

Skycar

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Classroom Activities



Car from Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

Overview:

A voyage in a flying car “from here to Timbuktu” may sound like a magical childhood fantasy, as in the movie *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, but this week a British adventurer will set off from London on an incredible journey through Europe and Africa in a souped-up sand buggy, travelling by road - and air. His mode of transportation is a Skycar, a flying machine based on technology. The Skycar is being described as the world’s first road legal biofuelled flying car. Students will look at the history of flying cars and use creative writing to describe their own voyage on one.

Grade Levels: 3-4

Subject: Social Studies. Language Arts

Standards:

Social Studies:

Students will be able to identify systems of transportation used to move people and products and systems of communication used to move ideas from place to place.

Language Arts:

Students will be able to deliver an oral presentation demonstrating an understanding of a subject.

Students will be able to ask questions for clarification and explanation.

Students will be able to produce informal writing.

Classroom Activities:

1. Activity #1 Just what is this “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang”?

- How many of you have ever flown in an airplane? Tell us what that was like? Was it fun?
- Have any of you seen the movie *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* that you heard mentioned in the NewsDepth feature? What do you think that would be like?
- Have you ever been in the car with someone, stuck in a traffic jam or knowing you had to spend several hours on route to a far away destination and thought to yourself, “if this car could just fly!” ? You are not alone.



Skycar

- A British adventurer is preparing to set off for Timbuktu in a home-made vehicle which can transform itself from a car into an aircraft in minutes. On the ground the Skycar runs on a biofuel-powered engine and can accelerate from zero to 100 kilometres per hour in 4.5 seconds. But with a powerful fan on the rear its take-off speed is 60kph, and once in the air it can fly at speeds of up to around 110 kph, cruising at 600-900 metres with a paraglider-style canopy holding it aloft. This story continues, and for more details plus a video, visit this site:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/01/14/2465675.htm>

- This site features an interview with Neil Laughton who is leading the flying expedition:
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/motoring/4238241/Skycar-expedition-prepares-for-take-off-from-London-to-Timbuktu-Parajet-Skycar.html>

Another media clip interview with Giles Cardozo, the inventor of the Skycar
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2009/jan/14/skycar-london-timbuktu>

Continue with a discussion about flying cars:

- Why do you think it has been so difficult to build a car that can drive on the road and fly in the air?
- How do you think the wind will affect the flying cars?
- The following could be a mini activity with students in pairs or small groups. Have them discuss and come back to the class with their ideas.
 - What do you think are the advantages to having flying cars?
 - What are the possible disadvantages or problems with having cars flying? Can you think of any possible solutions?
 - <http://www.strongware.com/dragon/> This website provides information about potential problems with flying cars.

2. Activity #2 Exploring the History of Flying Cars

- “Students will be able to identify systems of transportation used to move people.”
- In this activity, students will be able to examine the history of the “flying car” and learn of all of the previous attempts made to provide this form of transportation.
- The following website is excellent in tracing the very beginnings of the concept of a flying car. It has many excellent pictures.
<http://davidszondy.com/future/Flight/flyingcars.htm>
- Another website for history of the flying car
[http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Flying-car-\(aircraft\)](http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Flying-car-(aircraft))



First flying car in 1918

3. Activity #3 “Flying High” in Skycar

- A contest is being held for all third and fourth graders. In 25 words or less, explain why you think you should be the first student to be able to fly on board the Skycar. The winner will actually be able to fly on the next voyage of the Skycar.

- You have won the contest! You will be the first student in history to fly in car! Draw a picture of you in the car and write two paragraphs detailing your flight!
- Choose one or two students to be the “flying student” in a post flight press conference: Your flight has landed! It was successful. You are being interviewed by the press. Students in the class are the press. Encourage them to ask thoughtful questions about the experience.

Resources:

Additional lessons and websites pertaining to flying cars

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00001583.shtml>

Photos

First flying car: <http://www.earlyaviators.com/eraderph.htm>

Chitty Chitty car: <http://www.4qd.co.uk/evs/pics/Chitty.jpeg>

Some additional photos: <http://international.com.com/cutting-edge/?keyword=car+tech>