

Describing Technology with the Passive Voice

Choose one of the technologies below but don't tell your partner which one. Read out the hints there one by one until your partner guesses what you are talking about, starting with the most difficult hint first. Your partner can only guess once per hint (one hint one guess, one hint one guess, so not shouting out lots of different answers). If you finish all the hints below before your partner guesses correctly, make up more hints (with passive voice if possible). If they know what you are talking about but can't think of the name in English, they can just point at that thing in the classroom, ask the teacher for the word, use a dictionary, draw the object, etc. When they guess correctly, change roles and do the same thing. Continue until your teacher stops the game.

Useful language for playing the game

"I'm not sure/ I have no idea. Can you give me another hint?"

"That could also be right, but that isn't the object that it is written here. I'll give you another hint. The next hint is..."

"That's right. Now it's your turn."

Passive voice grammar presentation

After playing the game, put one word into each gap below, without looking at the previous worksheets.

Humidifier

Your skin _____ kept healthy by this.

Many _____ sold in Japan.

Lift/ Elevator

It _____ invented a long time ago.

Some are made _____ Toshiba.

Light bulb

The traditional one has _____ replaced by LED ones.

Clamshell mobile phone/ Clamshell cellphone

In most countries it _____ been replaced by smartphones.

It can _____ used by old people and children (because it is so simple).

Check your answers above.

Put the verbs into the correct form

Light bulb

It is _____ (make) of glass.

It is _____ (power) by electricity.

It is _____ (use) at night.

It _____ (be) replaced when it isn't working.

It _____ (be) invented by Thomas Edison.

The traditional one _____ (be) replaced by LED ones.

Check your answers with the other worksheets.

Descriptions of technology with passive voice

Humidifier

Your skin is kept healthy by this.

Steam is released by this.

It isn't sold in the UK.

Many are sold in Japan.

It is most often used when the weather is cold and dry.

Lift/ Elevator

People are carried in it.

It was invented a long time ago.

It is powered by electricity.

Some are made by Toshiba.

It is controlled by buttons on the wall.

Things are transported up and down in it.

HDTV

Bluray videos are best watched on this.

It is made from very many LEDs.

It is sold in electronics shops.

It was launched quite a long time ago but hasn't become so popular.

A lot of space is needed to have it in your house.

Light bulb

It is made of glass.

It is powered by electricity.

It is replaced when it breaks.

It is sold in supermarkets.

It is mostly used at night.

It was invented by Thomas Edison.

The traditional one has been replaced by LED ones.

Vending machine

Money is put into it.

It is sometimes robbed or stolen.

It is placed outside shops and homes, in offices, in hospitals, etc.

It is brought and taken away by lorries (= trucks).

The products inside are cooled or heated.

It is refilled at least once a week.

Contactless payment cards are sometimes accepted by these.

Strange products like canned bread, plastic models and pants are sometimes sold from these.

Air conditioner

It is put on the wall.
It is powered by electricity.
It is used a lot in the summer.
It is used to make the room hotter or colder.
The outside is made of plastic.
It is cleaned three or four times a year.
It is connected to outside the house.
It is bought in an electrical shop.
It is fixed by a technician.
It is replaced once every ten or twenty years.

(Travel) alarm clock

It can be usually be folded.
It can be carried in your suitcase.
It is powered by a battery.
People are woken up by it.
It is used to tell the time.
It is made from glass, plastic and metal.

Video game/ Computer game

Lots of time is wasted doing this.
It is sold for more than a DVD or CD.
More money is made from these than from movies.
It is mainly played by teenage boys.
It is criticised by teachers and parents.
It was made popular by Sega.
Movies are sometimes based on these.

Clamshell mobile phone/ Clamshell cellphone

In most countries it has been replaced by smartphones.
It is opened and closed each time that you use it.
It can be used for a few days without charging it.
It can be used by old people and children (because it is so simple).

Fax (machine)

Paper is put into it.
Documents were often sent this way at the end of the 20th century.
It has mostly been replaced by email.
Its documents are sent through telephone lines.

Ask about anything above which you couldn't understand, then do the grammar presentation on the first page.

Play the same game with your own ideas, for example the kinds of technology on the next page.

Technology to Describe using the Passive Voice

- Answerphone/ Answer machine/ Voice mail
- Anti-virus software
- App/ Application
- Bedside lamp
- Cable television/ Satellite TV
- Calculator
- Cloud computing
- Combined toilet and bidet
- Computer translation/ Machine translation
- Contactless payment card (e.g. Oyster Card)
- Debit card
- Desktop computer/ PC
- Dictaphone/ (Digital) voice recorder
- Digital camera
- Drinks machine
- Electric kettle
- Erasable pen
- Flashlight/ Torch
- Fluorescent light/ Fluorescent strip
- Fridge/ Freezer
- Hair clippers
- Hair dryer
- Hands-free phone/ Conference call function
- Intercom
- Iron
- Laptop
- Microwave (oven)
- Online chat
- Pager/ Beeper
- Photocopier/ Copy machine
- Radio cassette player
- Remote control
- Sewing machine
- SIM card
- Smartwatch
- Smoke detector
- Social media
- Socket/ Electrical outlet
- Spam filter
- Tablet (computer)
- USB (stick)/ USB thumb drive
- Vacuum cleaner/ Hoover

- Video conferencing
- Wi-fi
- Word processor

Ask about anything above you don't understand. Make passive sentences about each one.

Technology vocabulary collocations

Without looking above for now, brainstorm at least one collocation for each of the words below words (= words that go together with those words)

+ bulb
+ camera
+ clippers
+ conferencing
+ copier
+ dryer
+ game
+ kettle
+ lamp
+ machine
+ outlet
+ scales
air +
contactless payment +
desk +
flash +
fluorescent +
HD +
inter +
lap +
microwave +
radio cassette +
remote +
social +
travel alarm +
vacuum +
vending +
word +

If you need to or your teacher says you should, look below the fold for words that could collocate with the words above. Note that many other answers are possible.

fold-----

Use the expressions below to help with the collocations activity above:

bathroom
control

bedside
digital

clock
electrical

computer/ video
hair

hair	TV	light	media	
player	processor	sewing	top	oven
card	cleaner	com	electric	
light	photo	top computer	video	
light	machine	conditioner		

Technology synonyms

Without looking above for now, try to think of other expressions which mean the same as:

application
clamshell cellphone
conference call function
fluorescent strip
lift
PC
photocopier
refrigerator
socket
torch
vacuum cleaner

Differences between similar technology words

What are the differences between these things?

clock/ watch
laptop (computer)/ desktop computer
socket/ plug
clamshell mobile phone/ smartphone
smartphone/ tablet
debit card/ credit card
drinks machine/ vending machine
fluorescent light/ light bulb
fridge/ freezer
microwave oven/ oven
teleconference/ video conference