

Tablets, gadgets & apps

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What is wrong with an ordinary computer? Why not use a laptop? What makes a tablet so irresistible to make you want to buy one? Why are Apple products so popular or for that matter more expensive? What makes them better than their rivals? Who are their rivals? So far, we see the Samsung Galaxy giving the iPad a run for its money. It is a similar shape. But is the product as good as the adverts claim it is or is the iPad in a class of its own?

Another similar sized product is Amazon's Kindle for book reading. What makes this so popular? Do book readers prefer this to the iPad? It was designed for making books easier to read on the go. It definitely helps increase Amazon's online dominance of the book market. The traditional book market is suffering. But has it? Book sales online have shot up. The Kindle is preferred by many women, as it is more discreet when downloading erotica!

There are, of course, thousands of different gadgets to choose from. Mobile phones are probably a good place to start when discussing them. You could always treat yourself to a Blackberry. What about buying the latest MacBook or a wireless speaker? If you are into computer games you could buy a Sony PlayStation, a Nintendo 3DS or an X Box. You might want the latest 3D LED television or one of the new touchscreen monitors? Something a bit different is the iRobot for cleaning your house!

Today we are seeing a huge increase in the number of apps (applications) on the market that you can download, mostly for free. There are literally thousands of apps to choose from. Certainly, apps are the new way to get weather and travel information. The latter has helped transform the travel industry. Apps will, in the near future, no doubt help transform many other things...

Category: Tablets / Gadgets / Applications

Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

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Your top 5 gadgets

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

Your top 5 Apps

Apps	What they do!
1) _____	_____
2) _____	_____
3) _____	_____
4) _____	_____
5) _____	_____

EXERCISES

1. Computers, laptops and tablets: Do you have a computer, a laptop or a tablet? Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six 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 one - 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 five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. Reading: The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. Vocabulary: Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

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

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?

6. Tablets: In pairs think of five things about tablets. Then add five things about laptops. Write them below. Compare – which is better and why? Discuss together.

Tablets	Laptops
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.

7. Let's roleplay 1: Geek FM: In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Geek FM* radio studio in Silicon Valley, USA. Today's interview is about: *Tablets, gadgets and apps*.

1	A journalist
2	A computer geek
3	An apps developer
4	A spokesperson from an electronic shop

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

8. Let's think! In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **Tablets, gadgets & apps**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

9. Let's roleplay 2: In pairs. You are in local bar in your town. You are both computer geeks. Start a conversation about the latest tablets, gadgets and apps. 5-*minutes*.

10. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the gadgets for playing computer games.
- 2) Name the Apple devices.
- 3) What will transform what?
- 4) What is a bit different for your home?
- 5) What type of TV is mentioned?

Student B

- 1) What type of monitor is mentioned?
- 2) What is hitting practically every High Street worldwide?
- 3) Who is dominating what?
- 4) What is preferred by many women?
- 5) What is a Blackberry?

11. Presentation: In pairs, groups or individually: Prepare in class or at home a two minute presentation on: '**Different Apps**'. Stand at the front of the class to give your presentation to the class. The class can vote on the best presentation.

12. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **Tablets, gadgets & apps**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

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

- a) Apple _____
- b) My favourite app is _____
- c) My favourite gadget _____

SPEAKING

Let's discuss! Tablets, gadgets & apps

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

A general discussion on tablets, gadgets & apps.
Consider the advantages and disadvantages of some of them

The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Why are Apple products more expensive?
- 3) Who are Apples rivals?
- 4) Just why are iPads and iPhones so popular?
- 5) What is wrong with the ordinary computer?
- 6) Why not use a laptop?
- 7) What makes a tablet so irresistible to make you want to buy one?
- 8) Why are Apple products so popular or for that matter more expensive?
- 9) What makes Apple better than its rivals?
- 10) What makes Kindle so popular?

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?
- 3) What is your favourite app?
- 4) Do you like to download apps?
- 5) Are apps useful?
- 6) Why don't people just look up an internet site rather than using an app?
- 7) What is your favourite gadget?
- 8) Do you prefer a computer, a laptop or a tablet?
- 9) Would you like to own a Kindle?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

Student C questions

- 1) Would you like to buy an iMac?
- 2) Would you like to have a Blackberry?
- 3) Have you thought about getting yourself some wireless speakers or a wireless mouse?
- 4) Are you into computer games?
- 5) Have you thought about buying a new 3D TV? Why? Why not?
- 6) Would you like to have a touchscreen monitor?
- 7) What do you think of the iRobot that cleans your house on its own?
- 8) What will be the next big gadget to hit the market?
- 9) How do you think apps will develop?
- 10) Do you prefer to read a real book or read one on a Kindle? Explain.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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especially

technology

popular

rivals

tablets

practically

similar

irresistible

gadgets

something

touchscreen

discreet

traditional

definitely

wireless

probably

GRAMMAR:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings:
Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20

1	similar	11	probably
2	dominance	12	definitely
3	traditional	13	laptop
4	discreet	14	ordinary
5	touchscreen	15	practically
6	applications	16	thought
7	literally	17	gadgets
8	certainly	18	popular
9	weather	19	constantly
10	transform	20	irresistible

LINKS

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2119332/Apps-overtaken-Web-popularity-according-latest-statistics-actually-theres-probably-app-tell-that.html>

<http://www.top100gadgets.com/>

<http://abcnews.go.com/Travel/spring-2012-best-travel-gadgets/story?id=15970223>

<http://www.techradar.com/news/mobile-computing/tablets/the-10-best-gadgets-and-tech-at-ces-2012-1054305>

<http://luxpresso.com/photogallery-accessories/top-5-footloose-gadgets-for-the-business-traveller/11738/1>

<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2391521,00.asp>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2012/mar/18/top-50-android-phone-apps>

<http://www.techradar.com/news/mobile-computing/tablets/top-200-best-ipad-apps-2011-681998>

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