) mobile phones
  - c) smoking
- 4) Lucy claims that in France just 100 speed cameras have reduced deaths on the roads by:
- a) 5%
  - b) 10%
  - c) 20%
- 5) Complete Michael's sentence: "Look, on suburban streets, the difference between ..... can make a huge difference to how likely a victim is to survive an accident."
- a) 20 and 30 miles per hour
  - b) 20 and 40 miles per hour
  - c) 30 and 40 miles per hour
- 6) According to Lucy, a speed camera can only be installed in the UK where there have been:
- a) 2 serious accidents and 40% of drivers are breaking the speed limit
  - b) 20 serious accidents and 40% of drivers are breaking the speed limit
  - c) 4 serious accidents and 20% of drivers are breaking the speed limit



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- 7) Michael claims that almost all speed cameras are positioned on:
- a) country roads
  - b) main roads
  - c) motorways
- 8) Which telephone number should you dial if you think speed cameras do not prevent road accidents?
- a) 0800 446644
  - b) 0800446655
  - c) 0800 446645

#### 4. LISTEN AND READ.

Listen again to the debate and read the text to check your answers the questions above.

### The Debate Show

A: Welcome to the “Debate Show”. Every week we ask two experts to debate the issues that affect our daily lives. Our subject this week is 'speed cameras'. I'd like to welcome Michael Davis of the organization “Drivers Rights”, and Lucy Simmons from the “Campaign Against Dangerous Driving”. Michael is opposed to the introduction of speed cameras to the roads of Britain, while Lucy is a supporter of speed cameras.

So, do speed cameras really reduce the number of accidents on our roads? Lucy, would you like to start?



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- B: Well, speeding causes accidents because it reduces the amount of time a driver has to react to changing conditions. Excessive speed also makes it harder to keep a car under control. Speed cameras reduce the number of road accidents by penalizing people who drive dangerously, creating a deterrent for drivers who drive too quickly.
- C: That's not true actually. Speed is rarely the cause of accidents. Other factors such as alcohol, bad road conditions, bad signage or distractions such as mobile phones all play a part. Personally, I think tackling these other factors would do more than speed cameras to reduce road accidents.
- A: But isn't it true that speed cameras reduce speed, and accidents at lower speeds result in fewer fatalities than accidents at high speed? Lucy?
- B: Absolutely, speed is a critical factor in how bad accidents are. Even small changes in speed can be effective in preventing deaths and reducing injuries. Countries that have introduced speed cameras have all seen reductions in deaths and serious injuries on the road. Take France, for example, where just 100 speed cameras reduced deaths on the road by 10% in just one year.
- C: Well, I'm not sure about that. Look, on suburban streets, the difference between 20 and 40 miles an hour can make a huge difference to how likely a victim is to survive an accident. But this is not the case on faster main roads where almost all speed cameras are positioned. On these roads, the speed limits are already high enough to make accidents deadly, even if the vehicles involved are driving within the legal limit.
- A: The *legal* limit, that's the point isn't it. That speed limits are a law and the cameras are only there to enforce the law?



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- B:** Yes, of course, I'd agree with that. The law should be obeyed. You may believe you can drive safely above the speed limit but you must consider other road users too. In any case, who needs to speed? In the UK speed cameras can only be installed where there have been four serious accidents in recent years and where 20% of drivers are breaking the speed limit. It seems we need speed cameras to prevent these people from breaking the law.
- C:** I'm afraid you're missing the point. The speed limit is a guide to drivers for the maximum safe speed. But circumstances vary. Early in the morning, when it's light and the roads are empty, the safe speed may be higher than the limit. In these conditions a driver exceeding the legal limit may pose no threat to the public and should not be penalized. However, in heavy rain and fog the safe speed may be much lower than the legal limit. In these conditions, a driver may be driving dangerously but within the law. Speed cameras do not take into account road and weather conditions.
- A:** What I don't understand is, how can speed cameras be effective when there are warning signs indicating their presence, Lucy?
- B:** The signs act as a reminder to motorists that legal limits exist and that they are enforced. This constant reminder will lead to safer driving at all times, not just when cameras are present.
- C:** I'm sorry. I can't agree. The signs before speed cameras are dangerous as drivers often brake sharply when they see them. Any study will tell you that sudden changes in driving behaviour, such as sharp braking, is a major cause of accidents. I believe that speed cameras just serve to annoy motorists and make them more aggressive and as such, more dangerous.



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A: Well, there you have it. You have heard two different points of view regarding speed cameras on our roads. But what do you think? Join our vote. Do you think speed cameras prevent accidents? If you think the answer to this question is 'yes', dial 0800 446644. If you think the answer is 'no', dial 0800 446645. We'll be back after the commercial break with the results of the vote.