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## **Social networking in today's world**

*Long version of English lesson plan - 1 or 2 x 90 min*

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<b>Ideas and Articles by David Robinson</b>	

**14<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

**Category: Lifestyle / Social networking / Chat  
Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate**

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## THE ARTICLE

### **Social networking in today's world**

Hands up those of you who like to chat online? How many of you use Facebook? Probably quite a few of you, as in today's world we can't seem to live without it. So what is a social network? It is a way of communicating with other people. Why do we use them? Because we like to communicate with other people, especially our family and our friends. It is a good way to keep in touch. There are many different forms of social networking. Probably the most popular today are Facebook, Skype, MySpace, Twitter, Google chat and ICQ. All are different. So what is Facebook? It is a network that allows users to communicate with others using chat. It also allows you to upload photos etc... Skype allows users to telephone each other for free - if both sides are using computers. It allows people to phone each other in different countries at a greatly reduced rate – the cost of a local call thus transforming how we communicate with each other. Other similar networks allow one to telephone to far off countries at an even lower telephone rate than Skype charges.

The 'new' Skype gives a better sound performance - whereas before the sound quality was poor. Users today can see each other if they use a video camera. ICQ network has also upgraded itself. However, it tends not to be as popular today as it used to be. It depends on which country you are living in and what your friends use as to what you use and what is the most popular form of communicating. Twitter is also very popular today. People like to upload messages like "I just made a cup of tea." However, it came into its own during the Iranian election when the current government cracked down on its own population. It denied them the freedom of communication. Twitter users told the world what was really happening. Other networks like Unister, for university students, are also used. Social networking sites like MySpace have rapidly evolved and will probably continue to do so. While Facebook and Skype remain the most popular today who knows what tomorrow's new technology will bring us?

## LET'S START

**1. Social networking:** What is social networking? Can you give any examples of social networking? What is your favourite social network? Go round the room swapping details.

**2. Dictation:** The teacher will read 4 to 6 lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self correct your work from page 2 - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than 5 is very good. 10 is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than 20 - we need to do some work!

**3. Reading:** Get students to read the passage aloud. Swap readers every paragraph.

**4. Vocabulary:** Students look through the article. Underline/highlight any vocabulary you do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through & explain any words or phrases you do not understand.

**5. The article:** Students look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) What is the preferred social network of the class? (Teachers – use the hands-up response)

**6. Let's tell a story! Social networking:** Below are 20 words and phrases from the article. Use them to compile your own story about social networking. (Imagine!) Add 2 words of your own. Tell your story to your partner. (*Maybe tick off your words as you tell it*)

1	popular	11	Skype
2	MySpace	12	photos
3	in touch	13	Iranian election
4	chat	14	family and friends
5	ICQ	15	Twitter
6	video camera	16	Google chat
7	evolve	17	telephone
8	online	18	new technology
9	Facebook	19	communicate
10	social networking	20	cup of tea

Your choice 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Your choice 2 \_\_\_\_\_

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their stories in front of the class.

**7. Let's talk! Social networking:** In pairs. You are in a pub discussing the best social networking sites. Discuss what sites you prefer and why you prefer to use them. *5-minutes.*

**8. Let's write! A business e-mail:** You are a marketing manager. You have been asked to prepare and send a business e-mail to your teacher about the best social network to advertise on. Explain your product. Bullet point 6 reasons. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

**9. Let's compare! Social networking sites:** With your partner compare the social networking sites listed below? Which is the best? Which is the worst? Which do you use? What do your friends use?

1	Facebook	5	Google chat
2	ICQ	6	Skype
3	MySpace	7	Unister
4	Twitter	8	Your choice _____

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to hear their results.

**10. Let's debate:** In pairs. Students A think Facebook is best. Students B think otherwise – you think MySpace is better. Explain why.

**11. Let's do 'The Article Quiz':** With your partner or in small groups: (*1 point for each correct answer. Lose ½ point if you look at the article for help!*)

**Student A**

- 1) How many social networking sites are mentioned?
- 2) How did Twitter come into its own?
- 3) What does the new Skype give?
- 4) What happened in Iran?
- 5) What does Skype allow?

**Student B**

- 1) What is Facebook?
- 2) Why do we use social networks?
- 3) What is Unister?
- 4) What have rapidly evolved?
- 5) What has ICQ done?

**12. Let's think! Social networks:** Swap partners. With your new partner on the board write as many words to do with **Social networks** as you can. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

**13. Let's compile! Sentences:** Choose *six/nine* of the words from no 12. Write *two/three* sentences using *two/three* words in each. Underline your chosen words. The teacher will if necessary correct your work. Students might be asked to read their sentences aloud.

**14. Presentation:** In pairs, groups or individually: Prepare in class or at home a 2 minute presentation on **Social Networking**. Stand at the front of the class to give your presentation to the class. The class can vote on the best presentation. Class – After the presentations go through the strong and weak points on each presentation. Learn from the results.

**15. Let's think! 10 things about social networks:** Think of 5 positive and 5 negative things about social networks. Write them below. Compare and discuss with your partner.

5 positive points		5 negative points	
1		1	
2		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5		5	

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

**16. Sentence starters:** Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Social networking \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Twitter \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Skype \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Facebook \_\_\_\_\_
- e) ICQ \_\_\_\_\_

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** After reading the article guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Twitter is the most popular social network              | T / F |
| b. ICQ has also upgraded itself                            | T / F |
| c. The new Skype gives a better sound performance          | T / F |
| d. Twitter came into its own during the Iranian election   | T / F |
| e. Skype allows users to telephone each other for free     | T / F |
| f. People like to make a cup of tea                        | T / F |
| g. University students like to chat in the library         | T / F |
| h. Facebook, Skype and Google chat are owned by Bill Gates | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| a. chat     | cheaper      |
| b. probably | certainly    |
| c. so       | because      |
| d. network  | accepted     |
| e. poor     | thus         |
| f. lower    | unfold       |
| g. whereas  | possibly     |
| h. really   | insufficient |
| i. evolve   | talk         |
| j. popular  | system       |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a. Hands up those of you                   | with other people.                  |
| b. How many of                             | social networking.                  |
| c. in today's world we can't seem          | with other people                   |
| d. So what is a                            | different countries                 |
| e. It is a way of communicating            | communicate with others using chat. |
| f. we like to communicate                  | to live without it.                 |
| g. There are many different forms of       | technology will bring us?           |
| h. It is a network that allows users to    | you use Facebook?                   |
| i. It allows people to phone each other in | social network?                     |
| j. who knows what tomorrow's new           | who like to chat online?            |

## GAP FILL: READING

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### Social networking in today's world

Hands up those of you who like to chat \_\_\_\_\_.? How many of you use Facebook? Probably quite a few of you, as in today's world we can't seem to live without it. So what is a social network? It is a way of communicating with other people. Why do we use them? Because we like to communicate with other people, especially our family and our friends. It is a good way to keep in touch. There are many different forms of social networking. \_\_\_\_\_ the most popular today are Facebook, Skype, MySpace, Twitter, Google chat and ICQ. All are different. So what is Facebook? It is a \_\_\_\_\_ that allows users to communicate with others using \_\_\_\_\_. It also allows you to upload \_\_\_\_\_ etc... Skype allows users to telephone each other for free - if both sides are using computers. It allows people to phone each other in different countries at a greatly reduced rate – the cost of a local call thus transforming how we \_\_\_\_\_ with each other. Other \_\_\_\_\_ networks allow one to \_\_\_\_\_ to far off countries at an even lower telephone rate than Skype charges.

The 'new' Skype gives a better sound performance - whereas before the sound quality was poor. Users today can see each other if they use a video camera. ICQ network has also upgraded itself. However, it tends not to be as popular today as it used to be. It depends on which country you are living in and what your friends use as to what you use and what is the most popular form of communicating. Twitter is also very \_\_\_\_\_ today. People like to \_\_\_\_\_ messages like "I just made a cup of tea." However, it came into its own during the Iranian election when the \_\_\_\_\_ government cracked down on its own population. It denied them the \_\_\_\_\_ of communication. Twitter \_\_\_\_\_ told the world what was really happening. Other networks like Unister, for university \_\_\_\_\_, are also used. Social networking sites like MySpace have \_\_\_\_\_ evolved and will probably continue to do so. While Facebook and Skype remain the most popular today who knows what tomorrow's new \_\_\_\_\_ will bring us?

*network*

*chat*

*online*

*photos*

*similar*

*communicate*

*telephone*

*probably*

*rapidly*

*users*

*current*

*students*

*freedom*

*popular*

*upload*

*technology*

## **GAP FILL: LISTENING**

**Listen and fill in the spaces.**

### **Social networking in today's world**

Hands up those of you who \_\_\_\_\_? How many of you use Facebook? Probably quite a few of you, as in today's world we can't seem to live without it. So what is a social network? It is a way of communicating with other people. Why do we use them? Because we like to communicate \_\_\_\_\_, especially our family and our friends. It is a good way to keep in touch. There are many different forms of social networking. Probably the most popular today are Facebook, Skype, MySpace, Twitter, Google chat and ICQ. \_\_\_\_\_. So what is Facebook? It is a network that allows users to communicate with others using chat. It also allows you to upload photos etc... Skype allows users to telephone each other for free - if both sides are using computers. It allows \_\_\_\_\_ other in different countries at a greatly reduced rate - the cost of a local call thus transforming \_\_\_\_\_ with each other. Other similar networks allow one to telephone to \_\_\_\_\_ an even lower telephone rate than Skype charges.

The 'new' Skype gives a \_\_\_\_\_ - whereas before the sound quality was poor. Users today can see each other if they use a video camera. ICQ network \_\_\_\_\_ itself. However, it tends not to be as popular today as it used to be. It depends on which country you are living in and what your friends use as to what you use and what is the most popular form of communicating. Twitter \_\_\_\_\_ today. People like to upload messages like "I just made a cup of tea." However, it came into its own during the Iranian election when the current government cracked down on its own population. It denied them the freedom of communication. Twitter users \_\_\_\_\_ was really happening. Other networks like Unister, for university students, are also used. Social networking sites like MySpace have rapidly evolved and will \_\_\_\_\_ do so. While Facebook and Skype remain the most popular \_\_\_\_\_ tomorrow's new technology will bring us?

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. How useful are social networks?
- c. What benefits do you get by using a social network?
- d. Do you like chatting on social networks? Why? Why not?
- e. Do you use a web cam?
- f. Do you prefer to chat, speak or both when online with your friends?
- g. Which is the newest social network?
- h. Which is the oldest social network?
- i. Have you managed to contact many of your old friends using social networks?
- j. What business benefit is there for companies using social networks?



### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. What do you think about what you read?
- b. What is your favourite social network? Why?
- c. What is the worst social network? Why?
- d. What social network do your friends use?
- e. What would you do without a social network?
- f. What 3 tips would you advise a newcomer new to social networks?
- g. How would you sell social networks to your friends to entice them to join?
- h. Why do people use social networks?
- i. Do you Tweet on Twitter?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

## **SPEAKING**

### **Let's brainstorm! Social networks**

*Allow 10-20 minutes*

#### **Small groups**

In small groups talk about the social networks listed below. How can you use them? Choose a spokesperson who can present your ideas to the class at the end of your preparation. Present it visually or use the board etc... Try to be imaginative! *10-20 minutes.*

	Your ideas
1) ICQ / Other networks	
2) Facebook	
4) Skype	
5) G-chat	
6) My Space	
7) Twitter	

**The teacher can moderate the session.**

## PUT THE ARTICLE BACK TOGETHER

### Put the article back together

- ( ) networking. Probably the most popular today are Facebook, Skype, MySpace, Twitter, Google chat and ICQ. All are different. So what is Facebook? It is a network that allows users to communicate with others
- ( ) messages like "I just made a cup of tea." However, it came into its own during the Iranian election when the current government cracked down on its own population. It denied them the freedom of communication. Twitter
- ( ) the cost of a local call thus transforming how we communicate with each other. Other similar networks allow one to telephone to far off countries at an even lower telephone rate than Skype charges. The 'new' Skype gives a
- ( ) with other people. Why do we use them? Because we like to communicate with other people, especially our family and our friends. It is a good way to keep in touch. There are many different forms of social
- ( ) used to be. It depends on which country you are living in and what your friends use as to what you use and what is the most popular form of communicating. Twitter is also very popular today. People like to upload
- ( ) users told the world what was really happening. Other networks like Unister, for university students, are also used. Social networking sites like MySpace have rapidly evolved and will probably continue to do so. While Facebook
- (1) Hands up those of you who like to chat online? How many of you use Facebook? Probably quite a few of you, as in today's world we can't seem to live without it. So what is a social network? It is a way of communicating
- ( ) using chat. It also allows you to upload photos etc... Skype allows users to telephone each other for free - if both sides are using computers. It allows people to phone each other in different countries at a greatly reduced rate -
- ( ) and Skype remain the most popular today who knows what tomorrow's new technology will bring us?
- ( ) better sound performance - whereas before the sound quality was poor. Users today can see each other if they use a video camera. ICQ network has also upgraded itself. However, it tends not to be as popular today as it

**LANGUAGE:** Choose the correct words from a–d below and write them in the article.

Hands up those of you who like to chat online? How many of you use Facebook? Probably quite a few of you, as in today's world we can't seem to live without it. So what is a social network? It is a way of communicating with other (1)\_\_. Why do we use (2)\_\_? Because we like to communicate with other people, especially (3)\_\_ family and our friends. It is a good way to keep in touch. There are many different forms of social networking. Probably the most popular today are Facebook, Skype, MySpace, Twitter, Google chat and ICQ. All are different. So what is Facebook? It is a network that allows users to communicate with others using (4)\_\_. It also allows you to upload photos etc... Skype allows users to telephone each other for free - if both sides are using computers. It allows people to phone each other in different (5)\_\_ at a greatly reduced rate – the cost of a local call (6)\_\_ transforming how we communicate with each other. Other similar networks allow one to telephone to far off countries at an even lower telephone rate than Skype charges.

The 'new' Skype gives a better sound performance - whereas before the sound quality was poor. Users today can see each other if they use a video camera. ICQ network has also upgraded itself. However, it tends not to be as popular today as it used to be. It depends on which country you are living in and what your friends use as to what you use and what is the most popular form of communicating. Twitter is also very popular today. People like to upload messages like "I just made a cup of tea." However, it came into its (7)\_\_ during the Iranian election when the current government cracked down on its own population. It denied them the freedom of communication. Twitter users told the world what was really happening. Other networks like Unister, for university students, are also used. Social networking (8)\_\_ like MySpace have rapidly (9)\_\_ and will probably continue to do so. While Facebook and Skype remain the (10)\_\_ popular today who knows (11)\_\_ tomorrow's new technology will bring (12)\_\_?

1.	(a)	people	(b)	neighbours	(c)	aliens	(d)	strangers
2.	(a)	then	(b)	them	(c)	this	(d)	these
3.	(a)	your	(b)	my	(c)	our	(d)	their
4.	(a)	chats	(b)	chatting	(c)	chatted	(d)	chat
5.	(a)	country's	(b)	country	(c)	countries	(d)	counties
6.	(a)	thus	(b)	them	(c)	these	(d)	this
7.	(a)	own	(b)	down	(c)	sown	(d)	town
8.	(a)	mites	(b)	kites	(c)	bites	(d)	sites
9.	(a)	revolved	(b)	evolving	(c)	solved	(d)	evolved
10.	(a)	many	(b)	mostly	(c)	most	(d)	mean
11.	(a)	who	(b)	what	(c)	when	(d)	why
12.	(a)	me	(b)	us	(c)	you	(d)	them

## GRAMMAR 1: MIDWAY

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### Social networking in today's world

Hands up those of you who like to chat online? How many of you use Facebook? Probably (1)\_\_\_ a few of you, as in today's world we can't seem to live without it. So (2)\_\_\_ is a social network? It is a way of communicating with other people. Why do we use them? Because we like to communicate with other people, especially our family and our friends. It is a good way to keep in touch. There are many different forms of social networking. Probably the (3)\_\_\_ popular today are Facebook, Skype, MySpace, Twitter, Google chat and ICQ. All are different. So what is Facebook? It is a network (4)\_\_\_ allows users to communicate (5)\_\_\_ others using chat. It also allows you to upload photos etc... Skype allows users to telephone each other for free - if both sides are using computers. It allows people to phone (6)\_\_\_ other in different countries at a greatly reduced rate – the cost of a local call thus transforming how we communicate with each other. (7)\_\_\_ similar networks allow one to telephone to far off countries at an even lower telephone rate (8)\_\_\_ Skype charges.

*most*

*that*

*other*

*with*

*quite*

*than*

*what*

*each*

The 'new' Skype gives a better sound performance - (1)\_\_\_ before the sound quality was poor. Users today can see each other if they use a video camera. ICQ network has (2)\_\_\_ upgraded itself. However, it tends not to be as popular today as it used to be. It depends on (3)\_\_\_ country you are living in and what your friends use as to what you use and (4)\_\_\_ is the most popular form of communicating. Twitter is also (5)\_\_\_ popular today. People like to upload messages like "I (6)\_\_\_ made a cup of tea." However, it came into its own during the Iranian election when the current government cracked down on its own population. It denied (7)\_\_\_ the freedom of communication. Twitter users told the world what was really happening. (8)\_\_\_ networks like Unister, for university students, are also used. Social networking sites like MySpace have rapidly evolved and will probably continue to do so. While Facebook and Skype remain the most popular today who knows what tomorrow's new technology will bring us?

*which*

*whereas*

*other*

*what*

*them*

*just*

*also*

*very*

## GRAMMAR 2: EASY

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### Social networking in today's world

Hands up those of you who like to chat online? (1)\_\_\_ many of you use Facebook? Probably quite a few of you, as in today's world (2)\_\_\_ can't seem to live without it. (3)\_\_\_ what is a social network? It is a way (4)\_\_\_ communicating with other people. Why do we use them? Because we like to communicate with other people, especially our family and our friends. It is a good way to keep in touch. There are many different forms of social networking. Probably the most popular today are Facebook, Skype, MySpace, Twitter, Google chat and ICQ. (5)\_\_\_ are different. So what is Facebook? (6)\_\_\_ is a network that allows users to communicate with others using chat. It also allows you to upload photos etc... Skype allows users to telephone each other (7)\_\_\_ free - if both sides are using computers. It allows people to phone each other in different countries at a greatly reduced rate – the cost of a local call thus transforming how we communicate with each other. Other similar networks allow one to telephone to far off countries at (8)\_\_\_ even lower telephone rate than Skype charges.

*how*

*an*

*all*

*of*

*for*

*we*

*so*

*it*

The 'new' Skype gives (1)\_\_\_ better sound performance - whereas before the sound quality was poor. Users today can see each other if they use a video camera. ICQ network has also upgraded itself. However, it tends not to be as popular today as it used to be. It depends (2)\_\_\_ which country you are living in and what your friends use as to what you use and what is the most popular form of communicating. Twitter is also very popular today. People like to upload messages like "(3)\_\_\_ just made a cup of tea." However, it came into its own during (4)\_\_\_ Iranian election when the current government cracked down on (5)\_\_\_ own population. It denied them the freedom (6)\_\_\_ communication. Twitter users told the world what was really happening. Other networks like Unister, (7)\_\_\_ university students, are also used. Social networking sites like MySpace have rapidly evolved and will probably continue to do so. While Facebook and Skype remain the most popular today who knows what tomorrow's new technology will bring (8)\_\_\_?

*for*

*us*

*the*

*on*

*a*

*its*

*I*

*of*

## SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article:

1	communicate	11	because
2	probably	12	especially
3	technology	13	upload
4	university	14	transforming
5	freedom	15	similar
6	popular	16	however
7	current	17	really
8	government	18	remain
9	evolved	19	rapidly
10	quality	20	tomorrow

---

**Your score: Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

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## HOMEWORK

**Presentation:** Prepare a two minute presentation on **Social Networking**. The teacher will ask you to present it in the next lesson. Students can judge the best presentation.

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## WRITING: In class:

**Five-minute article:** Write an article on **Social Networking**. You have five minutes. The teacher will select some students to read out their work.

**Countdown:** Every minute the teacher may say, "You have xx minutes left".

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. T      c. T      d. T      e. T      f. F      g. F      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| a. chat     | talk         |
| b. probably | possibly     |
| c. so       | thus         |
| d. network  | system       |
| e. poor     | insufficient |
| f. lower    | cheaper      |
| g. whereas  | because      |
| h. really   | certainly    |
| i. evolve   | unfold       |
| j. popular  | accepted     |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a. Hands up those of you                 | who like to chat online?            |
| b. How many of                           | you use Facebook?                   |
| c. in today's world we can't seem        | to live without it.                 |
| d. So what is a                          | social network?                     |
| e. It is a way of communicating          | with other people.                  |
| f. we like to communicate                | with other people                   |
| g. There are many different forms of     | social networking.                  |
| h. It is a network that allows users to  | communicate with others using chat. |
| i. It allows many to phone each other in | different countries                 |
| j. who knows what tomorrow's new         | technology will bring us?           |

**GAP FILL: Social networking in today's world:** Hands up those of you who like to chat **online**? How many of you use Facebook? Probably quite a few of you, as in today's world we can't seem to live without it. So what is a social network? It is a way of communicating with other people. Why do we use them? Because we like to communicate with other people, especially our family and our friends. It is a good way to keep in touch. There are many different forms of social networking. **Probably** the most popular today are Facebook, Skype, MySpace, Twitter, Google chat and ICQ. All are different. So what is Facebook? It is a **network** that allows users to communicate with others using **chat**. It also allows you to upload photos etc... Skype allows users to telephone each other for free - if both sides are using computers. It allows people to phone each other in different countries at a greatly reduced rate - the cost of a local call - thus transforming how we **communicate** with each other. Other **similar** networks allow one to telephone to far off countries at an even lower telephone rate than Skype charges. The 'new' Skype gives a better sound performance - whereas before the sound quality was poor. Users today can see each other if they use a video camera. ICQ network has also upgraded itself. However, it tends not to be as popular today as it used to be. It depends on which country you are living in and what your friends use as to what you use and what is the most popular form of communicating. Twitter is also very **popular** today. People like to **upload** messages like "I just made a cup of tea." However, it came into its own during the Iranian election when the **current** government cracked down on its own population. It denied them the **freedom** of communication. Twitter **users** told the world what was really happening. Other networks like Unister, for university **students**, are also used. Social networking sites like MySpace have **rapidly** evolved and will probably continue to do so. While Facebook and Skype remain the most popular today who knows what tomorrow's new **technology** will bring us?.

### LANGUAGE WORK:

- 1 - a    2 - b    3 - c    4 - d    5 - c    6 - a    7 - a    8 - d    9 - d    10 - c    11 - b    12 - b

Social networking in today's world – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2009