Chapter 1

Communication and media

In the four units of this chapter you will:
- explore texts about the Internet
- learn more about the effects of video games
- come to understand the conventions of blogging
- become familiar with the requirements for the written assignment at standard level (SL).

This is the first of three chapters that cover the ‘core’ of your course, which is required for all Language B students. The three topics of the core are:

1. Communication and media (Chapter 1)
2. Global issues (Chapter 2)
3. Social relationships (Chapter 3).

The words ‘communication’ and ‘media’ both describe very large areas of study. Advertising, marketing, public relations and even law are just a few fields that require effective communications. Imagine all the forms of communication that you experience in an average day – watching TV, listening to a friend’s story or studying at school. Everyone seems to have a message to tell, whether it is to persuade, inform or entertain. People have a need to communicate.

As we discuss these various forms of communication, it is clear that every message is delivered through a medium (plural ‘media’). You may listen to the news on the car radio, watch football on TV and study from a textbook. There is a relationship between content (news, football and school work) and form (radio, TV and textbook). No-one understands this better than broadcasters, publishers and record companies. These bearers of information and entertainment are often referred to as the media.

We live in a world that is changing quickly, thanks to developments in technology. Both ‘media’ and ‘the media’ are developing rapidly. A telephone does more than make phone calls, and a telephone provider offers more than calls on a landline. Music videos can be viewed on multiple devices on demand, not just on a TV monitor, according to the programming of a music network.

As we study recent developments in media and communication, we cannot ignore the role that the Internet has played in these changes. Now that so many people are connected to the Web, it has become easier to find information, publish our thoughts or purchase something, all very quickly. In Unit 1.1, you will explore how the Internet has changed our lives and discuss related topics such as security, censorship and the quality of information.

In Unit 1.2, you will examine several texts about video games and their effects on users. Video games have also changed: violence has become more pervasive, markets have sprung up both on and off line, and educators have discovered their value. In brief, gaming is a serious study.

In Unit 1.3, you will explore the structural conventions of blogs. Although this type of text is difficult to define, it is possible to see certain trends among bloggers. Learning more about blogs will help you in your exams, as you may be asked to write a blog entry for your written task or on Paper 2. Learning how to blog may be a skill which you can benefit from beyond the realms of school or college.
In the final unit of this chapter, you will be introduced to the written assignment. Standard level students must write a written assignment about a topic from the core. Two samples of written assignments are provided, based on the texts from this chapter. These samples should give you a sense of what examiners expect. Finally, you should come away with an understanding of the path that leads to the assessment and feel more confident about these core topics from the Language B syllabus.

See Chapters 9 and 10 for higher level written assignments.

Unit 1.1 The Internet

The Internet has changed the way we live, do business and learn. While it has become more difficult for politicians to keep secrets, it has also become easier for a friend to share an embarrassing picture of you with the rest of the world! The first text in this unit invites you to think about what life would be like without a connection to the World Wide Web. In fact, there are many questions to ask when considering the importance of the Internet, such as the security of personal data (Text 1.2), online censorship (Text 1.3) and the quality of research (Text 1.4). These texts and activities are starting points for discussion, which you can then develop further by asking more questions and exploring other texts. Perhaps unexpectedly, through your studies of the Internet, you will find yourself studying the wider issues of humanity.

Getting started

1.1 Imagine you had to live for one week without the Internet. How would your life be different? You may want to use words and phrases from the following table to respond to this question.

| If I could not access the Internet | I would not be able to chat with my friends. |
| If I couldn’t check my email | it would be impossible to check my homework. |
| During a week without the Internet | to see what’s going on in the news. |
| If I were not allowed to go online | |
| If the Internet had been disconnected for a week | |

1.2 At the top of the next page is a list of companies in the information technology (IT) business. For each company or ‘brand’, say which word comes to your mind first. Do not give yourself too much time to think about your word association before moving on to the next one. When you have finished this activity, compare your list of words with those of a classmate. Why do you think you have made those associations with these companies? Discuss what each company and its products mean to you.

Word bank

- World Wide Web
- database
- device
- connectivity
- Ethernet
- cache
- gadget
- social networking
- netizen
- security
- malware
- phishing
- privacy
- Internet Protocol (IP) address
- surfing
Unit 1.1 The Internet

1.3 The Internet has changed the way we learn, do business and plan our lives. With the arrival of this technology come several basic questions about how societies are organised. Below are three Internet-related questions that you can discuss with classmates, friends or family. There are no wrong or right answers to these questions: only informed answers that you should support with examples from your own life or with reference to other sources. You can use vocabulary from the word bank in your discussions.

a Will the rise of the Internet mean the death of traditional businesses and media, such as bookstores, cinemas, theatres and publishing houses? Predict what you think will be ‘alive’ and what will be ‘extinct’ in 20 years’ time, by copying and completing the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Still alive in 20 years</th>
<th>Extinct in 20 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LPs (long play records)</td>
<td>cassette tapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDFs (Portable Document Format)</td>
<td>phone books</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b Is the Internet making us smarter or more lazy-minded? Do we benefit by having access to more knowledge, or are we becoming lazier and less critical of what we read? (In the higher level extension we will return to this question.)

c Are we using the Internet, or is the Internet using us? In other words, are we actively using the Internet to socialise and spread ideas, or are we becoming numbers in a greater database that advertisers and governments can use?

Exploring texts

1.4 Before you read Text 1.1, look at the list of words below. Group them into categories and label these categories with notes on what they have in common. You may want to work with a classmate and you may have to look up the meaning of some of these words.

- technology
- device
- distraction
- rendezvous
- cab
- phone
- friend
- interruption
- connectivity
- school
- social engagement
- temptation
- prison
- producer
- office
- driver
- PC
- information
- conversation
- gadget

1.5 Use the words from Activity 1.4 to predict what you think Text 1.1 will be about. After reading the article, come back to these predictions. Were you right or wrong in your predictions?
Predicting the content of a text is a good way to engage with it. Activity 1.4 gives you some words to help you make a prediction. The title of Text 1.1, Offline: day one of life without Internet, is another good indication of what the text will be about. Based on the title, predict what you think the main ideas of this text will be. After reading the text, go back and check to see if your prediction was correct.

Offline: day one of life without Internet

Dear Diary,

I just spent 24 hours entirely without the Internet for the first time I can remember in my adult life.

[1] I think there are two kinds of people who live with technology constantly in their face: people who freak out when they’re forcefully separated from their devices or connectivity, as if their arm has been cut off, and people who feel really chill when they’re forcefully separated from their devices or connectivity, as if they’ve been let out of prison. I’ve spoken to many of both kinds as I’ve prepared for leaving the Internet, and thankfully I fall in the latter camp.

[2] I’ve lost my phone for weeks at a time before (in my pre-iPhone days), and let my current dumbphone run out of charge numerous times, and I always feel at peace knowing nobody can call me and demand anything of me. I know it’s really frustrating for people who do want to reach me, and I’m always in danger of missing out on a party or failing to make a rendezvous, but overall I feel like it’s a positive.

[3] The moment I reached down and unplugged the Ethernet cable from my computer, I felt like school was out for the summer, and the simultaneous relief and boredom that last bell brings. I stood up, and I realized that I’d been anticipating this moment for ages, but for some reason I hadn’t made any plans. It was a stark contrast to the hectic day I’d just experienced, which had culminated in a 3-hour, ultra-insane livestream of myself playing StarCraft and Minecraft simultaneously while Skyping with friends and playing jams in Turntable.fm.

[4] I stood up, stretched, and then played local-multiplayer video games in the office for a couple hours, naturally. All that was missing was a beanbag and string cheese and I would’ve been 12 again.
To get my PC rig home I took a cab. Since Jordan, one of our video producers, was following me with a camera, recording this momentous evening, my cab driver asked me what we were shooting.

“Oh, I’m leaving the Internet for a year,” I said.

“Why?” he asked.

It was a good question, and he didn’t seem to find my answer very interesting. Our conversation ended there.

At home I listened to records with my roommate and the peaceful boredom continued. I found myself really engaging in the moment, asking questions and listening closely, even more than if I’d just closed my computer or locked my phone, because I knew neither of those things could demand anything of me. Not tonight, and not for another 364 nights.

My first major temptation came the next morning, when I pulled out my iPad. I had forgotten to turn my iPad’s Wi-Fi off for about five minutes after midnight, so I knew there were post-disconnect tweets cached on there. They’d be about me. They would stoke my ego, or maybe deflate it. I was very curious.

I deleted the app, tweets unseen. In fact, I’ve been keeping my internet-reliant apps in a folder on my iPad, so I deleted all of those. Twitch.tv: I’ll miss you most of all.

I went into the office a couple times for various errands, and heard snippets of news, but didn’t stay long. I’ll let the second-hand information stream start some other day. I heard something about a “BlackBerry 10” and something about Diet Coke that I plan on searching for in the next issue of my daily paper. More interesting to me was hearing Joshua Kopstein talk about some of his first-hand experiences that day with the Occupy Wall Street crowd. I guess I’m a bit of a first-hand fanboy right now.

I spent much of the day catching up with a friend from out of town. He’s actually a major authority on limiting phone-based distraction. He doesn’t text, and his phone is often off. While I had to field a bunch of calls the whole time we were hanging out, he wasn’t interrupted a single time by any of his gadgets. It’s almost intimidating to have someone be that attentive to you.

The whole day was really refreshing. All my internet-based social engagement the day before had been about how what I was doing was “brave” or “insane” or “inspirational” or a “publicity stunt” or “stupid” or “a waste of everyone’s time,” as if I was planning on going on a hunger strike or basejumping off the Empire State Building. But while hanging out with a fellow Luddite, it felt like my undertaking is the perfectly natural thing.

I haven’t settled into a rhythm yet. In fact, I haven’t even made a new schedule for myself. I’ve done a little writing, a little reading, and a lot of chilling. I don’t really know what the next days and weeks are going to look like. All I know is that so far I’m loving it.

Paul Miller will regularly be posting dispatches from the disconnected world on The Verge during his year away from the Internet. He won’t be reading your comments, but he’ll be here in spirit.
Words a–m listed below are taken from Text 1.1. Match these words with a synonym from the box. The words in the list appear in the same order as in Text 1.1.

attraction, expect, film, frighten, chore, small bit, busy, answer, at the same time, liberation, end, important, reduce

1.7 Fill the gaps in the sentences below using words from expressions found in Text 1.1. The sentences are based on the expressions as they appear in the text.

a I’m annoyed by loud advertisements that are constantly in your _____.

b There are two kinds of people: optimists and pessimists. Fortunately I _____ into the first camp.

c I have been looking forward to this big moment for _____.

d Our weekend in the country was in ________ contrast to our busy city lives.

e Please don’t give me too many compliments. You’re _______ my ego.

f I discovered this to be true through _______________ experience.

g We hadn’t talked in such a long time. It was nice to _____ up.

1.8 Answer the following comprehension questions with reference to Text 1.1.

a What did Paul Miller do after he unplugged the Ethernet on his computer?

b What did the cab driver think of his plan to live without Internet?

c How was the author’s evening at home with his roommate different from his usual evenings at home?

d Where does Paul Miller work? What kind of work does he do?

e What did Paul Miller do while hanging out with his friend from out of town?

f In the days leading up to Paul Miller’s experiment, what kind of responses did he receive from people about his choice to live without the Internet?

g How does Paul Miller plan to live without the Internet?
1.9 Return to Activity 1.1 which asked you how you would live for a week without Internet access. After reading Text 1.1, do you think you would change your answer to that question?

1.10 Text 1.2 is an article about the Internet and the security of personal information in India. Scan the article quickly to find answers to the following questions. Your answers can be very short. You could even turn the activity into a class competition!

- Of those interviewed, how many said they could not go for a day without the Internet?
- Who conducted the survey?
- On average, how many Internet-connected devices do Indians own?
- Of those interviewed, how many were happy with basic security of information on their devices?
- What can users of mobile devices do to protect their data?

**Reading strategy**
You may be surprised to see that Activity 1.10 asks you not to read Text 1.2 carefully. Instead, you are asked to read the article quickly to pick out a few key facts or statements. This kind of activity, known as ‘scanning’, is something we do regularly when looking for information. When reading on the Internet, scanning is common practice.

**Tip**
During the Paper 1 exam, you may be asked to scan texts for short answers to questions. Before you scan the text, underline the key words in the question. For example, if the question asks, ‘On average, how many Internet-connected devices do Indians own?’ you should underline ‘devices’. This will help you focus on finding the relevant answer.
CHAPTER 1

Text and context

- Norton (paragraph 2) is an antivirus software company.
- ‘Netizen’ (paragraph 4) is a combination of two words: ‘Internet’ and ‘citizen’.
- Malware (paragraph 5) is short for ‘malicious software’, a kind of virus that gathers sensitive information on a personal computer and sends it to a third party.
- Phishing (paragraph 5) is a way of getting information, such as usernames, passwords or credit card details, from users by pretending to be a trustworthy website.

Text 1.2

Indians value personal information most

[1] MUMBAI: A survey of Indian net-users has thrown up several interesting trends. Of all activities, the respondents said they would miss doing work-related tasks the most if left without an Internet connection. Social networking was the second most important task, while “convenience of life” activities like paying bills and shopping online came third. In fact, 83% of users said they couldn’t live without the Internet for more than 24 hours.

[2] According to Norton, which conducted the survey, the need to stay constantly connected is a new trend among Indian net surfers.

[3] In an almost fantastic finding, three out of four respondents to the survey said they would rather give up $1 million than grant [5] a stranger full access to their computers.

[4] “Indian netizens clearly place a high value on their personal information,” said David Hall, Norton’s senior product manager, Asia Pacific. He pointed out that 40% of India’s online community had declared that they value their financial information the most, followed by 35% who place a premium on their online accounts, including email and social networks. The survey – conducted using a sample size of 500 respondents between the ages of 18 to 64 years – also concluded that Indian users own an average of 2.8 devices that are connected to the Internet. “While the people interviewed used multiple devices to be online, half of them had little or no understanding of online security solutions that are available to them,” Hall said.

And while 60% of users are content with basic security, the antivirus expert said it wasn’t enough to protect them from the advanced malware and phishing attacks that their devices are exposed to on a daily basis.

“We advise people to change their passwords regularly. That’s the least they can do to make sure their information is safe,” he adds. “As far as mobile devices are concerned, setting up password protection and software that can help you remotely lock your phone are two ways you can keep your private data protected.”

Mahafreed Irani, Times of India, 29th March 2012

1.11 On the next page are five groups of four words. The words taken from Text 1.2 have been underlined. From each set of four words, select the ‘odd one out’ – the word that does not belong. This word may or may not be the underlined word from the text.
1.12 Much of the information in Text 1.2 is based on a survey that was taken among 500 people in India. What kinds of question do you think were included in this survey? Based on the evidence given in this article, write at least five questions that were asked of the 500 respondents.

Form and meaning

In Activity 1.1 of this unit, you were asked how your life would be different if you did not have access to the Internet. Internet users in India were asked a similar question, as you read in Text 1.2. The respondents said they would miss doing work-related tasks the most if left without an Internet connection.

This kind of sentence is called a ‘conditional’. While there are several kinds of conditional, we will focus on the ‘future unreal conditional’, where we describe an unreal event (such as cutting off the Internet connection) in the future. This consists of two parts (or clauses): an ‘if’ clause and a ‘would’ clause. Notice that the ‘if’ clause takes the past simple verb, such as ‘left’. The ‘would’ clause can also use ‘could’ (from ‘can’) or ‘might’ (from ‘may’). Here are a few examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘If’ clause</th>
<th>‘Would’ clause (or ‘could’ or ‘might’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If left without an Internet connection,</td>
<td>businesses could compete more effectively in global markets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If Eastern Africa had better Internet access,</td>
<td>they would miss doing work-related tasks the most.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If only I had a faster connection,</td>
<td>I might be able to watch streaming video.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.13 The following sentences are missing a clause. Make up your own clause to complete the following sentences, using the future unreal conditional.

a If we still had dial-up, …

b If there were no censorship of the Internet, …

c … then I might be able to work from home.

d … then citizens would be more informed voters.

e If our city introduced free wireless, …

f … students might not listen to their teachers anymore.

g If the public library ceased to exist, …
Discussion

1.14 What kinds of measures do you take to ensure that the information on your computer is safe? How important is privacy to you? Here is a survey that you can take together with your friends and classmates. Compare your answers with those of others and see how much your security matters to you. Discuss with classmates the importance of each question, and your final score.

How applicable are the following statements to you? (5 is ‘very applicable’ and 1 is ‘not applicable’.) Add up your score to see how safe you are, using the key below.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>It is easy to find me online with a quick search.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>I download applications and files from file-sharing sites.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Anyone can see my profile on social networking sites.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>People can ‘tag’ me in pictures on social networking sites.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>I use the same password for everything.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>I never bother with spam filters.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Firewall? What's that?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>I make use of the Internet a lot in my everyday life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>All my files are on a memory stick that I carry with me everywhere I go.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>I can’t be bothered to back up my files.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>I use wireless hotspots.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>I rarely update software.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your results

Knowledgeable

Part of being an IB learner is being knowledgeable. If you are spending a significant amount of time online, it helps to be knowledgeable about both the risks and the opportunities involved. For example, social networking can help you connect to friends, but you are also giving advertisers information about yourself, which may or may not bother you. How knowledgeable are you about the risks and benefits of living your life online?

Learner profile

12–20 You are safe from hackers, spyware and other risks. Your files are protected, your profile is unknown and privacy is important to you.

21–30 You know how to protect your identity and files, but you can’t always be bothered to do so. You value security and often take measures to keep your computer somewhat clean.

31–40 You may be at risk of losing personal data, even though you are aware of the measures that you can take to protect yourself.

41–50 You don’t mind living on the edge a little. Your data could be stolen by hackers or lost in the laundry, but you are easy going.

51–60 Future employers just have to Google you to see last weekend’s embarrassing pictures. You may wake up one morning to find your bank account empty. And your computer is subject to total meltdown.