

# UNIT 7 - APPS

## Reading 1

### Skills:

- Recognize referents
- Make inferences
- Details
- Understand vocabulary from context

**Getting started:** Do you remember which were the first apps that you ever downloaded?

## THE HISTORY OF MOBILE APPS



Some years ago, mobile apps were a rarity, but now they are an important part of our lives. Cell phones used to have some productivity tools (a calculator, for instance), but **they** couldn't offer us all app stores can give us now. Despite the short amount of time they've been around, they've had a grand history.

In 1997, the Nokia 6110 included a **built-in** version of the basic arcade game "Snake," which many consider the first mobile app. The first iPod would also come with built-in games: Solitaire and Brick.

Back in 1983, however, a young Steve Jobs first envisioned the App Store. Jobs imagined a place where software could be bought over phone lines. Shortly after Apple's introduction of the iPod, the iTunes store was launched, iTunes changed the way people bought and listened to music as they sold digital music to their customers. In 2006, iTunes introduced games, acting as a precursor to the Apple App Store. The iPhone was released in June 2007 and was a commercial success. Native apps were developed, and just over a year later, the Google App Store was launched **as well**.

The original App Store started with 500 apps, meaning there is no "true" first app. Nevertheless, as new varieties of smartphones were released, different app clients were introduced. Google Play, the Amazon App Store, and Blackberry's App World also gave more people the ability to enjoy various apps on their phones. Each store had both paid and free apps from the beginning, meaning **premium** and "**freemium**" content was always a factor.

The first installment in the popular franchise "Angry Birds" was released in December 2009 on the Apple App Store, and it quickly became a hit. By 2015, there were over three billion downloads, making **it** the most successful freemium software of all time. And while they are not as popular as they used to be at their peak, these birds are still part of the market today.

Apple revealed almost 300,000 jobs were added to the US economy since the iPhone's debut, calling it "the app revolution." Facebook acquired Instagram for \$1 billion in April 2012, an unprecedented move in the world of technology. 2014 showed a change in app usage, from fun games and social media to entire lifestyles. In 2019, Snapchat reported 400 million stories were created each day.

Thanks to smartwatches and smart appliances, today apps are not specific to phones anymore. Apps have become so integral to everyday life that there are just few people who don't use them on a regular basis. On a personal level, apps allow families and friends to connect even when miles apart. **They** also keep you in touch with professional colleagues and informed of what developments are happening.

Apps are so important for us that it's difficult to imagine what the world would be like without them. I remember back in 2010 Apple ran a commercial saying "There's an app for that." A clear prophecy or a prediction of what would happen in the future.

*\* Adapted from: <https://inventionland.com/inventing/the-history-of-mobile-apps/>*

**Glossary:**

- **Built-in:** Incorporated
- **Freemium:** A way of doing business, especially on the internet, in which basic services are provided free of charge while more advanced features must be paid for.
- **Premium:** Content you have to pay for.

**Answer the following questions:**

1. The word **They** in the paragraph 1 refers to
  - a. apps
  - b. lives
  - c. tools
  - d. cell phones
  
2. What is stated in paragraph 2?
  - a. Nokia launched the first app store back in 1997.
  - b. The Google App store was released before the iTunes store.
  - c. The iTunes store can be considered the first app store.
  - d. When the iPhone came in 2007, the App store was launched immediately.
  
3. The phrase **as well** in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to
  - a. also
  - b. in contrast
  - c. positively
  - d. before
  
4. It can be inferred from paragraph 2 and 3 that
  - a. it is difficult to acknowledge which was the first real app.
  - b. Steve Jobs designed the Google App Store.
  - c. when the Google store was launched, it included more than 500 apps.
  - d. the arcades games like snake, solitaire and brick were the first official apps.

5. The word **it** in paragraph 4 refers to
- a. hit
  - b. peak
  - c. store
  - d. franchise
6. It is implied in paragraph 4 about Angry Birds that
- a. it is one of the top and most popular games today.
  - b. its popularity has decreased.
  - c. it is an expensive game.
  - d. there are over three billion downloads daily.
7. What is something positive the app revolution brought?
- a. It created thousands of jobs.
  - b. It helped Facebook buy Instagram.
  - c. It has caused Snapchat to be the main app nowadays.
  - d. It has made people spend around \$1 billion since 2012.
8. The word **They** in paragraph 6 refers to
- a. families
  - b. apps
  - c. friends
  - d. colleagues

### What do you think?

Do you agree with the statement, “it’s difficult to imagine what the world would be like without mobile apps?”