

M.4 Listening Activity

Stop on Red, Go on Green

At the beginning of the 19th century, traffic in big cities such as New York and London became busy and 1. _____ 2. _____, 4. _____, 5. _____ and 6. _____ moved in every direction, and then they were joined by the adverse lay of the weather, the 7. _____ in those days, creating a street used to be a real challenge for 8. _____. There were no rules for drivers. The New York Police Department had to create a special 9. _____ to handle traffic. Police officers stood at 10. _____ and tried to direct the traffic, but very often they were run over by vehicles. By 1812, New York City had 28,000 motor 11. _____. Something had to be done about all the traffic on the 12. _____. In 1816, the first traffic tower was put up in New York, at the 13. _____ of 5th, 14. _____ and 42nd street. A traffic officer controlled three 500-watt lamps. They measured 40 centimeters in 15. _____ and they were red, amber and green. However, at the time, red meant traffic in all directions had to stop. 16. _____ stopped only east-west traffic, and green stopped only north-south traffic. This was very confusing, so in 1828 the city adapted the system used in 17. _____ and the stop, green for go, and yellow for slow. This system became standard all over the world. The first 18. _____ traffic lights were installed in Water Hampton, England, in 1867. Today computers 19. _____ traffic lights, and road 20. _____ are much better than they used to be. The only problem is when there is a power outage. The result is often confusion on the streets because the traffic lights don't work.