

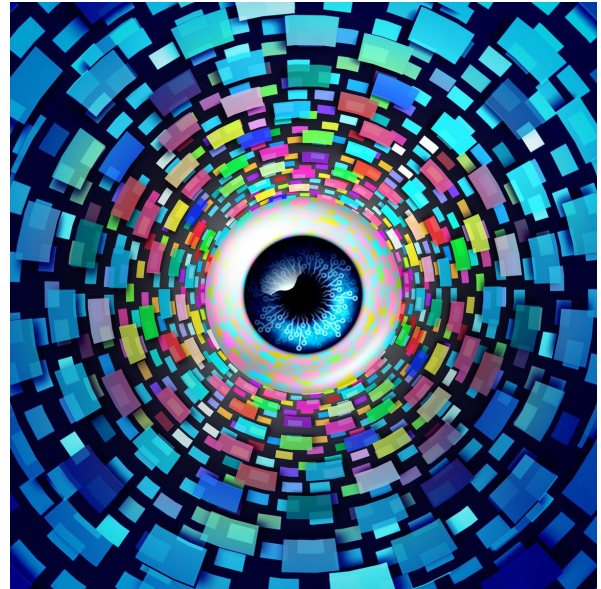


TYCOONS INVEST IN METAVERSE



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1653-U4CC-CIZD



1

Warm up

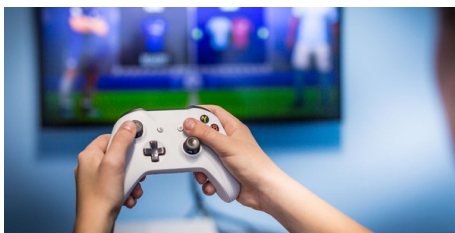
Look at the pictures below and discuss the questions in pairs or small groups.



picture 1



picture 2



picture 3



picture 4

1. How much time do you spend on the Internet every day?
2. Do you pay for a data package for your mobile phone?
3. When was the last time you had a break from the Internet of at least one day? Why?
4. Have you ever played a virtual reality game, or used a VR headset for another purpose, such as work?
5. Would you pay to attend a virtual event, such as a concert or lecture? Why/why not?

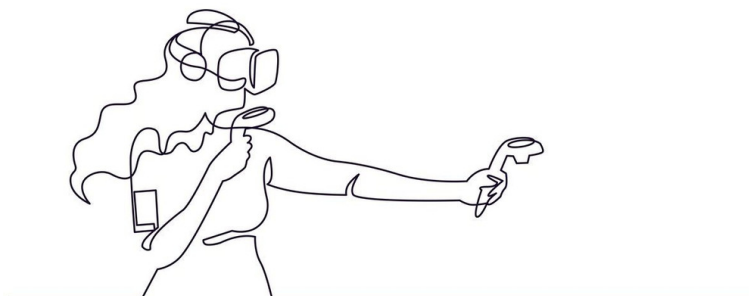


2

Vocabulary

Part A: Read each sentence and use the context to match the **bolded** word to the correct definition.

1. Richard Dawkins **coined** the term meme in its current context.
 2. Watching films in 3D allows the audience to have a more **immersive** experience.
 3. In the early years of the Internet, we made **avatars** of ourselves and used them in our social media profiles.
 4. There are many dangerous ideas floating around in **cyberspace**.
 5. At the **boardroom** meeting, it was decided that the company would open a new branch in another country.
 6. I informed my lawyer that I would like to **establish** a new company.
 7. **Proponents** of cryptocurrency claim that it is the future.
 8. In the United Kingdom, judges draw attention to their position by **donning** ceremonial wigs.
-
- a. an image that represents an individual in an online world, game or chatroom
 - b. a room in which people who control a company or organisation meet
 - c. invented a word or expression, or used it in a new way
 - d. people who publicly support an idea or plan of action
 - e. putting on an item of clothing or attire (formal)
 - f. start a company or organisation that will continue to exist for a long time
 - g. surrounding the audience, making them feel more involved
 - h. the Internet as an imaginary, limitless area





Part B: Now, look at the phrases in the text that are in bold and decide which definition matches best their meanings.

James Bakewell **made the leap** to virtual reality working in March so he could conduct meetings in real time with his colleagues at work. This was not an easy decision **by any means**, as he had to convert a room in his home into a temporary office. Furthermore, the shift to online work had **driven new demand** in virtual reality technology, so it was an expensive choice. On the other hand, James could no longer afford to commute to work and wanted to spend more time with his wife. **Either way**, he remained completely committed to his job and looked forward to the new challenge.

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. introduce or start a need for something | a. by any means |
| 2. it does not matter which one of two possibilities happens, is chosen or is true | b. drive new demand |
| 3. do something suddenly and quickly | c. either way |
| 4. in any way | d. make the leap |

3 Listening/video

You are going to listen to the report on the metaverse (00:05-01:54). Read the phrases and note down what they mean and what they refer to.



1. *Snow Crash* _____
2. *metaverse* _____
3. *Roblox* _____
4. *Robux* _____
5. *Second Life* _____

4 Listening comprehension

Read the statements below and decide if they are true, false or not given. Then listen again to check your answers.

1. Roblox recently became a multi-billion-dollar company.
2. Virtual worlds have been around for over 10 years.
3. The pandemic has made remote interaction more appealing to the general public.
4. Facebook's workers prefer donning virtual reality headsets to meet and interact.
5. The metaverse could allow Facebook to collect further data on its users.



5

Vocabulary - business and technology

Match the words on the left with the definitions on the right.

Group 1

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. <u>rebrand</u> | a. an idea or principle |
| 2. <u>buzz</u> | b. a strong negative reaction amongst a group of people to a change or new event |
| 3. <u>concept</u> | c. change the way a company or organisation is seen by the public |
| 4. <u>successor</u> | d. excited and usually positive talk about something or someone |
| 5. <u>backlash</u> | e. something or someone that comes after something else |

Group 2

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. <u>platform</u> | a. a model or representation of an object, event or problem found in the real world |
| 2. <u>collaborate</u> | b. remove or stop something from being published or released |
| 3. <u>simulation</u> | c. the improved or enhanced reality, often with the help of computer technology |
| 4. <u>pull</u> | d. the type of system a computer or smartphone uses |
| 5. <u>augmented</u> | e. work with someone else for a particular purpose |

Part B: Complete the sentences with the words from Part A.

1. There was a huge _____ against the new law with protests organised across the country.
2. Car manufacturers often create computer _____ of their products to present to the public.
3. Some software doesn't work on the Windows _____ ; you'll need a different operating system.
4. My colleague asked me to _____ with her on a new project.
5. Some commentators believe that virtual reality is flawed as a _____ .
6. Sometimes companies _____ their business after receiving negative attention in the media.
7. The mobile game Pokemon Go is a prime example of _____ reality.
8. There's a lot of _____ around the latest Playstation console.
9. The search for a _____ to Facebook continues, with no new social network standing out.
10. The developer _____ the game after it was found to cause migraines.



Discuss these questions in pairs.

1. Do you often **collaborate** with colleagues or classmates at work/school?
2. Have you ever played an **augmented** reality game? Would it interest you?
3. Can you think of an upcoming product from the tech world that has a lot of **buzz** around it?
4. If you had to **rebrand** Facebook, what would you change the name to?
5. Can you think of a time in which a company received **backlash** for one of its decisions?
6. Do you think it's possible that we're living in a **simulation**?

6 Reading for general ideas

You are going to read a text about the "metaverse" on page 6. Scan the text quickly and find out which paragraph mentions each of the following items.

- a. humans and machines potentially being able to work together
- b. the idea of being inside the internet as if it was a physical place
- c. side effects caused by virtual reality headsets
- d. failed technology that initially received lots of media attention
- e. a company that wants to create the next phase of the internet

7 Reading comprehension

Complete the following sentences with one, two or three words from the text.

1. To put it simply, the metaverse can be described as a _____.
2. Released in 2016, the first *Oculus* headset _____ to play virtual reality games.
3. According to Nvidia, its "Omniverse" technology could allow _____ to be created.
4. A potential problem with the metaverse concept is that it _____ virtual reality.
5. One of the reasons that Google Glass failed was its _____, which many consumers couldn't afford.



Into the metaverse

- the next step for the Internet?

1. It's been making headlines around the world, attracting interest from global corporations and has been called the next phase of the internet - but what is the metaverse, and is it really the next "big thing"? In broad terms, the metaverse is a label given to a hypothetical virtual world, in which users could connect using virtual reality headsets and take part in a variety of activities, such as watching live concerts, conducting office meetings or socialising with friends. *Facebook* founder Mark Zuckerberg describes the metaverse as a type of "embodied internet, where instead of just viewing content - you are in it."
2. Zuckerberg in particular has taken a special interest in the metaverse. Recent reports suggest that *Facebook* is planning to rebrand itself with a new name related to the metaverse. The company also announced that it is creating 10,000 jobs in the European Union with the intention of building what Zuckerberg describes as "the successor to the mobile Internet." In 2016, Facebook released their first *Oculus* headset, a device that enabled consumers to connect to virtual reality games. More recent projects have included VR (virtual reality) apps for social and work situations, such as *Facebook Horizons*, which the company heralded as a step to the metaverse.
3. Facebook isn't the only business to have invested heavily in the concept. *Roblox*, a popular children's game, describes itself as a metaverse company. *Nvidia*, best known for its range of graphics cards, is developing an *Omniverse*, a platform allowing three-dimensional worlds to be connected in a shared virtual universe. The company has suggested that its *Omniverse* could have real-world applications, such as allowing humans and robots to collaborate. It has also suggested the technology could enable the creation of digital twins, simulations of buildings and factories from the physical world. This is something that is already being used in industry. Car manufacturer *BMW* has used *Nvidia's* software to create a future factory, allowing operators to simulate key processes. When built, the physical factory will use the same AI (artificial intelligence) and software as the virtual factory.
4. Whilst the metaverse may offer a bright future for business, is it wise to invest so heavily in an idea that is, at best, vaguely defined? The concept hinges on virtual reality- technology which has actually been available to consumers since the early 1990s. VR headsets have been linked with a variety of health issues, including headaches, eye strain, blurred vision and even long-term visual problems. They can also be prohibitively expensive and many require powerful computers or next-gen consoles to function. Additionally, the metaverse may have to contend with "Zoom fatigue", as millions of people around the world tire of virtual meetings and long for physical contact with colleagues, friends and loved ones.
5. Is the metaverse, then, the next big thing? Or is it another false dawn, overhyped by tech billionaires, soon to **fizzle out**? Only time will tell. Some of the technology already exists, and there have been some early successes, such as singer Ariana Grande's virtual concert in the online game *Fortnite*, which was watched by millions around the world. On the other hand, the buzz around the metaverse may **bring back** memories of Google Glass, a gadget that was supposed to **bring about** the age of AR (augmented reality). These "smart glasses" were pulled from consumer markets within a year of release. A variety of factors were blamed for the failure, including an expensive price tag and public backlash. Users reported feeling trapped in the online world, being unable to disconnect as notifications **popped up** in their line of sight throughout the day. Perhaps we're not quite ready to **leave reality behind** just yet.

Sources: BBC, The Guardian, The Times, Reuters, The Verge



8

Vocabulary/optional task

Part A: Scan through the text again to find a word that:

1. describes a physical presence in a virtual world (para 1) _____
2. has announced something in a positive way (para 2) _____
3. is a synonym for unclearly (para 4) _____
4. means extreme tiredness (para 4) _____
5. something exaggerated for marketing purposes (para 5) _____

Part B: Focus on Paragraph 5. Keeping the context in mind, match the phrasal verbs in bold with their definitions below.

1. _____ abandon or move on from something
2. _____ recall something or make someone think of the past
3. _____ cause something to happen
4. _____ end gradually in a disappointing way
5. _____ appeared or happened suddenly or unexpectedly

9

Talking point

In pairs, discuss the following questions.

1. Why do you think people enjoy playing online games?
2. Do you think that the metaverse will be the next phase of the internet, or is it overhyped?
3. Have you experienced "zoom fatigue"?
4. Have you ever paid for virtual items, such as in-game items or digital products that don't exist in reality?
5. Can you think of any real-life applications for the metaverse, other than the ones mentioned in the article?
6. Why do you think some people are attracted to the idea of virtual reality?

**10****Extended activity/writing homework**

Choose ONE of the options.

- **A) Write an opinion essay of 250 - 300 words. You should choose a position - supporting or disagreeing with the statement - and provide evidence for your answer, as well as an introduction and conclusion.**

As a concept that takes us away from reality, the metaverse is a bad idea. We should focus on the problems of the world rather than attempting to escape from them.

- **B) Imagine you attended an online concert. Write a short review, describing the experience and comparing it to real-life events you have attended.**