

Digital Learning



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Have you ever taken an online course?
2. Do you use your mobile device for learning?
3. Why did remote learning become popular in 2020?
4. Can social media networks be educational?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.
Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| _____ 1. face | a) the actual time something happens, not delayed |
| _____ 2. assign | b) requiring participation and sharing |
| _____ 3. flexible | c) not to be trusted or relied on |
| _____ 4. affordable | d) open to change |
| _____ 5. interactive | e) no longer useful or used, outdated |
| _____ 6. obsolete | f) inexpensive |
| _____ 7. unreliable | g) appearance |
| _____ 8. encyclopedia | h) a major change in the way people think and act |
| _____ 9. real time | i) a reference book of facts in alphabetized volumes |
| _____ 10. revolution | j) to give someone a project or assignment |

Reading

DIGITAL LEARNING

Are classrooms the next thing to go?

1. *Times are changing!* Teachers say this more than anyone. Day by day, digital learning is changing the **face** of education. Instead of textbooks, essays, and paper-based tests, teachers **assign** e-books, blog posts, and internet quizzes. Blackboards are being replaced with interactive whiteboards. Learning with technology is growing in popularity around the world. Why? Digital learning is often **flexible**, **affordable**, and **interactive**. You can do a full university degree online at home and join a study group on Facebook. You can even study during a pandemic!
2. As technology advances, textbooks are becoming **obsolete**. Will teachers and four-walled classrooms be the next thing to go? At one time, people thought robots would take over human jobs. Now it seems the internet is doing this. Can you remember when the internet was viewed as an **unreliable** source? Today, the internet is the world's **encyclopedia**. Information changes quickly and some textbooks become outdated before they're printed. Instead of library books, students use mobile phones and laptops to research and share knowledge and ideas in **real time**. When they need face-to-face interaction, they can join a video call.
3. Some subjects are better suited to e-learning than others. You can't learn how to fix a car without actually touching it, can you? It would be hard to study ballet through YouTube alone. What about language learning? Will classrooms, study halls, and libraries exist for many generations, or are we experiencing an educational **revolution**?

"We need to bring learning to people instead of people to learning."

—Elliot Masie, coiner of the word "e-learning"

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. Why do teachers say “Times are changing!” so often?
2. What three adjectives are used to describe digital learning?
3. What does the reading say about textbooks?
4. What do students use mobile phones for?
5. Why does the reading mention ballet class?

Vocabulary Review

A. Matching

Match the phrase on the left to the correct example on the right.

- | | |
|---|--|
| _____ 1. It was more affordable. | a) Nobody sells tape cassettes anymore. |
| _____ 2. I learned about it in real time. | b) The online course was half the price of the course I took at the local college. |
| _____ 3. They have become obsolete. | c) You have to blog and leave comments on other students’ blogs. |
| _____ 4. It’s an interactive assignment. | d) I don’t trust the statistic in Chapter 2. |
| _____ 5. It’s unreliable. | e) I heard about the earthquake the moment it happened. My friend texted me. |

B. Synonyms or Antonyms?

Are the following words or phrases synonyms or antonyms?

Write your answer next to each pair.

1. face / look _____
2. flexible / adaptable _____
3. revolution / transformation _____
4. obsolete / timeless _____
5. interactive / one-way _____

Discussion

1. How did education change during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. Which subjects are best suited to digital learning?
3. What does a teacher provide that the internet can't give you?
4. Do you prefer learning online or in a classroom?
5. Try to imagine education 20 years from now.
Describe all aspects of how you imagine it will be.

Challenge

Experts are no longer a name in an index. If you have a question, you can contact an expert directly via email, a blog, or a social media network such as Twitter! Choose a field you are interested in. Send a question to an expert in this field via one of the methods mentioned above.

Class Opinion

Walk around the class and ask your classmates questions.
Write their answers in the chart below.

Classmate's name:	Can technology take the place of real-life experience?	Is digital learning a passing trend?	Will growing cities continue to build new schools?

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

DIGITAL LEARNING

Are classrooms the next thing to go?

1. *Times are changing!* Teachers say this more than anyone. Day by day, digital learning is changing the _____ of education. Instead of textbooks, essays, and paper-based tests, teachers _____ e-books, blog posts, and internet quizzes. Blackboards are being replaced with interactive whiteboards. Learning with technology is growing in popularity around the world. Why? Digital learning is often _____, affordable, and interactive. You can do a full university degree online at home and join a study group on Facebook. You can even study during a pandemic!
2. As technology advances, textbooks are becoming _____. Will teachers and four-walled classrooms be the next thing to go? At one time, people thought robots would take over human jobs. Now it seems the internet is doing this. Can you remember when the internet was viewed as an _____ source? Today, the internet is the world's _____. Information changes quickly and some textbooks become outdated before they're printed. Instead of library books, students use mobile phones and laptops to research and share knowledge and ideas in real time. When they need face-to-face interaction, they can join a _____ call.
3. Some subjects are better suited to e-learning than others. You can't learn how to fix a car without _____ touching it, can you? It would be hard to study ballet through YouTube alone. What about language learning? Will classrooms, study halls, and libraries exist for many generations, or are we experiencing an educational _____ ?

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about and discuss e-learning and the future of education.

TEACHING TIPS:

See *Discussion Starters Teaching Guide* (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

LEVEL: Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, e-learning, digital learning, future, education, school, internet, COVID-19, pandemic

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. g | 3. d | 5. b | 7. c | 9. a |
| 2. j | 4. f | 6. e | 8. i | 10. h |

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Discuss the quote. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 5. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

- Teachers say “Times are changing!” because digital learning is changing the face of education very quickly.
- The three adjectives that are used to describe digital learning are “flexible,” “affordable,” and “interactive.”
- The reading says textbooks can become outdated even before they are printed.
- Students use cell phones to research and share knowledge and information in real time.
- The reading mentions ballet as an example of a type of class that is not suitable for e-learning.

Vocabulary Review

A. MATCHING

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. b | 2. e | 3. a | 4. c | 5. d |
|------|------|------|------|------|

B. SYNONYMS OR ANTONYMS?

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. synonyms | 3. synonyms | 5. antonyms |
| 2. synonyms | 4. antonyms | |

Discussion

Answers will vary.
Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

Challenge

Optional.

Class Opinion

Have students walk around the class and ask their classmates questions. They should record their answers in the chart.

Listening

- face, assign, flexible
- obsolete, unreliable, encyclopedia, video
- actually, revolution