



Better Gas Mileage

Pre-reading

Questions: What do you know about this topic? What questions do you have?

Definitions: Mileage – the number of miles a vehicle can travel per unit of fuel

Hybrid car – a car that operates using both gas and electricity

Diligent – careful and hard-working

High octane fuel – fuel that requires a high amount of energy to ignite

Reading

16 Frank is a thrifty person. He keeps detailed records of his income and expenses. He only
33 buys things he really needs and uses coupons when he shops. He tries not to overspend. Despite
52 Frank's best efforts, his cash flow is less this year than last year. The high gas prices have forced
him to spend more than he had planned.

60 Frank would like to improve his gas mileage. Buying a hybrid or electric car is one option,
77 but not for Frank. He does not have enough money for a down payment, nor does he want to make
97 car payments. Besides, his car is still in good shape.

107 What are some other gas saving options? Frank decides to check online. He goes to
122 *Google* and types in "better gas mileage." There are some helpful tips at the Federal Trade
138 Commission's (FTC) Consumer Alerts' webpage. Frank reads their "Good, Better, Best: How to
151 Improve Gas Mileage" resource.

155 There are a variety of suggestions on improving gas mileage while driving and maintaining
169 your car. Frank learns that gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 miles per hour, so he
187 begins to stay within the posted speed limits.

195 When Frank waits for a long train, he now turns off his car instead of **idling**. Idling wastes
213 fuel, which costs money, and pollutes the air. He also removes things promptly from his trunk. An
230 extra 100 pounds in the trunk can reduce a car's fuel economy by up to two percent.

247 Frank is diligent about car maintenance. The engine, tires and air filters are checked
261 regularly. Tuning a car engine according to the owner's manual can increase gas mileage by an
277 average of four percent. Properly inflated and aligned tires can increase gas mileage up to three
293 percent. Replacing clogged air filters can increase mileage up to ten percent.

305 How about at the pump? Frank has often wondered about the high octane fuel. Would it be
322 better for his car? Would it give him better gas mileage? The FTC claims that a higher octane gas
341 offers no benefit. In fact, they say, "Unless your engine is knocking, buying higher octane gasoline
357 is a waste of money."

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Level 5.5

Understanding

1. Why did Frank's cash flow decrease? _____

2. What does the word **idle** mean in this reading? _____

3. What Internet search engine did Frank use? _____

4. Which mileage tip appeared to have the greatest benefit? _____

5. What gas mileage improvement option did Frank not use? Why? _____

6. List one driving tip and one maintenance tip for better gas mileage. _____

7. Where did Frank find the helpful tips? _____

Writing

Option A: Summarize the reading in your own words.

Option B: How do you save money on gas? Compare and contrast what you do with the tips that were recommended in the reading.
