Fill in the blanks with the appropriate form of the verbs given in brackets. Do NOT use modals.

BY William S. James, Card-carrying member of Road Rage Anonymous

The Top 10 Vehicles Most Likely to Contain Bad Drivers

The United States is an automobile oriented society with a long history of love affairs with anything on wheels. People in America just 1)___________________________ (love) their cars. Because of this and several other reasons, the number of drivers 2)___________________________ (increase) steadily at present. For some men, there are very few experiences that rival the excitement of buying a shiny new car, sliding into the driver’s seat, and taking a deep breath of that ‘new car’ smell. Talk to any man interested in cars and you will see that he is of the opinion that a new car 3)___________________________ (smell) better than anything else. However, over the past 10 years, I 4)___________________________ (realize) something else as well. Why is it that certain cars and vehicles 5)___________________________ (seem) to invite bad drivers? Is it the style, or what? 6)___________________________ it _____________ (cause) by socio-economic factors? I still 7)___________________________ (know). But in the last two years, after 40 years of driving, with more than 10 years as a professional, and close to a million miles logged behind the wheel, I 8)___________________________ (finally / conclude) that certain vehicles, either by their make, their vehicle type, or because of the personalized modifications made to them, are ‘Bad Driver Magnets.’ In other words, they attract bad drivers like magnets.

Based totally on non-scientific observation, you will soon see a list of the 10 most hated vehicles to be behind because of the possibility that there is a bad driver in the driver's seat. Of course, this list should be longer but vehicles like buses and large trucks such as dumper trucks or cement mixers 9)___________________________ (include) on this list. This is because it is not primarily the driver’s fault that such vehicles are slow. Also ‘multi-tasking’ drivers like the make-up artists, the diners and the phone-talkers are not on the list. Since women started driving in large numbers back in the 60s, there has been an increase in accidents because of all the women who put their make-up on while they 10)___________________________ (operate) the car. Now imagine – you stop at a red light in the morning rush. There is a woman driver in the car in front of yours. Under these circumstances, it is very normal for her rear-view mirror to be at an angle where she can put on her mascara or eye shadow. And if the light turns green before she’s finished that eye, you just have to wait! Actually, neither the traffic lights nor the woman 11)___________________________ (be) guilty here – the husband who got her the car should be blamed!
But of the multi-taskers, nobody (contribute) more to accidents than the cell-phone driver. Ever since cell phones became smaller than a toaster, cars have been transformed into rolling phone booths. You (hear) about or read the latest statistics saying that people on phones present the same risk as drunk drivers? In my childhood, my father or mother (make) their phone calls before getting into the car. They (control) the car with one hand only – both hands were on the steering wheel! For us kids in the back seat, looking out the window, chatting and singing (be) our only alternatives before reaching our destination. How we (manage) without DVD players, Game Boys or cell phones? Just fine! The good old days!

Also, I just have to say it here even before my Top 10 list starts! I would be surprised if you (involve) in a dangerous situation yet because of a car with a ‘Baby on Board’ caution sign in the window. It (make) any difference what the model, make, price-range, or condition of the car is – it can be anything! If you see a yellow ‘Baby on Board’ caution sign attached to the window, beware!!! These signs indicate a lawsuit waiting to happen. Because they have a baby, these drivers, instead of changing their own bad driving habits to protect their precious little monster, simply (expect) all of the rest of us to compensate for their careless driving habits!

So here it is: The Top 10 Vehicles Most Likely to Contain a Bad Driver:

10. Personal Transportation Cruisers
9. Sports Utility Vehicles
8. Minivans
7. Honda Civic
6. Corvettes
5. Customized cars
4. Pickup trucks
3. Cars with ‘Baby on Board’ caution signs in the window
2. Toyota Corolla
1. Commercial Vans and trucks

If you are interested in why these vehicles are among ‘The Top 10 Vehicles Most Likely to Contain Bad Drivers,’ check my website for more information.
INTERMEDIATE GROUP
ANSWER KEY

1. love
2. is increasing
3. smells
4. have realized
5. seem
6. Is … caused
7. don’t know
8. have finally concluded
9. aren’t included / haven’t been included
10. are operating / operate
11. is
12. contributes / has contributed
13. Have(n’t) … heard / Did(n’t) … hear
14. made
15. didn’t control
16. were
17. did … manage
18. haven’t been involved
19. doesn’t make
20. expect