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#### Vocabulary: Transport 词汇：交通工具

You know the feeling. You're stuck in **bumper-to-bumper** traffic. It's going to be hours before you get home. As we know all too well, **congestion** is one of the downsides of modern city living. Don't you wish you could just **take to the skies** and soar above it all in a helicopter?

Well, wish no more. Right now, **the race is on** to release the first commercially **viable** sky taxi. No longer will personal air travel be the **preserve** of the super wealthy, say optimistic tech entrepreneurs. There's just one **catch**: how do you feel about having no pilot?

For brave passengers, the city of Dubai plans to roll out rides on their pilotless **drone** taxi project by the end of this year. You can **buckle up** and share the ride with one other passenger in their 18-rotor **craft**, developed by German start-up Volocopter, with a top speed of 100km/h and a flight time of around 30 minutes.

If you have more friends, French **aviation** company Airbus are working on a drone which can carry four to six customers. Or if you prefer your own company, Chinese firm Ehang are pioneering a single-seater drone, which stays **airborne** for 23 minutes.

**Ride-hailing** company Uber also want **a piece of the action**. They say drones like this are the "future of **on-demand** urban air transportation". They recently poached NASA chief technologist Mark Moore to help them develop a drone taxi. And he claims it won't **cost the earth**. Moore told the BBC that with three or four passengers sharing, it would be "very similar to what an UberX [car] costs today".

So far so good. But naturally, a number of questions remain. On the technical side, there's the problem of batteries. A 23-minute flight could get you across town, but how and where does the battery recharge?

And regulations are a challenge too. US authorities require aircraft to carry at least 20 minutes of spare fuel. If you only have 23 or even 30 in total, that leaves very little **leeway**. Control of access to **flight paths** will also need to be worked out.

Even if these issues are tackled successfully, there's still the **biggie**: safety. Will passengers really be willing to put their lives in the hands of a flying robot? Winning the trust of the regulators and the public may take time. But when they do, well, **the sky's the limit**.

## 词汇表

<b>bumper-to-bumper</b>	(交通) 非常拥堵的
<b>congestion</b>	堵车, 交通堵塞
<b>to take to the skies</b>	冲上云霄
<b>the race is on</b>	竞争已经开始
<b>viable</b>	可行的, 有望成功的
<b>preserve</b>	(某类人群的) 专利
<b>catch</b>	暗藏的问题
<b>drone</b>	无人驾驶的飞机
<b>to buckle up</b>	系好安全带
<b>craft</b>	飞行器
<b>aviation</b>	航空
<b>airborne</b>	在空中的
<b>ride-hailing</b>	(提供) 叫车(服务) 的
<b>a piece of the action</b>	(口语) 分一杯羹
<b>on-demand</b>	按需的
<b>to cost the earth</b>	(英式口语) 漫天要价
<b>leeway</b>	富余的时间
<b>flight path</b>	飞行的路线, 航线
<b>biggie</b>	(口语) 重要的事情
<b>the sky's the limit</b>	“天空是极限”, 没有做不到的事情

## 测验与练习

### 1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why are batteries an issue?
2. What does the author believe is the most significant challenge for drone taxis to be successful?
3. Which word means 'disadvantages'?
4. Which word means 'a new business designed to solve a specific problem'?
5. True or false: Uber believe single drone passengers will pay the same as single car passengers.

### 2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. Buying a smartphone doesn't have to \_\_\_\_\_. Just get an older model.

be a piece of the action    cost the earth    limit the sky    break the earth

2. When it comes to how much you can spend on a wedding, \_\_\_\_\_.

it's a piece of the action    take to the skies    the race is on    the sky's the limit

3. Our new helicopter can stay \_\_\_\_\_ for 10 hours before needing to refuel.

airborne    aviation    aboard    to the skies

4. Lots of people rented their apartments to visitors when the Olympics came to London. They all wanted \_\_\_\_\_.

to take to the skies    to cost the earth    to buckle up    a piece of the action

5. Your plan is interesting, but there's not much \_\_\_\_\_ for failure.

headroom    leeway    congestion    viability

## 答案

### 1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

#### 1. Why are batteries an issue?

**Batteries only last a short time before needing to be recharged. US regulators also demand aircraft carry at least 20 minutes of spare fuel, which limits the flight time even further.**

#### 2. What does the author believe is the most significant challenge for drone taxis to be successful?

**The author believes that the biggest problem is convincing the public and regulators that drone taxis are safe.**

#### 3. Which word means 'disadvantages'?

**Downsides.**

#### 4. Which word means 'a new business designed to solve a specific problem'?

**Start-up.**

#### 5. True or false: Uber believe single drone passengers will pay the same as single car passengers.

**False. Uber's Mark Moore believes that three or four people sharing a drone taxi will pay the same per person as hiring a whole Uber car costs.**

### 2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. Buying a smartphone doesn't have to **cost the earth**. Just get an older model.

2. When it comes to how much you can spend on a wedding, **the sky's the limit**.

3. Our new helicopter can stay **airborne** for 10 hours before needing to refuel.

4. Lots of people rented their apartments to visitors when the Olympics came to London. They all wanted **a piece of the action**.

5. Your plan is interesting, but there's not much **leeway** for failure.