

# Your Virtual Self

This girl is wearing a high-tech armband that can find her friends nearby, send text messages and even act as a video-game controller.



‘Really good technology helps us all be more human and connect with each other as we never could before.’

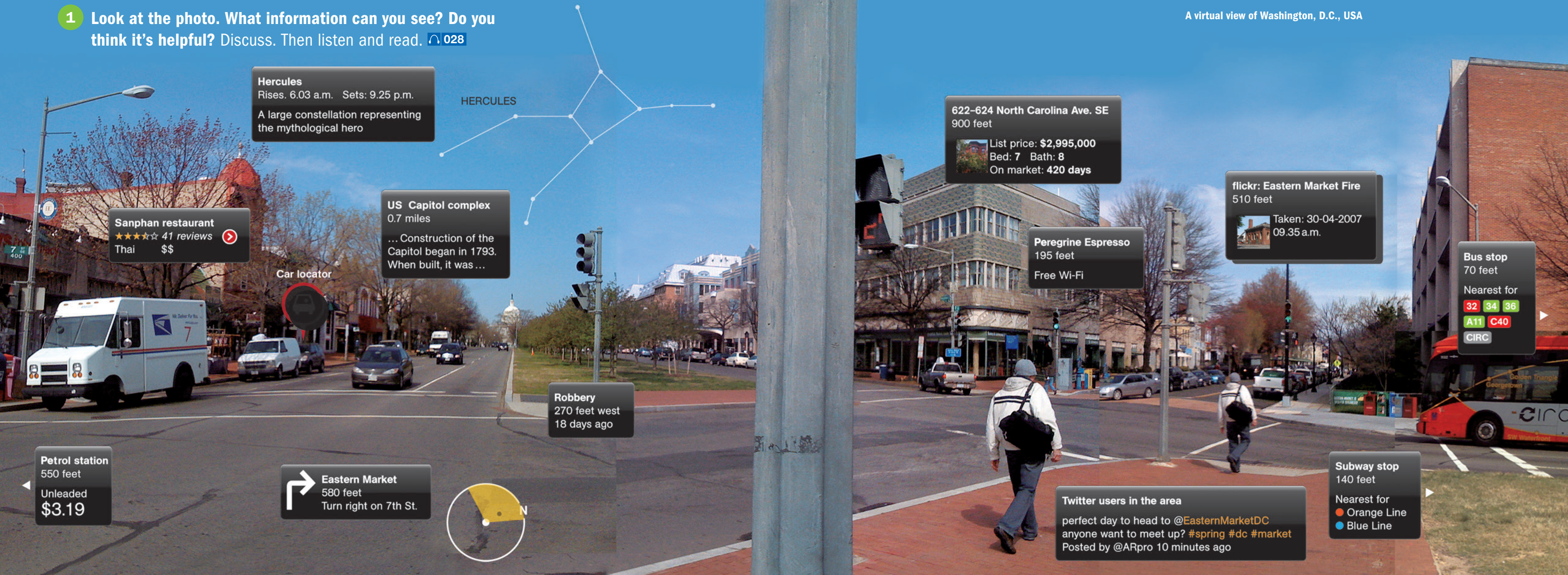
**Amber Case**

## TO START

1. Look at the photo. Have you ever used anything similar to this type of technology? Explain.
2. What technology do you use in your daily life? Think about your home, your schoolwork and your free-time activities.
3. Imagine you don't have a mobile phone. How would you contact your friends? Explain.

1 Look at the photo. What information can you see? Do you think it's helpful? Discuss. Then listen and read. 028

A virtual view of Washington, D.C., USA



Anthropologists traditionally study human behaviour and culture. They look at the way humans live and work together. Amber Case is an anthropologist, but she studies a different type of anthropology. Amber is a cyborg anthropologist. Do you know what a cyborg is? Part human, part **machine**, a cyborg is usually associated with science fiction films or comic books.

Amber believes that in today's **digital** world, we're all cyborgs. We rely on **technology** all the time. Our mobile phones and tablet

computers are like extra body parts that we carry around with us. 'Our mobile phones have become like children,' explains Amber. 'If they cry, we pick them up. We plug them into the wall and feed them. When they're lost, we panic.'

In the past, we humans developed **tools** that extended our physical **abilities**. We used them to **improve** the environment, farm the land, move around faster or protect ourselves. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, our smart tools – our gadgets – extend our mental abilities. With

modern technology, we can **communicate** faster and find any **information** we want in an **instant**. **Social media** allows us to connect with people around the world. So friendships can form based on our shared interests, not just our **location**.

Although there are a lot of positive things about technology, Amber thinks there is also a negative side to our new cyborg selves. She worries that our **constant access** to other people interferes with our ability to just be alone. Wherever we are, there's someone we

know who's online and ready to interact with us. 'We aren't taking time to slow down and figure out who we really are,' says Amber.

Despite these concerns, Amber doesn't think that machines are taking over. 'We're sharing with each other – human to human – in a very real way.'

2 **LEARN NEW WORDS** Listen and repeat. 029

3 **Work in pairs.** Do you agree that you're a cyborg? Why or why not?

4 Read and write the words from the list.

access	communicate	constant	digital
information	location	social media	technology

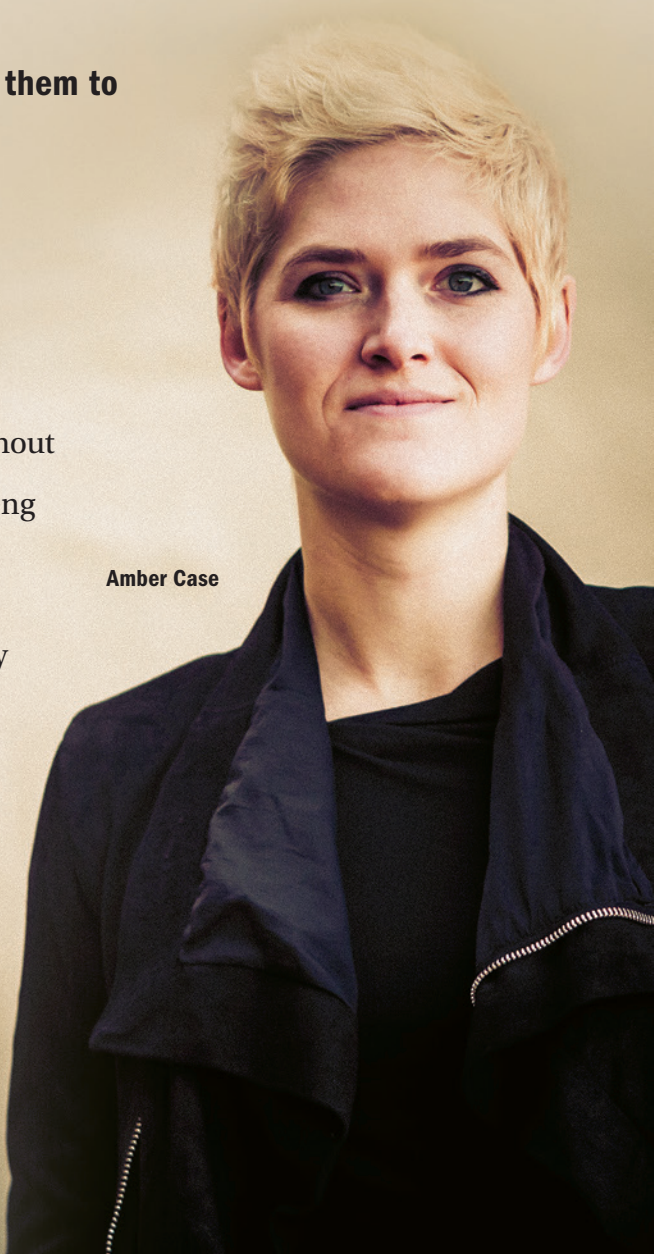
According to Amber Case, in today's world of \_\_\_\_\_, people have two selves. There's the real self, and then there is a second self – the \_\_\_\_\_ self. This is the person that you become when you go online. There are some risks to having a virtual identity. Through your virtual self, you create huge amounts of \_\_\_\_\_ about yourself that anyone can \_\_\_\_\_. Another problem is that you're never really alone. People still \_\_\_\_\_ with your virtual self when you're not there. Even when you're sleeping, your friends are using their smartphones to connect with you on \_\_\_\_\_. This \_\_\_\_\_ online interaction means it's very difficult to disconnect!

5 LEARN NEW WORDS Listen to these words and match them to the definitions. Then listen and repeat. 030 031

extend	interfere	rely on	take over
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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. take control of
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. make something larger
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. feel that you can't be without
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. get in the way of something

Amber Case



6 YOU DECIDE Choose an activity.

- Work independently.** Do you think modern technology has made us better at communicating? Write a paragraph to explain your opinion.
- Work in pairs.** Discuss a piece of technology that has really changed your life. How has it made your life easier?
- Work in groups.** Discuss. How often did you communicate with friends and family online in the last week? Imagine you don't have a mobile phone or a computer. How would you communicate with your friends and family?

SPEAKING STRATEGY 032

Checking for understanding

Responding

Do you mean that cars will drive themselves in the future?

So, you're saying that mobile phones will replace computers?

Do you actually believe that we won't need to write by hand?

That's right. There are already self-driving cars on the road!

Not quite, but we'll be able to do even more on our phones.

That's exactly what I mean. No one will need pencil and paper in the future.

1 Listen. How do the speakers check that they understand each other? Write the phrases you hear. 033

2 Read and complete the dialogue.

Carla: Twenty years from now, I doubt that anyone will have a mobile phone.

Santana: Seriously? Do \_\_\_\_\_ that we won't talk on the phone in the future?

Carla: No, \_\_\_\_\_. I just think that we'll have technology in our brains. So then we won't need to carry anything with us.

Santana: \_\_\_\_\_ that we'll all have tiny machines in our heads?

Carla: \_\_\_\_\_

Santana: No way! I don't agree. I think we'll have more wearable technology.

Carla: Wearable technology? \_\_\_\_\_ mean things like special glasses or watches?

Santana: Yes. That's \_\_\_\_\_. These gadgets are already out there. But in the future, they'll be much cheaper so that anybody can buy them.

Carla: Maybe you're right. And I like that better than the idea of a machine in my head!

3 Work in pairs. Spin the wheel to make a prediction about the topic you land on. Your partner will check for understanding.

People won't drive in the future.

Do you mean that cars won't need drivers?

That's right.



4 Discuss in groups. Why is it important to check that you understand something? What might happen if you get the wrong idea about what someone is saying?

Go to page 157.

**GRAMMAR** 034

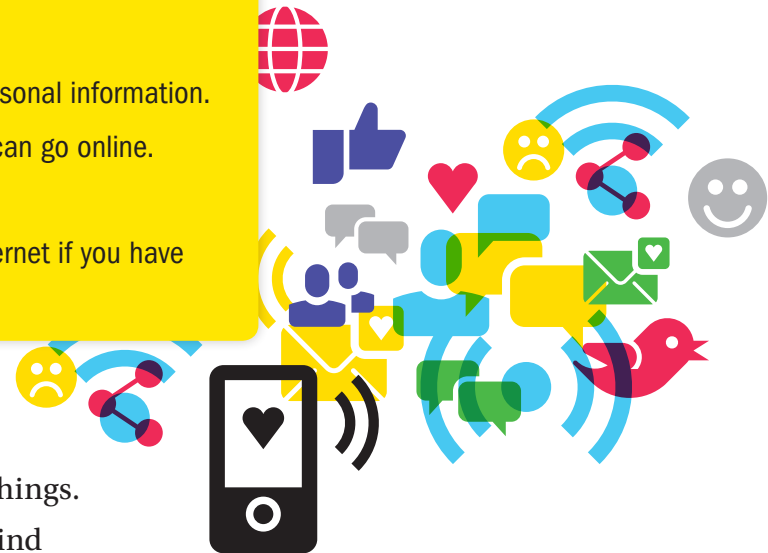
**Modals: Expressing obligation, advice and permission**

You **should** be careful about your safety online. You **shouldn't** give away personal information.

Students **don't have to** ask to use the computer, but they **must** ask if they can go online.

You **have to** protect yourself with a strong username and password.

**Can** anyone use the computer at the library? You **can/may** only use the Internet if you have a library card. Children under 14 **can't/may not** use the Internet at all.



**1 Read.** Circle the correct answer.

The Internet is great, and it gives you the ability to do a lot of things. You *can / should* learn about some really interesting topics and find people who have the same interests as you. But at the same time, you *must / shouldn't* always think about what you say and do online. You *don't have to / should* remember that real people with real feelings are reading your words. You *should / can't* behave the same way online as you behave in real life. Everyone says mean things sometimes, but when you write something online, it will always be there for everyone to see. You *may / have to* say things you don't believe, but you *can / can't* ignore other people's feelings. When you talk to people in real life, they can see your face and your body language. Online, they just read your words, so you *can't / have to* be very careful about the words you choose.

**2 Work in pairs.** Write advice using *can, may, should, must* and *have to*.

1. Someone is mean to you online.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. A stranger sends you a message on social media.

\_\_\_\_\_

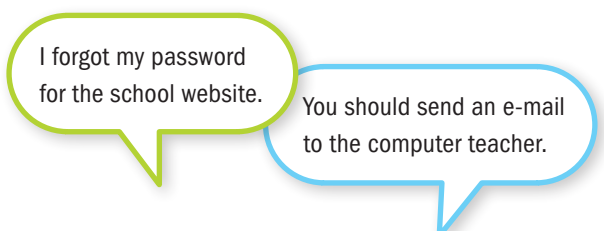
3. You want to start your own blog.

\_\_\_\_\_

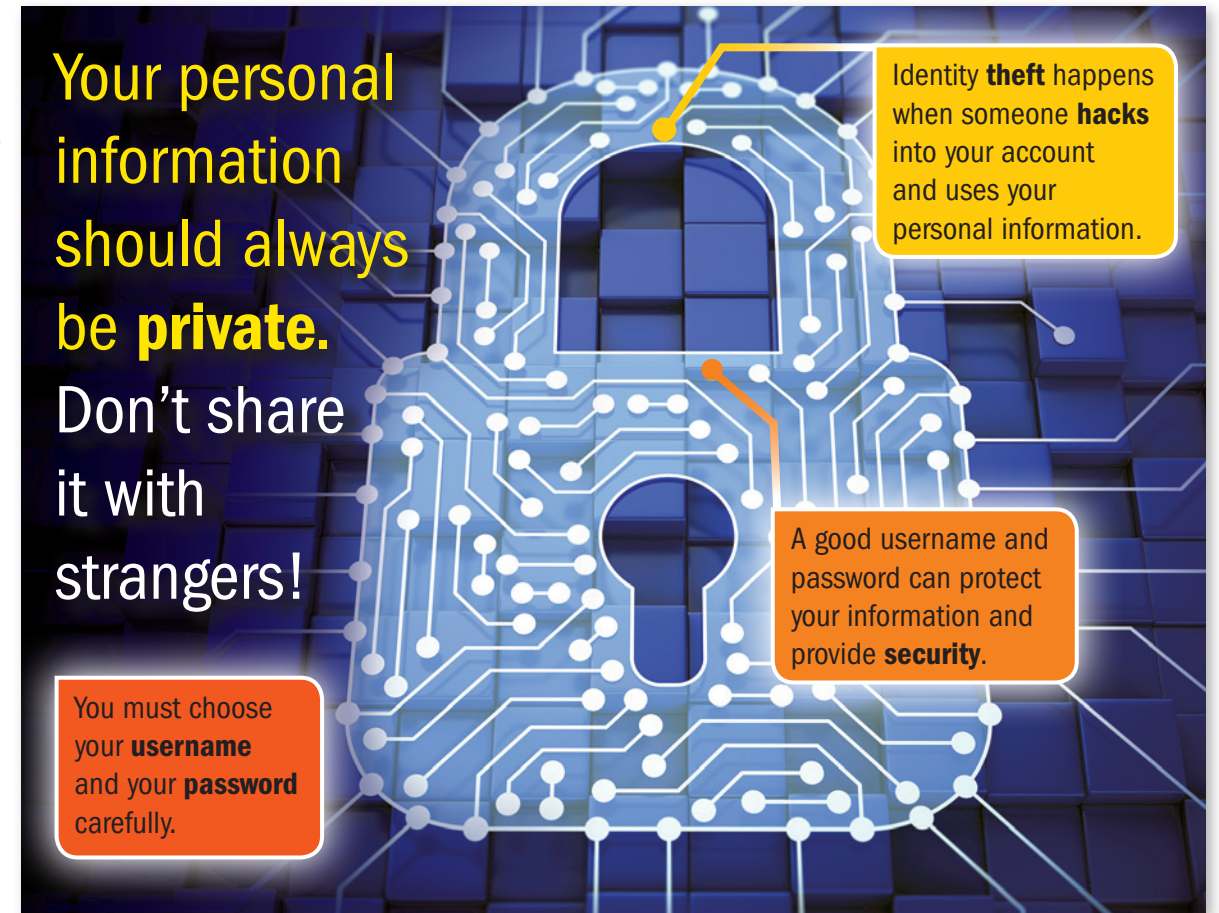
4. Someone uses a photo of you without asking you first.

\_\_\_\_\_

**3 Work in groups.** Take turns discussing problems at school or online. Give advice using *can, may, should, must* or *have to*.



**4 LEARN NEW WORDS** Listen to learn about online safety. Then listen and repeat. 035 036




**5 Work in pairs.** Imagine that you want to start a new social media website. How can you make sure that it's safe? Make a list of five guidelines for users to follow. Use the words in the box, as well as *can, may, should, must* and *have to*.

hack	information	password	private	theft	username
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1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**6 Discuss in groups.** People hack into businesses, banks, government websites and personal e-mail accounts. What information do they want to find? What can they do with this information? What should you do if your own account gets hacked?

**1 BEFORE YOU READ** Discuss in pairs. Based on the title, the photo and the graphics, what do you think the reading is about?

**2 LEARN NEW WORDS** Find these words in the reading. What do you think they mean? Use a thesaurus to find synonyms for each word. Then listen and repeat.  037

demand	edge
focus	interrupt

**3 WHILE YOU READ** Think about your own home and the technology you use there.  038

**4 AFTER YOU READ** Look at the sentences. Tick T for true or F for false.

1. Amber Case invented the idea of calm technology. (T) (F)
2. Calm technology demands our attention at all times. (T) (F)
3. A smoke alarm is an example of calm technology. (T) (F)
4. Cooking your food on the hob is an example of calm technology. (T) (F)
5. Amber believes that houses in the future will use calm technology. (T) (F)

**5 Work in pairs.** List three examples from your life where technology has demanded your attention. Then list three examples of calm technology in your school or home. Share your responses with the class.

Often it seems like technology is everywhere. Computers and smartphones are at the centre of almost everything we do. They're constantly demanding our attention. We text our friends during the day, sleep with our devices by our beds and check our messages as soon as we wake up.

According to Amber Case, in the future, technology will no longer be interrupting us all of the time. Instead, we will use calm technology – a concept first developed by scientist Mark Weiser in the 1970s. In his vision, calm technology works quietly but constantly, at the edge of our attention. We know it is there, but we don't focus on it. According to Mark, the best technology should be invisible and let you live your life.

We already use many different types of calm technology in our everyday lives. Do you have a smoke alarm in your house? That smoke alarm is always there, checking the air for smoke

and quietly keeping you safe. It only reminds you it's there when you've burnt your toast! Or there may be lights in your home or school that are sensitive to movement. When somebody passes in front of their sensor, the lights turn on. You don't think about this type of technology until you see the light go on. Even a microwave oven is an example of calm technology. You're not standing at the hob heating your food: the microwave is doing it for you. You don't think about its work until you hear the beeping noise signalling that your food is ready.

In the future, Amber imagines that our houses will use calm technology to open the curtains for us in the morning, to turn down the heat when we leave, or even to choose the best music for our mood. The minute we walk through the door, our house will respond by turning on the lights and music, setting the radiators to a comfortable temperature and perhaps even starting to prepare our dinner!

# Calm Down

Should we be excited about calm technology?

**6 Discuss in groups.**

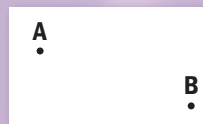
1. Amber believes that eventually, with calm technology, electronic devices will do all the boring, repetitive tasks in our lives. How will this benefit us? What negative impact might this have on us?
2. Calm technology will allow different machines in our lives to share information about us, our routines and our personal habits. Do you think that sharing this information is a security risk? Why or why not?
3. Design a house that uses calm technology. Think of all the ways it can use calm technology to make our lives easier without demanding our attention.

**1 BEFORE YOU WATCH** Discuss in pairs.

1. When you're communicating with your friends, does speed matter? Do you expect your friends to respond instantly? Why or why not?
2. When might you want to slow communication down? Why?

**2 Work in pairs.** You are going to watch a video called *The Distance Between Two Points*. Before you watch, do the following:

1. Draw two points on a sheet of paper. Label them *A* and *B*.
2. Now draw the shortest route from point *A* to point *B*.
3. How could you make this route even shorter?



**3 WHILE YOU WATCH** Check your responses  
How does Amber say the distance between two points is made shorter? Does your response from Activity 2 match what she says? **Watch scene 3.1.**

**4 AFTER YOU WATCH** Read the sentences. Circle the correct answer.

1. Amber's dad said that a straight line *was / wasn't* always the shortest distance between two points.
2. Amber thinks technology *reduces / creates* the distance between two people.
3. Amber studies how technology *affects culture / must be used all the time*.
4. With *calm technology / social media*, others can interact with our virtual selves when we're not there.
5. Amber created an interface that tells her phone when *she's at home / her family members are online*.
6. Amber believes that people *sometimes need distance from / need constant access to* one another.

**5 Work in pairs.** What technology might you use in each of the places below? When might it be a problem to use technology at each place?

gym	home	library
museum	school	



Singers joining in a virtual choir

**6 YOU DECIDE** Choose an activity.

1. **Work independently.** Imagine you can send a letter back in time to your great-great grandparents. Write a description of a smartphone.
2. **Work in pairs.** Amber's phone has an invisible interface so that it knows when she's at home. How could your phone help you based on your location? What kinds of things could it do? Give at least three ideas.
3. **Work in groups.** Think about how communication has changed over the past 100 years. Create a timeline showing at least five ways that communication has changed. Then add two or three predictions for how communication will change in the future.

## GRAMMAR 039

### Must, might and can't: Expressing certainty

I checked these facts on three different websites, so they **must** be true.

This website **must** mention security somewhere.

This **might** be her social media page. I'm not sure.

He **can't** be the author of this article: he doesn't know anything about the topic!

**1 Read.** The information below came from the Internet. Some sentences are true and some are false. Use *must*, *might* and *can't* to write what you believe.

1. Giant tortoises can live for one year without food or water. That must be true! My own pet turtle can live without food for a while. / That can't be true! All animals need to eat and drink.

2. There were computers during World War II. \_\_\_\_\_

3. You only use ten per cent of your brain. \_\_\_\_\_

4. On average, youngsters spend over 150 hours a week using technology. \_\_\_\_\_

5. There are robots that can play football. \_\_\_\_\_

6. More people die every year from vending machine accidents than from shark attacks. \_\_\_\_\_



**2 Work in groups.** Write two true sentences and one false sentence on a piece of paper. Read your sentences to the group. Can they guess the false sentence?

Number 2 must be false. Your house can't be 100 years old - it's too modern!

1. My mum knows how to fly a helicopter.
2. My house is 100 years old.
3. I have 15 cousins.

Answers to Activity 1: 1. true; 2. true; 3. true; 4. false (100%); 5. false (53 hours); 6. true

## WRITING

In an opinion essay, we want to tell others what we believe about a topic. We use facts to support our argument. We must make it clear when we're stating a fact and when we're expressing an opinion.

### Facts include:

- a date or time of an event
- a statistic
- a description of an event

### Opinions include what the author:

- believes is possible
- thinks about something
- says is good, bad, important, etc.

**1 Read the model.** Work in pairs. Circle the sentences stating facts. Underline the sentences expressing opinions.

### Can we live without computers?

For most people my age, it's hard to imagine life without a computer. It seems like almost everybody has got one! In fact, there are 640 million personal computers in households around the world. Most people use them every day for work and play. Actually, the first personal computer was invented in 1975. Before then, people survived without computers and the Internet, so it must be possible!

I believe that there would be some advantages to life without a computer. We would probably do more exercise because we wouldn't be sitting in front of our screens all day. Maybe we would get better at remembering things because we couldn't always check facts online. I think we would also interact more with each other because computers wouldn't demand so much of our attention.

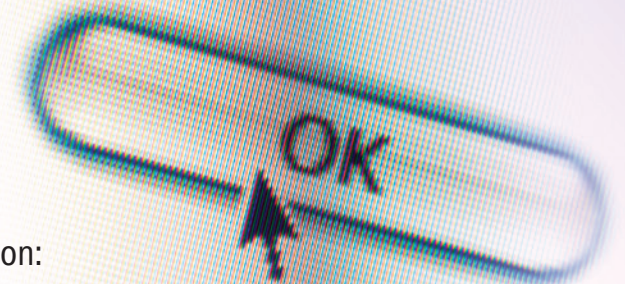
However, I think that it would also be very difficult for young people today to live without computers. We use them to communicate with our friends and family all around the world. We also use computers to research information about many different subjects. Computer technology has helped improve our lives in many different areas. For example, mechanics use computers to check our cars, doctors use computers to analyse health tests, and architects use computers to design modern, safe buildings.

In conclusion, although I think that we may have had healthier lifestyles in our computer-free past, I believe that, in today's society, we can't live without computers.



**2 Work in pairs.** Do you agree with the writer's opinion? Think of one more argument against and one more argument in favour of life without computers. Use facts to support your arguments.

**3 Write.** Write an opinion essay to answer the question: Can we live without smartphones?





# Connect with People

**'Today's technology extends our mental self.  
It's changing the way we experience the world.'**

**Amber Case**

National Geographic Explorer, Cyborg Anthropologist

1. **Watch scene 3.2.**
2. What are your favourite ways to connect with people now? Is it the same for everybody in your life? Explain.
3. How will technology change our communication in the future? Will it help or harm communication? Explain.

# Make an Impact

**YOU DECIDE** Choose a project.

- 1 **Plan and conduct a survey.**
  - Write questions to find out about your classmates' online activity.
  - Conduct the survey and summarise the results.
  - Present the results and make recommendations.
- 2 **Advertise an app or website.**
  - Choose an app or a website that you use regularly.
  - Write a list of its best and worst features.
  - Create an advert for the app or website. Present it to the class.
- 3 **Plan and hold a technology fair.**
  - In a group, bring in five or six different technological gadgets.
  - Write a short description of each piece. Display your descriptions with the gadgets.
  - Hold a technology fair. Discuss how each item is used with your classmates.

