

① Your experiences of learning technologies

- 1) When did you first use a computer?
- 2) When did computers become part of your life?
- 3) When did you first use computers in the classroom (as a teacher or as a student)?
- 4) What learning technologies do you have access to in your school?
- 5) Have you used learning technologies in your teaching? What did you use? How did you use it?
- 6) Are there any learning technologies you have access to but you don't use? Why not?

② Advantages and disadvantages of learning technologies

The following is a list of just some of the advantages and disadvantages of using learning technologies in class.

Advantages

- **Interactive** – it can give feedback and evaluation and, unlike a teacher, never tires of giving feedback repeatedly
- **Multimedia** – it provides a combination of media (text, graphics, sound, and video) in one place
- **IT skills acquired** – students learn IT skills
- **Student paced** – students can work through the material at their own speed
- **Variety = Fun!** – novel and entertaining, and can add variety to courses
- **Presentation quality** – work on the computer is often neat
- **Authentic** – content of CD-ROMs and the Internet is often written by native speakers
- **Real communication** – lots of ‘community’ functions on the Internet such as forums, email etc.
- **Storage** – you can save work for future access and sharing
- **Motivating** – for all the above reasons

Disadvantages

- **Technical issues** – if technical support is not easily available, teachers may need more training, or be confident enough to ask their learners if they know how to solve the problem
- **IT skills required** – for software and the Internet
- **Mixed ability and degrees of comfort with technology** – both learners and teachers
- **Student objections** – students may have had bad learning experiences in the past, they may use computers excessively in other subjects
- **Can seduce teachers** – “I’ll get a coffee while they get on with it”, “I haven’t had time to plan a lesson – I’ll take them into the computer room” etc. Need to be careful about technology leading pedagogy, and using technology as an easy option
- **Integration problems** – teachers don’t use the equipment and software available
- **Classroom management** – teachers may have to change their classroom management techniques
- **Accuracy of language and appropriacy of content** on the Internet may not always be suitable
- **Distraction** – many Internet sites have a lot of distracting advertisements, and it’s easy for learners to get lost

③ Questions to ask when integrating learning technologies

Is the learning technology stage of the lesson relevant/appropriate? (Think about aims, length of time it will take, type of resources needed, level of language etc).

Does the learning technology stage fit into the lesson as a whole? Are there pre- and post- tasks?

Does the use of the learning technology fit with the syllabus? (Not fitting a lesson around the learning technology).

How do the learners benefit from using the learning technology in the lesson?

- Does it motivate students or improve the learning experience?
- Does it help the students understand more easily?
- Are there any other benefits of using the resource e.g. IT skills acquired, learner autonomy enhanced?



How does the teacher benefit from using the learning technology in the lesson?



- Is it worth the effort? Can the materials be reused or shared with other teachers?
- Can another resource be more easily used instead, and be as effective?
- Is the resource being used because it helps achieve the aims of the lesson or because it makes life easier for the teacher?

④ **Some teaching examples of learning technologies**

Look at the websites and activities below.

Make notes under the headings for each idea.

<p>Website/activity</p>	<p>Cubeez - http://www.cubeez.com/container_movie.php <i>The teacher guides students through an interactive story</i> <i>Click on the orange character on the home page to see this content.</i></p> 	<p>The weather - http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-weather.htm <i>Students complete the weather after listening to a weather report.</i></p> 
<p>Notes</p>	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p>	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p>



Website/activity	<p>YouTube - http://www.youtube.com/ <i>Students watch</i> http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlfKdbWwruY&feature=user <i>as part of a lesson on countries.</i></p> 	<p>Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/ <i>Students create an entry in this user-generated encyclopedia on their school.</i></p> 
Notes	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p> <p>Advantages of using YouTube in general:</p> <p>Disadvantages of using YouTube in general:</p> <p>Solutions:</p>	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p> <p>Advantages of using Wikipedia in general:</p> <p>Disadvantages of using Wikipedia in general:</p> <p>Solutions:</p>

<p>Website/activity</p>	<p>Using Word to edit a text <i>In this activity students complete a text in Word that has had all the verbs removed.</i></p>	<p>Using PowerPoint to create a photo dialogue <i>In this activity students add speech to pictures representing everyday situations.</i></p>
<p>Notes</p>	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p>	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p>

④ **Some teaching examples of learning technologies – Answer sheet**

Look at the websites and activities below.

Make notes under the headings for each idea.

<p>Website/activity</p>	<p>Cubeez - http://www.cubeez.com <i>The teacher guides students through an interactive story (click on the orange character on the home page to see this content).</i></p> 	<p>The weather - http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-weather.htm <i>Students complete the weather after listening to a weather report.</i></p> 
<p>Notes</p>	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fun, colourful characters and exercises will attract and engage young learners • immediate feedback will reinforce language • content promotes student-centred classes • other areas of the site can be used by very young learners. 	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voices of native speakers increase authenticity • interactive • provides instant feedback • learner can control speed • text can be turned on or off.

Website/activity

YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/>

Students watch <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlfKdbWwruY> as part of a lesson on countries.





Wikipedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/>

Students create an entry in this user-generated encyclopedia on their school.



<p>Notes</p>	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • video adds variety to the classroom • this video is enjoyable • provides a motivating way to learn countries and helps memory by linking images from that country • lots of opportunities for starting discussions. <p>Advantages of using YouTube in general:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • huge variety of content means that there is always something available to illustrate a point • students can upload their own content • students can control what they watch and how many times they watch something making learning more learner centred. <p>Disadvantages of using YouTube in general:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lots of temptation to watch irrelevant content if students are allowed individual access • some content may not be suitable for younger students • user generated comments may not be suitable • poor bandwidth can stop streaming videos. <p>Solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usage requires good classroom management • pre-viewing is essential • comments can be hidden • if the video is played once it is stored on the computers memory, so next time it plays more quickly. 	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is motivating to see your work published on the internet • following other articles can provide a clear structure for writing • allows for collaboration and peer reviewing • following how the text is edited by other users can provide further learning opportunities. <p>Advantages of using Wikipedia in general:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • huge amount of information available to students on any subject. • authentic resource • provides text and images to aid understanding of topic • editable – students can create their own content = motivating. <p>Disadvantages of using Wikipedia in general:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some basic mark-up is needed (you have to produce some basic coding to create hyperlinks, <i>emphasis</i> etc) • difficult to do as a whole class activity so would need access to a computer room • the language level of Wikipedia may be too high for some students. <p>Solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students can produce content in Word and leave it to the teacher to publish • http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page is a simplified version of wikipedia with simple words and grammar.
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Website/activity	<p>Using Word to edit a text <i>In this activity students complete a text in Word that has had all the verbs removed.</i></p> 	<p>Using PowerPoint to create a photo dialogue <i>In this activity students add speech to pictures representing every day situations.</i></p> 
Notes	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • easily created and saved • can be recycled • students can work at their own pace • editing function of Word makes this activity neater than paper equivalent • any text can be used. <p>NOTE: This worksheet is available in the <i>TeachingEnglish Learning Technologies for the Classroom</i> online course at http://courses.britishcouncil.org/pub/learningtechnologies/mod/resource/view.php?id=215 (log in required).</p>	<p>Advantages of this idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fun to work with images and text • student paced – allows for stronger and weaker students to take part in the same activities • can help students develop IT skills <p>NOTE: This PowerPoint is available at the <i>TeachingEnglish Learning Technologies for the Classroom</i> online course at http://courses.britishcouncil.org/pub/learningtechnologies/mod/resource/view.php?id=116 (log in required).</p>