

# The Metaverse

## Pre-Reading

### A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Which social media platforms do you use the most often? Which one is your favorite?
2. How do you think social media will change in the next 10 years? How has it changed in the last 10 years?
3. What is virtual reality?
4. Have you heard about Facebook's name change?



### B. Vocabulary Preview 1

The word cloud below includes words and phrases related to social media and online gaming. Check your understanding of each one. If you are unsure, ask a partner or search for the meaning online.

**virtual reality**  
**connections**  
**hardware**                      **users**  
**MMOG**  
**data**                      **information privacy**                      **avatar**  
**mixed reality**  
**social media**                      **real time**  
**Minecraft**

## Pre-Reading cont.

### C. Vocabulary Preview 2

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 3.

- |          |              |    |   |
|----------|--------------|----|---|
| _____ 1. | era          | a) | to control by laws or rules                             |
| _____ 2. | collaborate  | b) | the newest or most modern (often describing technology) |
| _____ 3. | interact     | c) | creating a 3D image that seems to surround a user       |
| _____ 4. | immersive    | d) | to work together  |
| _____ 5. | cutting-edge | e) | to talk or do things with people                        |
| _____ 6. | vision       | f) | a person who feels negatively about something           |
| _____ 7. | critic       | g) | an idea of what something might be like in the future   |
| _____ 8. | regulate     | h) | a period of history                                     |

# Reading

## THE METAVERSE

*Where is technology headed?*

### 1. *The future of the internet*

Are we entering a new **era** of digital reality? Facebook, the world's leading social media platform, changed its name to Meta in 2021 and announced the company's plan to create a 3D version of the internet. In this massive virtual world (known as "the metaverse"), users will be able to **collaborate** with coworkers, play games, and hang out with friends in an online space where the possibilities are limitless. The ideas put forward by Meta sound exciting, but are they actually new? What's more, will they be popular?

### 2. *Basic description of a metaverse*

A metaverse is a 3D virtual world in which real people **interact** with each other and their digital environment. Although the term "metaverse" was first used in a science-fiction novel, the concept is quickly taking shape. Massively multiplayer online games (MMOGs), such as Minecraft and Fortnite, take place in vast 3D worlds where real people interact as avatars. In these virtual landscapes, users can explore, create, and expand the online environment. In the game Second Life, which was launched in 2003, users can do everyday activities in a virtual environment. They can earn money, shop, attend college or business meetings, and even go to rock concerts.

### 3. *Key features of a metaverse*

Not every online virtual world is a metaverse. According to tech expert Matthew Ball, there are certain key features that define a metaverse. Firstly, a metaverse continues forever—it does not stop or reset, and there is no limit to the number of users. Another important aspect of a metaverse is that users interact in real time. Users can create experiences in a metaverse and help to construct

the environment. Furthermore, a metaverse has its own functioning economy. Users can trade and invest within the online environment just as they do in the real world.

### 4. *A mixed reality*

Metaverses may not be new, but most existing virtual worlds cannot be described as a "fully **immersive**" experience—one in which the user feels "truly present." Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg's goal is to create a social network of "mixed reality" in which the user can easily jump between the real world and their virtual environment. Zuckerberg hopes that **cutting-edge** virtual reality hardware, such as VR headsets, will mean that users have "a deep feeling of presence" in the online world they enter while remaining grounded in the real world around them. In this sense, Meta will be a completely new social media experience.

### 5. *Concerns about Meta's plans*

Mark Zuckerberg argues that his **vision** for Meta represents the future of the internet, but the idea has its **critics**. Some experts worry that some users may become addicted to the virtual environment, resulting in mental and physical health issues. Others worry about information privacy as companies could gather large amounts of data from hardware like VR headsets. Some question whether user interactions will be **regulated** or policed, and they are concerned about how much control Meta will have over the environment. However, it is early days for the metaverse, and the company may find ways to address these issues before their virtual world becomes a reality.

## Response

Write a tweet in the box sharing your views on the reading and the idea of the metaverse. Don't forget to add hashtags and/or tag your friends, companies, etc.

**Example:**



Great read. Will everyone be wearing #VR headsets in a few years? I will!  
#futureisreal #FOMO #trendsetter



## Comprehension

Read the text again. Add notes on the main information to your table. Some examples have been given.

<b>Definition of a metaverse</b>	
<b>Features of a metaverse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>continuous—doesn't stop or reset</i></li> </ul>
<b>Examples of existing metaverses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fortnite</i></li> </ul>
<b>Facebook's plans for a metaverse</b>	
<b>Concerns about the metaverse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>users might get addicted</i></li> </ul>

## Conversation Exchange

You are discussing the metaverse with a friend. How can you respond to each of their comments? Use the information from your notes on page 4 to help you.

Friend: To be honest, I don't really understand what a metaverse is.

You: Well, basically, it's \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: What makes a metaverse different from just, say, playing online games with a friend? It's the same thing, right?

You: Not exactly. \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: Wow! I've never heard of anything like this before!

You: Actually, \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: So why are people talking about Facebook and the metaverse? Do they have a new product coming out or something?

You: Kind of. I mean \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: Aren't people worried about this? I mean, there must be some risks...

You: Hmm. I read that \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: So, what do you think? Will it be popular?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary Review

## A. Chart

Read the sentences in the chart below. Which word from page 2 is each sentence an example of?

#	Sentence	Word
1	The writers offer feedback on each other's ideas in a shared Google doc.	<i>collaborate</i>
2	The students are friendly, and they like to chat with each other before class starts.	
3	There was a time when some European countries had empires that extended across the world.	
4	James didn't like the movie. He didn't think it was very realistic.	
5	Copenhagen is aiming to be the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025.	
6	When I put on the headset, I felt like I was really at a rock concert! It was so real!	
7	The government or the banks should introduce more rules to control cryptocurrency trading.	
8	The new phone uses modern technology. It has 5G connectivity and advanced eye-recognition software.	

## Vocabulary Review cont.

### B. Writing

Rewrite sentences 1–8 to include the words from Vocabulary Preview 2.  
You can change the word form if needed.

1. The writers offer feedback on each other's ideas in a shared Google doc.

*The writers collaborate in a Google doc.*

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2. The students are friendly, and they like to chat with each other before class starts.
- 

3. There was a time when some European countries had empires that extended across the world.
- 

4. James didn't like the movie. He didn't think it was very realistic.
- 

5. Copenhagen aims to be the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025.
- 

6. When I put on the headset, I felt like I was really at a rock concert! It was so real!
- 

7. The government or the banks should introduce more rules to control cryptocurrency trading.
- 

8. The new phone uses modern technology. It has 5G connectivity and advanced eye-recognition software.
-

## Vocabulary in Context

Match these words and phrases from the reading with their synonyms.

- |                      |                              |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ 1. construct   | a) collect                   |
| _____ 2. put forward | b) idea, thought, notion     |
| _____ 3. expand      | c) enlarge, increase, extend |
| _____ 4. launch      | d) huge, massive, extensive  |
| _____ 5. take place  | e) build, make, create       |
| _____ 6. concept     | f) suggest, propose          |
| _____ 7. vast        | g) occur, happen             |
| _____ 8. gather      | h) begin, establish, set up  |

## Pros and Cons

What do you think are the pros and cons of the metaverse?  
Make notes in the chart below. You can include ideas from the text if you wish. Share your ideas with a partner.

Pros	Cons



## Discussion

1. What do you think are the biggest challenges that Meta faces in introducing this new form of social media?
2. Would you say that, from a business perspective, the metaverse is a risk?
3. If the metaverse is successful, do you think there will still be a place for other social media platforms like Instagram or Twitter?
4. Many people find themselves in an “echo chamber” on social media, where the only beliefs and viewpoints they encounter are ones similar to their own. Do you think the metaverse would lead to a stronger echo chamber effect?

# Answer Key

**LESSON DESCRIPTION:**

In this lesson, students read about Facebook’s name change to Meta and its plan to create a metaverse. They also discuss the pros, cons, and implications of such a massive 3D virtual world. In addition, students practice taking notes and figuring out the meaning of words from context.

**LEVEL:** High Int

**TIME:** 1.5–2 hours

**TAGS:** discussion, technology, Facebook, Meta, social media, avatar, immersive environment, virtual reality, mixed reality, Mark Zuckerberg, Zuckerberg, tweet, Twitter

## Pre-Reading

**A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS**

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

**B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW 1**

This task is a quick check of key vocabulary. Some of the more challenging phrases that learners might not be familiar with include:

- MMOGs (or MMOs) – Massively multiplayer online games, such as Fortnite or Minecraft
- avatar – an image used to represent a person in an online profile
- virtual reality – images created by a computer that make someone feel like they are in a 3D space
- mixed reality – technology that closely connects virtual reality with the real world, making it easy to move between the two

**C. VOCABULARY PREVIEW 2**

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

## Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. You can also play the listening as your students read along. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

## Response

You may want to share a couple more examples from Twitter with your students. You may also refer to our Writing in English lesson on How to Tweet: <https://esllibrary.com/courses/74/lessons/2053>

*(continued on the next page...)*

# Answer Key cont.

## Comprehension

Answers may vary. Possible answers:

<b>Definition of a metaverse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a 3D virtual world in which real people interact with each other and their digital environment</li> </ul>
<b>Features of a metaverse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continuous—doesn't stop or reset</li> <li>no limit to the number of users</li> <li>users interact in real time</li> <li>users create experiences in a metaverse and help to construct the environment</li> <li>has its own functioning economy—users can trade and invest</li> </ul>
<b>Examples of existing metaverses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fortnite</li> <li>Minecraft</li> <li>Second Life</li> </ul>
<b>Facebook's plans for a metaverse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a virtual world in which users can collaborate, play, and hang out</li> <li>a "fully immersive" experience—one in which the user feels "truly present"</li> <li>a social network of "mixed reality" in which the user can easily jump between interactions in the real world and in their virtual environment</li> <li>users have "a deep feeling of presence" with the aid of VR hardware</li> <li>a completely new social media experience</li> </ul>

<b>Concerns about the metaverse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>users might get addicted</li> <li>it may result in issues related to mental and physical health</li> <li>information privacy; companies could gather vast amounts of data from hardware like VR headsets</li> <li>difficult to regulate</li> <li>creators (Meta) may have too much control over the metaverse</li> </ul>
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## Conversation Exchange

First, give students a few minutes to write responses to the friend's questions in the dialogue. Then put students in pairs. Have them practice reading the conversation aloud. Make sure they switch roles and read it at least twice.

*(continued on the next page...)*

# Answer Key cont.

## Vocabulary Review

### A. CHART

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. collaborate | 5. vision       |
| 2. interact    | 6. immersive    |
| 3. era         | 7. regulate     |
| 4. critic      | 8. cutting-edge |

### B. WRITING

Answers may vary. Possible answers:

- The writers collaborate in a Google doc.
- The students are friendly, and they like to interact before class.
- There was an era when some European countries had empires that extended across the world.
- James was a critic of the movie. He didn't think it was very realistic.
- Copenhagen's vision is to be the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025.
- When I put on the headset, I felt like I was really at a rock concert! It was so immersive!
- The government or the banks should regulate cryptocurrency trading.
- The new phone uses cutting-edge technology. It has 5G connectivity and advanced eye-recognition software.

## Vocabulary in Context

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

## Pros and Cons

Answers will vary.

## Discussion

Answers will vary.

Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

### SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Favorite*. Most other English-speaking countries spell this word this way: *Favourite*. Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.