

## Comprehension 5

### A Journey Through Hong Kong's History

What mode of transport gets you from A to B, whilst also allowing you to step back in time? Hong Kong's trams have transported passengers through the north corridor for over a century, and still they rumble on. Tourists and residents alike climb aboard these charming vehicles, and enjoy the wonderful views as they travel towards their destination in style.

A tramway system for Hong Kong was first proposed way back in 1881, but it wasn't until 1904 that the first tramcars were shipped to Hong Kong from the United Kingdom. Soon, the demand for the trams was so high that the Hong Kong Tramway Company introduced double-deck tramcars. Back then the tramcars had open tops, so it wasn't advisable to ride up there in the rain! Since then, the tramcars have been updated dozens of times, leading up to the modern and well-equipped tramcars that we see around the city today.

As well as being a crucial mode of transport for Hong Kong's commuters, the trams are a major tourist attraction. The window seats on the top deck offer unbeatable views, as images of the city pass by like a film. Riding on one of these trams, tourists can feel that they are part of Hong Kong's history. For a truly authentic ride, one tram, number 68, has even been renovated and converted into an open-top "vintage" tram, which looks just like the tramcars that citizens rode 100 years ago.

Despite their long history, Hong Kong's trams remain a practical and affordable way to travel around the city. Each tram ride costs a flat fare of just \$2.30, making it the most inexpensive way to travel around the island. Locals can even pay for their journeys cash-free, using their so-called 'Octopus Card'. Trams are also the most environmentally friendly mode of transport in the city; they are the only on-land vehicles in the city that emit no roadside emissions at all!

Hong Kong's tramcars are a perfect example of how a city can maintain its history, whilst looking firmly to the future. Here's hoping that the trams will continue to run through Hong Kong for at least another hundred years!

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Which of the following is FALSE according to the text above?
  - a. Passengers weren't allowed to ride on the top deck in the rain.
  - b. There have been many versions of the tramcars.
  - c. The fare is the same no matter how far you travel.
  - d. Trams are better for the environment than buses and cars.
  
2. What does the highlighted word "they" refer to in the first paragraph?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
3. When did tramcars arrive in Hong Kong?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Why were double-deck tramcars introduced?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What does the word "well-equipped" in the 2nd paragraph mean?
  - a. environmentally-friendly
  - b. containing suitable equipment
  - c. easy to ride on
  - d. safe
  
6. What can tourists do to have a genuine experience of historical trams?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
7. What is particularly convenient about paying for tram travel, if you live in Hong Kong?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
8. What does the writer want to happen to the trams?  
\_\_\_\_\_