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The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 10/02/14

Facebook could lose 80% of users by 2017

Recently a study revealed that Facebook could die out in a few years. The hype surrounding the highly popular social networking site is starting to dissipate. Its growth and fading has been compared to 'an infectious disease' by scientists.

Using a mathematical model they charted Facebook's demise. The researchers from Princeton University first used the number of queries for MySpace, a similar popular site which experienced a steep rise and an even steeper fall.

An updated formula was then applied to Facebook. The maths showed the networking giant is now slowly beginning its abandonment phase, which means the next few years could see a rapid decline in its popularity. If the projections are correct the company stands to lose 80% of its user base by 2015-2017. Thus the platform will be largely abandoned.

Facebook celebrated its 10th birthday on February 4th this year. It has survived longer than rivals such as MySpace and Bebo. Facebook reported 1.2 billion monthly users in October 2013. It is due to update investors on its traffic numbers shortly. While desktop traffic to its websites is declining; this is in fact due to users now only accessing the network via their mobile phones.

Some 870 million people use Facebook via their smartphones each month. This could explain the drop in Google searches, as the word 'Facebook' is typed in less on Google searches.

Facebook has hit back; saying in the past three months they had seen an increase in daily users, specifically from younger teens. Facebook's decline began back in 2013, around the time research showed it had started to lose its younger teenage user base, dramatically.

SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three social networks. Which one do you use most? Why? Go round the room swapping details with others.

LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

1) The article – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

2) The article - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

3) Article quiz - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A questions

- 1) Name the social networks.
- 2) Who celebrated what and when?
- 3) What will be largely abandoned?
- 4) Name the university.
- 5) What does hype mean?

Student B questions

- 1) What is an infectious disease?
- 2) In October 2013, how many monthly users were there?
- 3) How many million people use Facebook on their mobile phones each month?
- 4) How many users is Facebook projected to lose?
- 5) What is Facebook?

**Category: Technology / Facebook / Social Networking
Intermediate / Upper Intermediate**

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WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with 'Facebook'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs - Choose six social networks. Write them below. Talk about them. Which is best? Why?

- 1) _____ (4) _____
- 2) _____ (5) _____
- 3) _____ (6) _____

Add three advantages and three disadvantages of using Facebook. Discuss together.

- 1) _____ (1) _____
- 2) _____ (2) _____
- 3) _____ (3) _____

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

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs, write down three ways you can send an SMS message then add three ways you can video chat. Which is better? *5 mins.*

The teacher will choose some students to read out their work to the class.

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Do you use Facebook?
- 3) Why would one use Facebook?
- 4) What other social networking platforms do you use?
- 5) Which social networking platform is used most in your country?
- 6) How long have you used Facebook?
- 7) What social network might replace Facebook?
- 8) What social network do your friends use?
- 9) Do you access Facebook using your mobile?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. There are up to four guests. You are in the CNN Technology TV studio. Today's interview is: *Facebook could lose 80% of users by 2018. 10 mins.*

- 1) A Facebook user.
- 2) A non Facebook user.
- 3) A researcher at Princeton University.
- 4) A Facebook spokesperson.

The teacher will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In pairs. Explain to each other what you put on your favourite social networking sites and why! Does this include many selfies? *5 mins.*

SPEAKING – DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

Facebook could lose 80% of users by 2017
True or false?

The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) What social networks did you use to use?
- 3) Why is Facebook so attractive to many people?
- 4) Is it true Facebook is losing its users?
- 5) Is your data safe on Facebook?
- 6) Do you use Skype or Viber?
- 7) Which are your favourite social networking sites?
- 8) Over the last five years how have social networking sites changed?
- 9) Has this been a difficult lesson for you to understand?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

GAP FILL: READING

Facebook could lose 80% of users by 2017

Recently a study revealed that Facebook could die out in a few years. The (1)___ surrounding the highly popular social networking site is starting to dissipate. Its growth and fading has been compared to 'an (2)___ disease' by scientists.

Using a mathematical model they charted Facebook's (3)___. The researchers from Princeton University first used the number of queries for MySpace, a (4)___ popular site which experienced a steep rise and an even (5)___ fall.

An updated formula was then applied to Facebook. The maths showed the networking giant is now slowly beginning its (6)___ phase, which means the next few years could see a rapid decline in its popularity. If the (7)___ are correct the company stands to lose 80% of its user base by 2015-2017. Thus the (8)___ will be largely abandoned.

steeper / similar / platform / abandonment / demise / projections / infectious / hype

Facebook celebrated its 10th birthday on February 4th this year. It has survived longer than (1)___ such as MySpace and Bebo. Facebook reported 1.2 billion monthly users in October 2013. It is due to (2)___ investors on its (3)___ numbers shortly. While (4)___ traffic to its websites is declining; this is in fact due to users now only accessing the network via their mobile phones.

Some 870 million people use Facebook via their smartphones each month. This could explain the drop in Google searches, as the word 'Facebook' is typed in less on Google searches.

Facebook has hit back; saying in the past three months they had seen an increase in daily users, (5)___ from younger teens. Facebook's (6)___ began back in 2013, around the time research showed it had started to lose its younger teenage (7)___ base, (8)___.

specifically / traffic / update / desktop / decline / dramatically / user / rivals

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

Facebook could lose 80% of users by 2017

Recently a study revealed that Facebook (1)___ die out in a few years. The hype surrounding the highly popular social networking site is starting to dissipate. Its growth and fading has been compared to 'an infectious disease' (2)___ scientists.

Using (3)___ mathematical model they charted Facebook's demise. The researchers from Princeton University first used the number of queries (4)___ MySpace, a similar popular site (5)___ experienced a steep rise and an even steeper fall.

An updated formula was (6)___ applied to Facebook. The maths showed the networking giant is now slowly beginning its abandonment phase, which means the next few years could see a rapid decline in its popularity. (7)___ the projections are correct the company stands to lose 80% of its user base by 2015-2017. (8)___ the platform will be largely abandoned.

could / which / thus / then / a / if / by / for

Facebook celebrated its 10th birthday on February 4th this year. (1)___ has survived longer than rivals such as MySpace (2)___ Bebo. Facebook reported 1.2 billion monthly users in October 2013. It is (3)___ to update investors on its traffic numbers shortly. While desktop traffic to its websites is declining; this is in fact due to users now only accessing the network via their mobile phones.

Some 870 million people use Facebook via their smartphones each month. This could explain the drop in Google searches, (4)___ the word 'Facebook' is typed in less (5)___ Google searches.

Facebook has hit back; saying in the past three months they had seen an increase (6)___ daily users, specifically from younger teens. Facebook's decline began back in 2013, around (7)___ time research showed it had started to lose (8)___ younger teenage user base, dramatically.

in / on / it / as / its / due / and / the

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GAP FILL: LISTENING

Facebook could lose 80% of users by 2017

Recently a study revealed that Facebook could die out in a few years. The _____ highly popular social networking site is starting to dissipate. Its growth and fading has been compared to '_____ ' by scientists.

Using a mathematical model they charted Facebook's demise. The researchers from Princeton University first used the number of queries for MySpace, a similar popular site which experienced a steep rise and _____.

An updated formula was then applied to Facebook. The maths showed the _____ now slowly beginning its abandonment phase, which means the next few years could see a rapid decline in its popularity. If the projections are correct the company stands to lose 80% of its user base by 2015-2017. Thus the platform will _____.

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Some 870 million people use Facebook via their smartphones each month. This could explain the drop in Google searches, as the word 'Facebook' is typed in less on Google searches.

_____; saying in the past three months they had seen an increase in daily users, specifically from younger teens. Facebook's decline began back in 2013, around the time research showed it had started to lose its _____ base, dramatically.

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WRITING/SPELLING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - In pairs, as a class - write down 20 things you know about **social networks**. Talk about them! 5 mins.

2) Sentence starters - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) Facebook _____
- 2) Social networking _____
- 3) I use _____

3) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **Facebook**. Your email can be read out in class.

GAP FILL READING

- 1) hype
- 2) infectious
- 3) demise
- 4) similar
- 5) steeper
- 6) abandonment
- 7) projections
- 8) platform

SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) dramatically
- 2) mathematical
- 3) demise
- 4) hype
- 5) infectious
- 6) highly
- 7) formula
- 8) networking
- 9) maths
- 10) giant

ANSWERS

- 1) rivals
- 2) update
- 3) traffic
- 4) desktop
- 5) specifically
- 6) decline
- 7) user
- 8) dramatically

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

Pass = 12

Good = 15

Very good = 18

Excellent = 20

- 11) abandonment
- 12) phase
- 13) decline
- 14) popularity
- 15) projections
- 16) thus
- 17) platform
- 18) rivals
- 19) traffic
- 20) specifically

Facebook could lose 80% of users by 2017 - *10th February 2014*