

## Volkswagen to recall 11 million cars

2nd October, 2015



The troubled German carmaker Volkswagen (VW) has announced it will recall around 11 million cars following the emissions tests scandal that has mired the company in

controversy. Some industry analysts predict the recall could cost the auto manufacturer more than \$6.5 billion. Last week, VW admitted cheating in diesel emissions tests in the United States and Europe. It manipulated data to falsely show that VW cars were a lot more fuel-efficient than was really the case. The company is Europe's largest carmaker and employs over 750,000 people. It has lost more than a third of its market value on stock markets and has badly tarnished its reputation as being a leader in clean energy.

Chief executives at VW could face criminal charges over the scandal. Olaf Lies, a Volkswagen board member, told the BBC TV programme Newsnight that some staff acted criminally over emission tests. He said: "Those people who allowed this to happen, or who made the decision to install this software, acted criminally. They must take personal responsibility." He added: "We only found out about the problems in the last board meeting, shortly before the media did. I want to be quite open, so we need to find out why the board wasn't informed earlier about the problems when they were known about over a year ago in the United States."

Sources: *BBC / Reuters / Autocar.com*

## Writing

Everyone who bought a VW with the cheat software should get a full refund. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*troubled / carmaker / emissions / analysts / predict / fuel-efficient / market value / criminal / board member / software / responsibility / media / informed / problems*

## True / False

- The controversy is because of emissions tests. T / F
- The scandal could cost VW \$65 billion. T / F
- VW lost almost a third of its market value. T / F
- VW has damaged its green credentials. T / F
- Bosses at the company will not have to face criminal charges. T / F
- A VW board member said some staff acted criminally. T / F
- Many board members found out about the scandal after the media did. T / F
- People in the US knew about this until a year ago. T / F

## Synonym Match

- |                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. announced   | a. falsified       |
| 2. mired       | b. let             |
| 3. admitted    | c. behaved         |
| 4. manipulated | d. entangled       |
| 5. tarnished   | e. understood      |
| 6. face        | f. confessed       |
| 7. acted       | g. made it known   |
| 8. allowed     | h. told            |
| 9. informed    | i. blackened       |
| 10. known      | j. come up against |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- What was your image of VW before this scandal and what is it now?
- How would you feel if you had a VW car?
- What do you know about the emissions tests scandal?
- How will this scandal affect VW's future?
- What does VW need to do to repair its reputation?
- Should VW pay compensation to VW car owners?
- How much do you trust big companies like VW?

# Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

## Phrase Match

- mired the company in
- industry
- a lot more fuel-efficient than
- employs over
- lost more than a third
- Chief executives at VW could face
- board
- They must take
- shortly
- find out why the board wasn't
- was really the case
- before the media
- of its market value
- member
- criminal charges
- analysts
- controversy
- informed earlier
- 750,000 people
- personal responsibility

## Discussion – Student B

- Why do you think staff acted criminally over the tests?
- What world company do you think has the cleanest image?
- How did VW keep the cheating a secret for a year?
- What car company do you like, and why?
- Should VW pay for producing more emissions than they claimed?
- What will VW be like in five years from now?
- What advice would you give the boss of VW?
- What questions would you like to ask VW's boss?

## Spelling

- ondencuan it will recall around 11 million cars
- the nsisseomi tests scandal
- mired the company in royvocnstre
- industry satlnsya
- fuel-tncfeiife
- badly tarnished its nutaripeto
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- people who lwolaed this to happen
- take personal lspstribyiioen
- the last dabor meeting
- shortly before the deaim did
- wasn't rodnfime earlier about the problems

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. f	4. a	5. i
6. j	7. c	8. b	9. h	10. e

## Role Play

### Role A – SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle)

You think an SUV is the best car to have nowadays. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their cars aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): 2-seater mini-car, sports convertible or compact car.

### Role B – 2-seater mini-car

You think a 2-seater mini-car is the best car to have nowadays. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their cars aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): SUV, sports convertible or compact car.

### Role C – Sports convertible

You think a sports convertible is the best car to have nowadays. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their cars aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): 2-seater mini-car, SUV or compact car.

### Role D – Compact car

You think a compact car is the best car to have nowadays. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their cars aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): 2-seater mini-car, sports convertible or SUV.

## Speaking – Cars

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- SUV
- 2-seater mini-car
- family sedan
- people carrier
- sports convertible
- compact car
- Rolls Royce
- supercar

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.