

A

Technology

Here are some things we are likely to see more of in the future.

smart buildings/homes	computer-controlled buildings and homes where things like lighting, heating, security, etc. are completely automatic; the adjective smart can be used for anything that uses computers or information stored in electronic form (e.g. a smartphone, smart TV, smart car)
interplanetary travel and space tourism	travel to planets in outer space, either for exploration or for tourism
nanotechnology	science of developing and producing extremely small tools and machines by controlling the arrangement of atoms and molecules
keyhole surgery	medical operation in which a very small hole is made in a person's body to reach the organ or tissue inside

B

The environment and nature

A **doomsday scenario** for the environment sees our **destiny** as a world choked with pollution, where many plants and animals have become extinct. [the worst possible prediction, what will happen in the future] [the things that will happen to us in the future]

Many experts **foresee** a situation where traffic in **mega-cities** becomes completely **gridlocked**. [think that something will occur in the future] [cities of more than 10 million people] [unable to move at all]

The **population explosion** may lead to widespread food and water shortages. [rapid increase in population]

Genetic modification/engineering is already used to change fruit and vegetables so that they grow better. However, many people object to the idea of **genetically modified** (or **GM**) **food/crops**. [changing genes] [food/crops created by changing the genes of the ingredients]

Gene therapy will be used to eradicate some diseases, thanks to our knowledge of **the human genome**. [changing genes in order to prevent disease or disability] [the 'map' or index of all the genes in a human being]

Some people **envisage** a world in which **designer babies** will be popular. [see a possible or probable situation in the future] [babies whose genetic characteristics are artificially created]

Cloning of animals, and even human beings, may become common. [making a genetically identical copy]

C

Society and people

The breakdown of the traditional family structure has already occurred in some countries. In future, the **nuclear family**¹ may no longer be the main type of family unit, and more loosely defined relationships will develop. **Globalisation**² will increase, affecting how things are produced and sold, what we buy and how we communicate. The world has become a **global village**³ and we will have more and more contact with other people in it. We may even make contact with **extraterrestrial beings**⁴. The **gulf**⁵ between rich and poor nations will widen if we do not take **drastic measures**⁶ now to improve the situation.

¹ family with father, mother and one or two children

² increase of trade around the world, with companies producing and trading goods in many different countries or the spread of similar social and cultural behaviour around the world

³ a single community covering the whole world

⁴ creatures from other planets

⁵ gap/difference

⁶ severe actions that have noticeable effects

Exercises

57.1 Match the words to make collocations.

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1 gridlocked | <input type="checkbox"/> | a explosion |
| 2 genetic | <input type="checkbox"/> | b village |
| 3 human | <input type="checkbox"/> | c traffic |
| 4 population | <input type="checkbox"/> | d genome |
| 5 global | <input type="checkbox"/> | e modification |



57.2 Use the collocations in 57.1 to rewrite the underlined parts of the sentences.

- Asia underwent a dramatic increase in the population in the latter part of the 20th century.
- The crop had been subject to having its genes altered.
- Since the advent of the internet, the world has become one single community.
- Times when the traffic cannot move can cost the economy millions of pounds.
- Scientists now understand how the human genes are composed.

57.3 What do we call:

- a huge city with more than 10 million people?
- medical operations where a very small hole is made in someone's body?
- the science of making very small tools and machines by controlling atoms and molecules?
- making an exact genetic copy of something?
- creatures from other planets?
- the process of altering human and animal genes?
- the things that will happen to us in the future?
- a baby whose genetic features have been chosen by its parents?

57.4 Rewrite the underlined words in these sentences using expressions from the opposite page.

- The worst possible prediction is that we will destroy the world with nuclear weapons.
- Travelling to other planets for scientific exploration will become normal in the coming centuries.
- He belongs to a team of scientists who are trying to improve our understanding of the index of all the genes in a human being.
- Governments need to do things that will have a great impact to save the planet.
- Many people see in their imagination a world in which the poor simply get poorer. (Give two answers.)

57.5 Which words or phrases from the opposite page are associated with these sentences?

- These tomatoes will stay fresh for several months.
- A typical family is often said to consist of a husband, wife and 2.4 children.
- This sheep is identical in absolutely every respect to the sheep standing next to it.
- Thanks to this, doctors may be able to cure some genetic diseases.
- The world is becoming a very small place in terms of economics and communication.
- The company is planning to market two-week holidays on the Moon.

57.6 Over to you

Write five sentences about how you envisage the future. Consider the future in terms of technology, the environment and society.