Advantages and Disadvantages of Future Technologies

Choose one of the inventions below and take opposite sides about whether it would be a good or bad thing for life/ society, taking turns to speak until someone can't think of any new points. The last person to speak wins.

OR

Choose one of the inventions below that you think has only advantages or only disadvantages. Your partner gets one point for each thing that you will accept is actually an opposing point, e.g. each thing that is actually an advantage if you thought there were only disadvantages. If they can't think of anything at all, you get three points.

OR

Work together to brainstorm as many advantages and disadvantages as you can for one thing, then come to a conclusion.

Inventions to speak about

- 100% effective missile defence shields
- 100% effective toothpaste/ Fully plaque-resistant artificial teeth
- 99% of personal data in the cloud
- A beam which can immobilise people and objects
- A cure for the common cold
- A technological fix for the hole in the ozone layer
- All devices linked to the internet
- All telephone and video communication via the internet
- Androids which look exactly like people
- Being able to freeze your body and defrost when a cure for your disease is invented
- Being able to program your dreams
- Being able to read minds
- Bionic eyes with a zoom function and ability to record what you see
- Breeding of extinct animals, including pre-historic ones such as mammoths and dino-saurs
- Bridges or tunnels between all continents and between continents and all islands
- Bullet-proof clothes
- Car-free cities or countries
- CGI character indistinguishable from real actors
- CGI-generated dead actors and famous people appearing in completely life-like films
- Colonisation of other planets
- Communication with life on other planets
- Complete genetic manipulation of foods
- Computer chips in your brain
- Computer-generated music top of the charts
- Deafness fully curable
- Driverless cars
- Drugs which cure most criminals of their desire to commit crimes
- Electricity generation from normal human motion, e.g. from your watch to your smart-phone or from the pavement to the street lights
- Enhanced hearing
- Enhanced intelligence
- Eradication of mosquitoes from entire cities
- Eternal life

- Floating cities
- Flying cars/ Cheap helicopters
- Free manipulation of your future baby's DNA
- Fully insect-resistant crops
- GPS tracking of all people by governments
- Growing of human organs
- Human cloning
- ID implanted in your skin
- Individually targeted television commercials
- Indoor farming, e.g. in high-rise farm buildings in cities, becomes ubiquitous
- Invisibility/ A personal cloaking device
- Laser guns with the possibility of stun settings
- Limitless cheap electrical energy, e.g. from fusion reactors
- Lunar and interplanetary tourism
- Male birth control pills
- Memory sticks in your body
- Mind-operated electronics
- One world currency
- Pacemakers inserted in all middle aged people
- Perfect computer-based matching with compatible marriage partners
- Perfect virtual reality
- Personal DNA sequencing for $100
- Personal force field shields
- Recording dreams
- Robot shop assistants
- Satellite hotel
- Satellite launches for $1000
- Shopping only online
- Space exploration which is affordable for all countries
- Teleportation
- The ability to dig down to the earth's core
- The ability to drain and then refill huge areas of the sea
- The ability to freeze time
- The complete automation of all work
- The elimination of absolute poverty
- The end of cash
- The first computer generated film stars/ television personalities
- The internet completely replaces television
- Time travel
- Two hour flights to the other side of the world
- Underwater cities
- Underwater cruises
- Underwater hotels
- Vegetarian substitutes that taste exactly the same as meat
- Vertical cities in 3000 metre high skyscrapers
- Very cheap and safe cosmetic surgery
- Wars without humans on the battlefield

The future of technology discussion questions

- Are you generally optimistic or pessimistic about how technology will affect our working lives and leisure in the future? What might the positive and negative changes be?
- What are the present trends in technology and its use? Which might continue, and which might change?
- What recent invention or piece of technology will have the most impact on our lives, do you think?
- How do you picture daily life in 2050 (work and leisure)?
- Describe a vision of the future and your partner will say when they think that might come true. Do you agree on the date?