Microsoft unveils Windows 8

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One of biggest innovations for Windows 8 will be its compatibility with processors designed by ARM holdings. Chips based around the ARM architecture typically use very little power, and as a result are found in the vast majority of smartphones and tablets currently available. To date, Windows devices have required Intel or Intel-compatible processors. The latter are found in the vast majority of Microsoft's Windows Phone range. ARM chips are likely to be predominately used on Windows 8 Metro devices, and will require ARM-specific versions of applications. Tapping into any section of the Windows market will be seen as a huge boost for the Cambridge-based ARM Holdings. The company faces growing competition in the mobile device sector since Intel launched its tablet and smartphone Oak Trail in April 2011. Tapping into that particular market is seen as vital for hardware manufacturers, and software-makers, such as Microsoft, as the market for traditional computers continues to be eroded. Sales of desktop computers and laptops are expected to continue growing, but at a much slower rate than in the past.

Category: Business / Technology / Microsoft Windows 8
Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

EXERCISES

1. Windows 8: Think of three things you know about Windows 8? 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?
c)   What do you think about Windows operating systems?

6. Desktop v Tablet: In pairs think of five features/applications a desktop computer has that a tablet does not have and vice versa. Write them below. Discuss together. What are your conclusions? Which is best and why?

Desktop computer	Tablet
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. Tablets v Blackberry: In pairs think of three reasons why a tablet or a Blackberry is better than the other. Write them below. Discuss together.

Tablet	Blackberry
1	1
2	2
3	3

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

9. Let's roleplay 1: Gadget FM: In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Gadget FM* radio studio. Today's interview is about: *Windows 8.*

1	Apple representative	3	Sales person in electronic shop
2	A computer geek	4	Head of Microsoft

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

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) Which company unveiled Windows 8?
2) When will Windows 8 be released?
3) What did the Windows division president say?
4) Where are ARM Holdings based?
5) What happened in April 2011?

Student B
1) Where was the new Windows 8 operating system unveiled?
2) What is 'Metro'?
3) What new features does Windows 8 offer?
4) Why are ARM chips good for the new Microsoft devices?
5) Name the competitors.

11. Windows: Think of three things you like *or* don't like about each of the following Windows operating systems. Write them below. Discuss together with your partner. Which system do you prefer? Why? Which operating system don't you like? Why? Explain.

Windows XP	Windows Vista
1	1
2	2
3	3
Windows 7	Windows 8
1	1
2	2
3	3

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

12. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about*: Windows 8.* 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) Windows 8 _____

b) Windows 7 _____

c) Windows XP _____

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DISCUSSION

Student A questions
1) What do you think of what you read?
2) Will you be buying the new Windows 8 operating system?
3) Do you prefer a tablet, a laptop or a desktop? Explain.
4) How many computers do you own?
5) How many computers do you use?
6) Do you use a computer for your job?
7) What do you think of touchscreens?
8) What do you think of pop-up touch screen keyboards?
9) Think of three advantages of a tablet.
10) Will you opt to buy the new Metro tablet? Explain.

Student B questions
1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
2) What Windows operating system do you use?
3) Which windows operating system do you prefer? Why?
4) Which was the worst Windows operating system? Why?
5) Which Windows operating system did you first use?
6) If you were designing a new operating system what three features might you want on it?
7) How much competition does Microsoft have these days?
8) Do you prefer to use Apple computers? Why? Why not?
9) Just how much has technology changed over the last 10 years?
10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's discuss! Windows operating systems
Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

Windows operating systems

The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Microsoft has (1)_____ its new Windows 8 operating system. Windows 8 is designed to run on tablet (2)_____, as well as desktop and laptop PCs. The (3)_____, which is due to be released in 2012, will work on the popular ARM-designed low-power processors for the first time. Microsoft has been under pressure to come up with an answer to Apple's iOS and Google's Android platforms. The new Windows 8 was unveiled (4)_____ at the Build developers' conference in California. Windows division president Steven Sinofsky: "We re-imagined Windows. From the chipset to the user experience." The system will function through one of two interfaces; a traditional desktop, similar to that seen in previous editions of Windows, and a (5)_____ version, known as Metro. Metro features larger, (6)_____ controls of the sort that best suit (7)_____ use. The current lack of such an input method is widely seen as the reason why few Windows 7 tablets exist. Microsoft said it would also be launching its own online marketplace - the Windows Store – to sell downloadable applications. The new Windows 8 tablet version will also feature a (8)_____ touch-screen keyboard.

chunky

touchscreen

unveiled

software

tablet

recently

computers

pop-up

One of biggest (1)_____ for Windows 8 will be its compatibility with processors designed by ARM holdings. Chips based around the ARM architecture typically use very little power, and as a result are found in the vast (2)_____ of smartphones and tablets currently available. To date, Windows devices have required Intel or Intel-compatible processors. The latter are found in the vast majority of Microsoft's Windows Phone range. ARM (3)_____ are likely to be predominately used on Windows 8 Metro devices, and will require ARM-specific versions of (4)_____. Tapping into any section of the Windows market will be seen as a huge boost for the Cambridge-based ARM Holdings. The company faces growing (5)_____ in the mobile (6)_____ sector since Intel launched its tablet and smartphone Oak Trail in April 2011. Tapping into that particular (7)_____ is seen as (8)_____ for hardware manufacturers, and software-makers, such as Microsoft, as the market for traditional computers continues to be eroded.

applications

majority

competition

innovations

market

vital

device

chips

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GAP FILL: LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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7

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	popular	11	typically
2	majority	12	function
3	predominately	13	division
4	competition	14	innovations
5	downloadable	15	unveiled
6	conference	16	experience
7	touchscreen	17	input
8	launching	18	applications
9	traditional	19	processors
10	architecture	20	compatibility

LINKS

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: Microsoft unveils Windows 8: Microsoft has **unveiled** its new Windows 8 operating system. Windows 8 is designed to run on tablet **computers**, as well as desktop and laptop PCs. The **software**, which is due to be released in 2012, will work on the popular ARM-designed low-power processors for the first time. Microsoft has been under pressure to come up with an answer to Apple's iOS and Google's Android platforms. The new Windows 8 was unveiled **recently** at the Build developers' conference in California. Windows division president Steven Sinofsky: "We re-imagined Windows. From the chipset to the user experience." The system will function through one of two interfaces; a traditional desktop, similar to that seen in previous editions of Windows, and a **tablet** version, known as Metro. Metro features larger, **chunky** controls of the sort that best suit **touchscreen** use. The current lack of such an input method is widely seen as the reason why few Windows 7 tablets exist. Microsoft said it would also be launching its own online marketplace - the Windows Store – to sell downloadable applications. The new Windows 8 tablet version will also feature a **pop-up** touch-screen keyboard.

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