Name: _____
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RESEARCH ARTICLES

RESEARCH ARTICLE 1: LIDAR — MAPPING THE WORLD WITH LIGHT

Overview
LiDAR, short for *Light Detection and Ranging*, is one of the most advanced technologies used in self-driving and robotic vehicles. It works by sending out rapid pulses of laser light that bounce off surrounding objects. By measuring how long each pulse takes to return, LiDAR builds a highly accurate 3D map of the environment.

Functions and Applications
In autonomous vehicles, LiDAR helps identify obstacles, lane markings, and even the edges of sidewalks. It can detect objects at various distances, allowing the car to navigate safely even when visibility is poor. Engineers often combine LiDAR with camera and radar data to improve reliability.

Advantages
- Provides detailed, high-resolution 3D data
- Works well in both daylight and low-light conditions
- Excellent for mapping and obstacle detection

Limitations
- Can be expensive compared to other sensors
- Laser beams may scatter in heavy rain, fog, or dust
- Requires significant computing power to process data

Real-World Example
Companies like Waymo and Tesla have used LiDAR to train vehicles for city and highway navigation. The technology continues to evolve, with smaller and more affordable LiDAR units being developed for consumer-grade robots and drones.

Name: _____
Period: _____

RESEARCH ARTICLE 2: ULTRASONIC SENSORS — THE SOUND OF PRECISION

Overview
Ultrasonic sensors use sound waves that humans cannot hear. They send out a short pulse of sound, then measure how long it takes to bounce back. This delay reveals how far away an object is.

Functions and Applications
In robotic cars, ultrasonic sensors are often used for close-range detection, such as when parking or avoiding low-speed collisions. They are ideal for identifying nearby walls, vehicles, or other obstacles that the car must maneuver around.

Advantages
- Affordable and easy to install
- Accurate at short distances (usually under 5 meters)
- Not affected by lighting conditions

Limitations
- Limited range—cannot detect distant objects
- May have difficulty detecting very soft or angled surfaces
- Accuracy decreases in heavy rain or wind

Real-World Example
Parking assistance systems in many cars use multiple ultrasonic sensors along the bumpers to detect curbs or other vehicles. Similar sensors are used in robotic vacuums and small-scale educational robots.

Name: _____
Period: _____

RESEARCH ARTICLE 3: CAMERAS AND VISION SYSTEMS — THE EYES OF THE ROBOT

Overview
Cameras allow robots to “see” the world visually, just like human eyes. They capture color, shape, and motion, which software then processes to identify objects, signs, and boundaries.

Functions and Applications
Vision systems use advanced image-recognition algorithms to interpret road conditions, detect pedestrians, and read traffic lights. In educational robotic cars, cameras may help the robot follow a line on the ground or identify color-coded targets.

Advantages
- Provides rich visual data and color recognition
- Can identify symbols, shapes, and text
- Works well for tracking and AI-based decision-making

Limitations
- Struggles in low light, glare, or fog
- Requires advanced software to interpret images accurately
- May produce large amounts of data that slow down processing

Real-World Example
Self-driving cars like Tesla’s Autopilot rely heavily on cameras combined with artificial intelligence to identify objects and predict their movement patterns.

Name: _____
Period: _____

RESEARCH ARTICLE 4: RADAR — RELIABLE DETECTION THROUGH ALL CONDITIONS

Overview
Radar (Radio Detection and Ranging) uses radio waves to detect objects and measure their distance, speed, and direction. It works by sending out radio pulses and analyzing the echoes that return.

Functions and Applications
Radar sensors are used for detecting vehicles, pedestrians, and large obstacles—especially at higher speeds. They are particularly valuable for long-distance detection, where cameras and ultrasonic sensors are less effective.

Advantages
- Works in fog, rain, and darkness
- Measures both distance and object speed
- Long detection range

Limitations
- Provides less detailed data than LiDAR
- May have interference from nearby signals
- Not ideal for identifying small or low-profile objects

Real-World Example
Adaptive cruise control systems rely on radar to maintain a safe distance from other vehicles. In robotics, radar supports obstacle detection where environmental visibility is poor.