



PREDICTIONS



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1D1F-85FC-D7GB

1

Warm up

In pairs, discuss the following questions.

1. Do you spend a lot of time thinking about the future?
2. Do you know what you are going to do next week/ next month/ next year?
3. In which jobs do you need to predict the future?
4. What are the dangers of trying to predict the future?





2

Focus on keywords

You are going to hear the podcast about predictions of the future that were correct. Before listening match the underlined words to the definitions below.

1. I've read quite a few dystopian novels and they make me worry about the future.
 2. The new movie was only streaming on one service, and I did not have a subscription with that provider.
 3. They displayed the new TV in the front window of the shop so the customers could see it easily.
 4. The dawning of a new era in technology will arrive in the next 20 years.
 5. The financial expert forecasted that the economy would be in trouble next year.
 6. The movie was made by an acclaimed Oscar-winning filmmaker.
 7. The TV channel transmitted the game all over the country.
 8. His new car was tailored to his height and his body shape.
- a. (adj.) admired by the public
 - b. (n) beginning or start of something
 - c. (v) put something where people can see it easily
 - d. (v) said what you think will happen in the future
 - e. (v) method of receiving data, usually video or audio over a computer network
 - f. (v) sent an electrical signal, radio, or television broadcast
 - g. (adj.) featuring an imaginary place where everything is mostly awful
 - h. (v) made or adapted something for a particular person

3

Prediction and listening comprehension

Part A: Look at the names of the four people below, tell your partner what you know about them, then listen to the podcast and match the predictions to the correct person.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. Nikola Tesla | a. Wireless communication would exist |
| 2. Ray Bradbury | b. Services like Netflix would be available |
| 3. Roger Ebert | c. People would all be wearing earbuds |
| 4. Bill Gates | d. Personalised advertisements would be possible |



Part B: Listen to the podcast one more time and try to answer the following questions.

1. Where did Tesla say that we would be able to *transmit wireless messages*?
2. What is the name of Bradbury's classic novel?
3. What was Roger Ebert's job?
4. What did Bill Gates manage to point out in 1999?

4**Focus on vocabulary**

Part A: Let's look at some vocabulary that will help your understanding of the article. Match the following words to the definitions.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>foolish</u> (adj.) | a. quality of being new and different |
| 2. <u>novelty</u> (n) | b. the board made by sticking thin layers of wood together |
| 3. <u>fad</u> (n) | c. an event where something is made available to the public |
| 4. <u>investment</u> (n) | d. not likely to change |
| 5. <u>voyage</u> (n) | e. something people are interested in for a very short time |
| 6. <u>firm</u> (adj.) | f. not showing a good sense of judgement |
| 7. <u>launch</u> (n) | g. a long journey, usually in space or at sea |
| 8. <u>proclaimed</u> (v) | h. the act of investing money in something |
| 9. <u>plywood</u> (n) | i. publicly tell people about something important |





Part B: Put the vocabulary from Part A into the correct gaps in the following sentences. You may need to change the form of the word.

1. There was a Japanese toy called a Tamagotchi that was popular for a short time, but it was a bit of a _____, to be honest.
2. I lost quite a bit of money when I _____ in some stocks and shares last year.
3. Sarah built her own dining room table out of _____.
4. He felt a bit _____ when he couldn't remember his own password.
5. Her team had a _____ spot at the top of the league, and she was sure they would be champions.
6. The story in the book was based on a _____ to Mars.
7. I don't get many chances to be alone but the _____ of being by myself does not last long.
8. The President _____ that interest rates would fall by the end of the year.
9. Microsoft was due to _____ its new product this month, but it has been delayed for several reasons.

Part C: Now with your partner, discuss the following questions.

1. Can you remember any **fads** from your childhood?
2. When did you last feel **foolish**? Why did you feel that way?
3. Have you ever been excited about the **launch** of a new product?
4. What is the best way to **invest** your money these days?

5

Skimming for general understanding

You are going to read a text about the predictions that were incorrect. (page five). Match the following subtitles to the correct paragraph. Two are not needed.

- It's hard to know what is coming
- The computer and the console
- Will you fly me to the moon?
- Rural horses
- Driving the future
- A rival for Hollywood
- The technological trendsetter



The future is not what it seems

Predictions gone wrong

1. _____

In a competitive world trying to get out in front is a difficult thing to do. One way to succeed is to guess which way the market is going and predict upcoming trends. Unfortunately, this can often be a tricky task and one which can leave you looking a little foolish. Throughout the years many people have found themselves in such a situation and unluckily for them the history books are not so quick to forget when things like this happen.

2. _____

It is hard to believe but at the start of the twentieth century, cars weren't such a big deal and for many people they were just another luxury they couldn't afford. In the United States in 1900 there was around 1 car for every 10,000 people and many couldn't see the automobile becoming a common purchase. Therefore, when Henry Ford's lawyer was thinking about investing \$5000 in his client's new company, the president of the Michigan Savings Bank expressed this famous quote, "The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a novelty - a fad." The lawyer ignored the advice and stood back and watched as his investment quickly turned into \$12.5 million.

3. _____

In the 1930s, talk of realistic space travel was a rare thing and it remained an area for sci-fi comics or fantasy movies. In 1936, the New York Times wanted to strengthen this argument and they went as far as to say "A rocket will never be able to leave the Earth's atmosphere" a statement that by 1961 looked a little silly when Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin went on

his historic voyage. It was clear that the writers at the New York Times quickly felt more than a little embarrassed, but it wasn't until 17th July 1969 that the paper issued a correction. This particular date happened to fall three days before man set foot on the moon.

4. _____

From as early as the 1910s, the movie industry had a firm place in American culture and in 1927 with the launch of the talking film it secured its position as one the primary sources of entertainment in the country. Its dominance remained unchallenged until in the post-war years television started to become more popular. The threat of the TV did not seem to worry Hollywood Producer Darryl Zanuck however, as he confidently but wrongly proclaimed that "Television won't last because people will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night". These days TVs are present in 99% of homes in America with 66% of houses having three.

5. _____

As the year 2000 approached, society's attraction to technology and gadgets seemed to grow at an increased pace. However, one company looked to be falling behind the rest; it was doing so badly that Wired Magazine seen seemed happy to offer them this friendly advice, "Admit it, you're out of the hardware game". It may surprise you to know that they were talking about techno-giant, Apple a company that is now so big that it has more money than the entire US government.

Sources: energy.gov, [Television History](#), [MUO](#), weforum.org



6 Reading comprehension

Read the following statements and decide if they are True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG).

1. Guessing which way the market is going is the only way to succeed. _____
2. At the start of the century, cars were too expensive for a lot of people. _____
3. Henry Ford's lawyer did not take the suggestion he was given. _____
4. In the thirties, the thought of sending a human into space was an actual possibility. _____
5. Yuri Gagarin was thrilled to talk about his voyage into space. _____
6. The writers at the New York Times offered a correction as soon as Gagarin returned to Earth. _____
7. The movie industry led the way in entertainment in America until after the war. _____
8. At the start of the millennium, Apple was ahead of its rivals. _____

7 Talking point

In pairs discuss the following questions.

1. What do you think is the most surprising prediction in the article?
2. Can you imagine a world where horses were more common than cars?
3. Why do you think it took so long for the New York Times to make the correction in relation to space travel?
4. How do you think people feel when they make predictions that turn out to be wrong?
5. Can you make any predictions about how technology might change in the next 50 years?



Transcripts

3. Prediction and listening comprehension

Speaker: Predicting the future is a tricky business and some may say that it is practically impossible to guess what is going to happen, but do you know what? Some people have the ability either through intelligence, creativity or just pure luck to be pretty exact with their predictions.

Speaker: Take for example Nikola Tesla who correctly predicted in 1909 that a wireless communication system would exist. He confidently stated, "It will soon be possible to transmit wireless messages all over the world".

Speaker: The acclaimed American author Ray Bradbury in his classic dystopian novel Fahrenheit 451 correctly wrote about a future where people would all be walking about with wireless earbuds. He mentioned people having "little seashells" in their ears keeping themselves entertained with the "sound of music and talk".

Speaker: In 1987, film critic Roger Ebert correctly forecast the dawning of streaming services like Netflix, when in an interview he detailed that we would have "a push-button dialling system to order the movie you want at the time you want it".

Speaker: Finally, in 1999 Microsoft founder Bill Gates quite worryingly managed to correctly point out the future of online targeted advertising and how it would affect us all "They will know your purchasing trends and will display advertisements that are tailored toward your preferences".



Key

1. Warm up

5 mins.

This gives the teacher an opportunity to set the context and allows the students time to talk about their previous knowledge in relation to making predictions. Monitor and provide on-the-spot feedback when appropriate.

2. Focus on keywords

5 mins.

Make sure students can correctly pronounce the target vocabulary. Ask them to complete the task by themselves first, and then compare answers with a partner.

1. → g. 2. → e. 3. → c. 4. → b. 5. → d. 6. → a. 7. → f. 8. → h.

3. Prediction and listening comprehension

Part A:

5 mins.

This stage allows students to listen to a podcast about correct predictions. The students talk about what they know about each person, the first time they listen they match the people with the prediction.

1. → a. 2. → c. 3. → b. 4. → d.

Part B:

5 mins.

The second time they answer more detailed questions. The listening may need to be played more than once to allow students to answer the questions accurately.

1. "...all over the world." 2. "...Fahrenheit 451..."
3. "...film critic Roger Ebert..." 4. "...the future of online targeted advertising..."

Sources for listening:

<https://www.history.co.uk/articles/historical-predictions-that-came-true>

<https://www.rd.com/list/predictions-that-came-true/>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/predictions-from-the-past-that-came-true-2013-9#from-1987-roger-ebert-predicted-video-on-demand-services-netflix-and-hulu-9>

4. Focus on vocabulary

Part A:

5 mins.

Ensure students can correctly pronounce the target vocabulary. Ask them to complete the task by themselves first and then compare answers with a partner.

1. → f. 2. → a. 3. → e. 4. → h. 5. → g. 6. → d. 7. → c. 8. → i. 9. → b.

**Part B:**

5 mins.

Ask students to identify which parts of speech could be used to fill the gaps before completing the exercise.

- | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|------------|---------|
| 1. fad | 2. invested | 3. plywood | 4. foolish | 5. firm |
| 6. voyage | 7. novelty | 8. proclaimed | 9. launch | |

Part C:

5 mins.

Now, ask them to discuss the questions in order to practise using the vocabulary. Circulate and help as needed.

5. Skimming for general understanding

5 mins.

You may want to set a time limit and highlight the differences between skimming and scanning at this point.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. It's hard to know what is coming | 2. Driving the future | 3. Will you fly me to the moon? |
| 4. A rival for Hollywood | 5. The technological trendsetter | |

Sources:

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/10/10-predictions-for-the-future-that-got-it-wildly-wrong/>

<https://www.energy.gov/eere/vehicles/fact-962-january-30-2017-vehicles-capita-other-regionscountries-compared-united>

<https://list25.com/25-famous-predictions-that-were-proven-to-be-horribly-wrong/>

<https://www.rfcafe.com/miscellany/factoids/ny-times-admits-moon-flight-possible.htm>

<https://open.lib.umn.edu/mediaandculture/chapter/8-2-the-history-of-movies/#:~:text=In%20the%20United%20States%2C%20film,a%20thing%20of%20the%20past.>

<http://www.television-history.net/television-facts/facts-about-tv/#:~:text=99%25%20of%20American%20homes-%20own,TV%20commercials%20during%20his%20life.>

<https://www.makeuseof.com/interesting-facts-about-apple/>

6. Reading comprehension

10 mins.

Ask students to read in more detail and complete the exercise. Ask them to underline where they find the answer.

If the information is not in the article, then they should write Not Given.

1. False. "One way to succeed is to guess which way the market is going..."
2. True. "...for many people they were just another luxury they couldn't afford."
3. True "...The lawyer ignored the advice ..."
4. False "...talk of realistic space travel was a rare thing..."
5. Not given
6. False. "...but it wasn't until 17th July 1969 that the paper issued a correction."
7. True "Its dominance remained unchallenged until in in the post-war years..."
8. False "...looked to be falling behind the rest..."

7. Talking point

10 mins.

Ask students to discuss the questions in pairs or small groups. Monitor and provide feedback where required.