1. Read the following text and prepare to:

✓ retell it in your own words
✓ give your opinion on the matter

How has Computer Technology Affected our Lives?

It is said that inventions change the way we live. Computer technology is a classic example of this.

The evolution of computers can be traced back to calculators and punched cards, which were some of the earliest computing devices. For many years after 1960, when the third generation computers were created, desktop computers (you surely still have one of those on your desk at home or at work!) remained to be popular for personal and business use.

Research in this field continued in the 70s and 80s, and laptops, tablets, etc., soon followed. During the 90s, developers focused on making their systems more user-friendly, thus making it easier for the non-expert to use computers. As we see today, computers serve as 'personal digital assistants' in the literal sense of the term! How has this affected our lives? Well, we can remain connected to the world at all times!

Computer operating systems (Windows, Mac OS, Linux, etc) are a vital component of the computer technology. They help in the management of a variety of operations and in the sharing of computer resources. They handle the execution of programs, help in the management of files, etc. Computers, as we all know, can perform complex mathematical operations within seconds and process large amounts of information. Computer operating systems manage multiple user profiles and user accounts, thus playing a major role in maintaining computer security.

Also the multimedia capabilities of computers make them one of the ideal audio-visual media. They can play movies and music. They offer support to a variety of storage media like CDs, DVDs, etc. And how has this affected our lives? Well, it is due to these storage and audio-visual media, that we can keep soft-copies of data (CDs, pen drives…). Gone are the days, when we used to document on paper! Gone are the days when students maintained traditional notebooks. Many of them use notebook computers today. Today’s education is about PowerPoint presentations and e-homework assignments. TVs and radios were once, the only means of entertainment, but not anymore. Today’s entertainment is about the computer and Internet technology!

Read more at Buzzle: http://www.buzzle.com/articles/how-has-computer-technology-affected-our-lives.html
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**COMPUTERS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)**

Computers and IT are so much a part of modern life, that we cannot imagine living without them. IT has become such a key concept in all organizations that we expect it to function perfectly all the time; however, when servers are down - even if it is for a brief period – the result is that life seems to stop abruptly.

This is because computers serve as efficient data storage systems and excellent information processors. They can store, organize and manage huge amounts of data. Moreover, they operate on incomparable speeds, thus saving human time and effort to a large extent.

In the 1960s and 70s, the use of computers was limited to the banking sector, mathematical engineers, and computer scientists. In the 1980s, the arrival of personal computers (PC) made it possible for computers to be used in more sectors and the concept of IT developed.

Information Technology, or IT, can be defined as the use of computer to manage information. Information technology has accomplished a lot in the 21st century. It is an industry which deals with the use of computer hardware, and software, and networking. It is a combination of computer and communication technology. It is the transfer of information from one individual to another.

In business establishments, IT is used predominantly to solve mathematical and logical problems. In the medical field, it has helped to find cures for several diseases; thereby, serving mankind in many ways. Different kinds of software are provided for individuals with visual, or hearing impairment, thus making their life easier. The primary importance of information technology with regards to education is that various learning resources can be accessed instantly by students as well as teachers. Students may access the online libraries; enroll in e-learning programs, etc.

Perhaps, one of the major advantages of IT technology is its ability to provide us with Internet access. Computers possess networking capabilities, which makes it possible to connect multiple computers and achieve an exchange of information between them. Multiple communication approaches, like, chats, forums, emails, etc., can be used. This network communication is possible thanks to the networking features offered by IT technology.

Read more at Buzzle: [http://www.buzzle.com/articles/why-is-information-technology-important.html](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/why-is-information-technology-important.html)
ROLEPLAY

STUDENT A

✓ You are a computer engineer. You have worked for the same IT company for 10 years.
✓ Recently there were changes in management and the budget for R&D has been dramatically diminished due to the economical situation.
✓ You used to have a lot of freedom to experiment with new programs at work but lately you haven't been allowed to do so.
✓ You have developed a new computer program in your free time and would like to experiment with it at work. You think it is a very innovative program that could provide large benefits for the company.
✓ You may consider leaving the company if your boss doesn't allow you to do it.

DISCUSS ALL OF THESE ISSUES WITH YOUR BOSS AND TRY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH HIM/HER

ROLEPLAY

STUDENT B

✓ You have been the manager of an IT company for 6 months.
✓ You are aware that the cuts in R&D that your company has had to implement may affect the future of the business but there was nothing you could do to prevent them.
✓ The best engineer in the company wants to develop a new computer program during his/her work time. This is not allowed under the new rules of the company.
✓ S/he says it is a very innovative program that could provide large benefits for the company but only if s/he can provide definitive proof that it will be successful you'll consider letting her/him to do what s/he wants.
✓ On the other hand, you do not want to lose her/him.

DISCUSS ALL OF THESE ISSUES WITH YOUR EMPLOYEE AND TRY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH HIM/HER