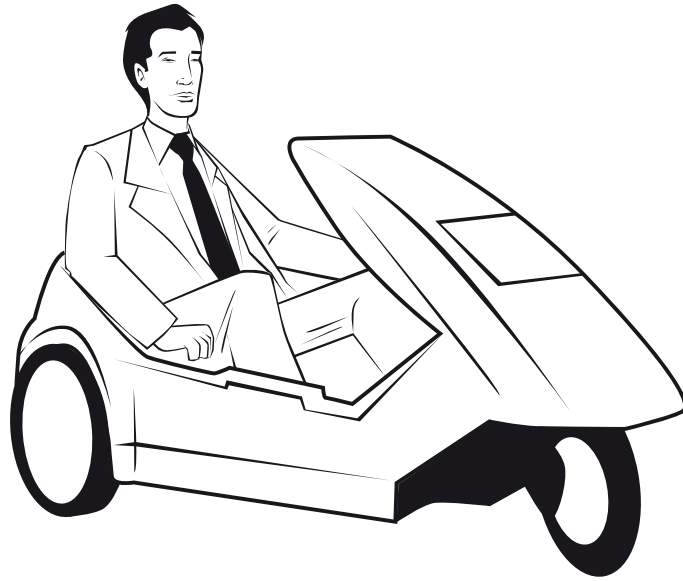


The Sinclair C5



1	Launched in United Kingdom in 1985, the Sinclair C5 was a battery-assisted tricycle	
2	created by British inventor, Sir Clive Sinclair. The C5 was steered by the handlebar	
3	beneath a driver's knees and powered by a small electric motor making it unnecessary	
4	for the driver to pedal. C5's top speed of twenty-four km/h was the fastest allowed	
5	in the UK without driving licence. The retail price was £399, plus £29 for delivery,	
6	which was expensive for the time. Both media and the public ridiculed the C5 during	
7	1980s and it was a commercial disaster, selling only around 12,000 units. In fact, the	
8	design was an impractical one: from the beginning, there were the serious concerns	
9	about the C5's safety in traffic because it was so low to ground. In addition to this, the	
10	driver was exposed to the wind and the rain and the cold weather tended to shorten	
11	battery life. The lack of gears and seat-to-pedal adjustment and the fact that a motor	
12	overheated on the long hills, were also serious problems. The motor turned out to be	
13	essentially useless for climbing hills, with even the gentle slopes requiring the driver to	
14	pedal. Sinclair spent the millions of pounds on developing the C5 and its failure	
15	bankrupted a company and cost him his reputation. It will long be remembered in the	
16	UK as the spectacular and comic failure, but was Sir Clive's idea just ahead of its time?	

SOLUTIONS OF GRAMMAR 5A

AHEAD OF ITS TIME

1 the United Kingdom 2 a handlebar 3 the driver's knees

4 The C5's 5 a driving licence 6 the media 7 the 1980s

8 serious concerns 9 low to the ground 10 cold weather

11 the motor 12 long hills 13 gentle slopes 14 millions

15 the company 16 a spectacular