**Pre-reading activities**

1. **Define:** What does "virtual reality" mean? Can you use it in a sentence? Can you give examples?
2. **Brainstorm**: Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "virtual reality" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together
3. **Title:** Speculate and/or discuss the contents of today's article from its title: "Are We Living in a Computer?"
4. **Do you agree or disagree? Why?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | I'm very interested in computers and technology. |
|  | I think computers are dangerous. |
|  | We currently live in interesting and exciting times. |
|  | The future will be an interesting and exciting place to live. |
|  | I enjoy playing video games. |

**Reading**

**Are We Living in a Computer?**

It may sound very strange, but quite a few important physicists and philosophers have suggested that all people and things in our universe are a computer simulation. In other words, although seemingly far-fetched, nothing and no one is real. We are simply computer code in a virtual reality.

The legitimate theory suggests that an advanced civilization is running computer simulations. Perhaps our future descendants thousands of years from now want to gain insight into 21st century humans, for example. However, instead of research, it's also possible that these beings are running the computer simulation for enjoyment, such as when we run video games and virtual worlds for our entertainment. And with access to enormous computing power, such would be possible.

Of course, not everyone agrees. Thinking that we are unique and interesting seems exceedingly self-centered. These skeptics think the following: Humankind really is not terribly special.

However, some tech billionaires have begun to fund research. They want to confirm whether humankind does indeed live in a computer, even if the evidence will prove difficult to find. And in fact, additional money is being thrown at scientists to find a way to free humankind from the simulation.

Whatever the truth, if we are merely computer simulations on a future descendant's computer, let's hope that the program doesn't crash or the people watching don't grow bored and switch us off.

**Vocabulary**

1. **Vocabulary match:** Individually or in pairs/groups, match the words in column A (from the article) with the best choice in column B.

a. far-fetched q. surpass

b. legitimate r. awareness

c. insight s. just

d. enormous t. provide money for

e. exceed u. hard to believe

f. skeptic v. prove

g. terribly w. disbeliever

h. fund x. huge

i. confirm y. very

j. merely z. real

1. **Fill in the Blanks:** Fill in the blank with the correct word.

far-fetched;

merely;

skeptics

confirm

terribly

insight

exceedingly

fund

legitimate

enormous

a. Although seemingly ( ), nothing and no one is real.

b. The ( ) theory suggests that an advanced civilization is running computer simulations.

c. Our future descendants thousands of years from now want to gain ( ) into 21st century humans.

d. With access to( ) computing power, such would be possible.

e. Thinking that we are unique and interesting seems ( ) self-centered.

f. These ( ) think the following.

g. Humankind really is not ( ) special.

h. However, some tech billionaires have begun to ( ) research.

i. They want to ( ) whether humankind does indeed live in a computer.

J. We are ( ) computer simulations on a future descendant's computer.

1. **Define:** Define each word and write an example sentence.
2. far-fetched
3. legitimate
4. insight
5. enormous
6. exceed
7. skeptic
8. terribly
9. fund
10. confirm
11. merely

**Post-comprehension**

1. **Texto

   Descripción generada automáticamenteTrue or False?:** Guess (before the article) or answer (after the article) whether the sentence is true or false. If false, correct the sentence.
2. **Questions:** Answer the questions to check comprehension.
3. According to the article, what have physicists and philosophers suggested?
4. Who might be running the simulation?
5. Why might someone be running the simulation?
6. Why do some people disagree with the suggestion?
7. What are tech billionaires doing about the simulation?