Norris takes São Paulo pole in heavy rain

LEVEL B1



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I. WARM-UP

1. What do you like about watching motorsport?
2. Have you ever driven in heavy rain? How was it?
3. Do rules or penalties make sport fairer? Why or why not?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

downpour
a sudden, very heavy fall of rain

flooding
water covering an area because of heavy rain

grid
the starting order of cars before a race begins

penalty
a punishment in sport that moves a driver or team back

engine
the machine in a car that makes it move

upgrade
a new part or change that makes something work better

furious
very angry

confident
sure that you can do something well

III. READING

In heavy rain at Interlagos in São Paulo, Lando Norris took pole for McLaren. Qualifying ran for two and a half hours after a downpour and flooding caused long delays. The grid is mixed after several penalties, so the race looks very open.

George Russell was second but has a grid penalty, so his Mercedes teammate Kimi Antonelli will start second. Liam Lawson will start third for Racing Bulls, and Nico Hülkenberg fourth for Audi. Russell called the conditions crazy and was furious after being told to back off on a fast lap.

Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton also took engine penalties. Verstappen chose not to set a time after Q1 to save tyres and will start 21st. Hamilton had a problem with a new internal combustion engine and will start 20th. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc finished fourth but has a 10-place penalty and will start 14th.

McLaren brought upgrades, including a new front wing, and Norris said the changes felt good. With more rain expected for the race, many drivers still feel confident.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "Lando Norris claims F1 São Paulo GP pole as...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who took pole position at Interlagos?
2. Why did qualifying last two and a half hours?
3. Who will start second, third and fourth on the grid?
4. From which positions will Verstappen and Hamilton start?
5. What new part did McLaren bring as an upgrade?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Is rain good or bad for racing? Why?
2. When should F1 stop or restart a race for weather?
3. Do grid penalties make races more exciting or less fair?
4. Which car upgrades matter most in a wet race? Why?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Question tags

Add a short question at the end to check or confirm: statement + tag. Match tense and subject; positive sentence → negative tag, negative sentence → positive tag (is → isn't, was → wasn't, will → won't, can → can't).

"It's raining hard at Interlagos, ***isn't it?****"*
"You watched qualifying, ***didn't you?****"*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Choose the correct option.

1. Qualifying lasted a long time, (doesn't it? / didn't it?) _____
2. Russell was told to back off, (wasn't he? / didn't he?) _____
3. Verstappen will start 21st, (won't he? / will he?) _____
4. There was flooding, (isn't there? / wasn't there?) _____
5. McLaren brought upgrades, (didn't they? / did they?) _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.



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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10–12 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach key terms on the board with quick examples: pole position, grid, penalty, upgrade, engine. Use an image of a starting grid to anchor meaning.
- Run a first fast read for gist, then a second read to find names and starting places. The story includes risk in bad weather; if students have concerns, keep discussion on race rules and safety rather than personal experiences.
- Differentiate by task: stronger students summarise how penalties changed the grid; others match names to starting places using a simple table before answering questions.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Elicit both sides, then ask for one example from F1 history or another sport.
2. Set a line debate: one side argues to race, the other to pause; then swap sides.
3. Poll the room, group by opinion, and have each group list two reasons.
4. Have pairs choose two upgrades and rank them for wet conditions with reasons.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: In pairs, write a 70-word team radio message to a driver during heavy rain.

Debate: Split into two teams: continue qualifying in heavy rain vs. suspend it; prepare 5 minutes, debate 5 minutes.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Question tags

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who took pole position at Interlagos?
   Lando Norris.
2. Why did qualifying last two and a half hours?
   Because a downpour and flooding caused long delays.
3. Who will start second, third and fourth on the grid?
   Kimi Antonelli second, Liam Lawson third, Nico Hülkenberg fourth.
4. From which positions will Verstappen and Hamilton start?
   Verstappen 21st and Hamilton 20th.
5. What new part did McLaren bring as an upgrade?
   A new front wing.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Choose the correct option.

1. Qualifying lasted a long time, (doesn't it? / didn't it?) **didn't it?**
2. Russell was told to back off, (wasn't he? / didn't he?) **wasn't he?**
3. Verstappen will start 21st, (won't he? / will he?) **won't he?**
4. There was flooding, (isn't there? / wasn't there?) **wasn't there?**
5. McLaren brought upgrades, (didn't they? / did they?) **didn't they?**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Add a short question at the end to check or confirm: statement + tag. Match tense and subject; positive sentence → negative tag, negative sentence → positive tag (is → isn't, was → wasn't, will → won't, can → can't). (Examples constructed.)

"It's raining hard at Interlagos, **isn't it?***"*

"You watched qualifying, **didn't you?***"*