Beyond the Internet

1 What's it like?

a) *Look at these pictures. Each one has an internet address with it. These are webcams: they show what is happening there with a new picture every few seconds or minutes. Who might want to look at live pictures of each of these places and why?*

http://www.minack.com/webcams.htm

http://www.earthcam.com/usa/newyork/timessquare/

http://www.onestives.co.uk/StIvesCornwallWebcams.html

http://www.snoweye.com/?page=ch-ne

b) *Think of two places that you know, where a webcam might be useful. Give reasons why you think this.*

c) *Write a short e-mail to the school/town council/… in your twin-town in England to persuade them to set up a webcam at these places. Give reasons for your request or tell them about something that happened there.*

2 How it all started

The very first webcam, in 1991, was in the Computer Science Department at Cambridge University in England and it showed a coffee pot. Why a coffee pot?
Well, the department takes up seven floors of the building and only one floor had a coffee pot! If you worked on the top or bottom floor, the pot was often empty when you came to get your coffee. So some clever students decided to watch it on camera.
At first you could only see a picture of the coffee pot on computers in the building, but in November 1993 the scientists connected it to the worldwide web – it was the first internet webcam!
The coffee-pot camera was switched off in August 2001 because the Department moved to a new building. They sold the old coffee pot and used the money to buy a coffee machine for each floor in the new building.
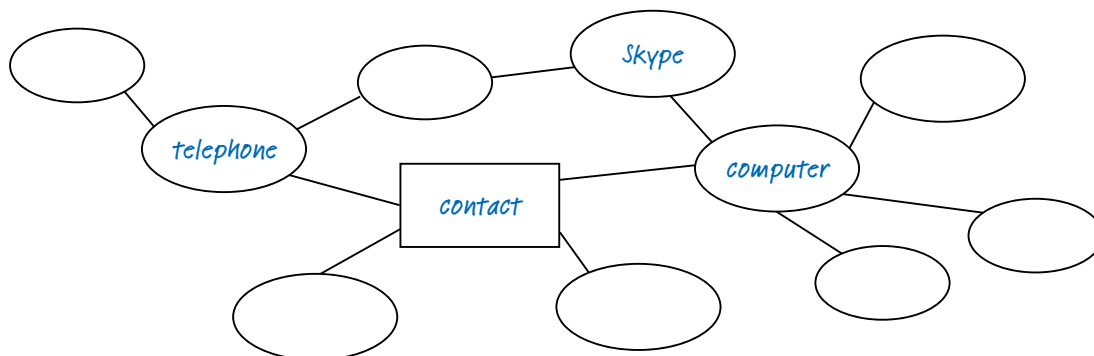
There is more information about the coffee pot on http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/coffee/qsf/timeline.html

Read the text and answer the questions:

- What problem did the Cambridge computer scientists have?
- What other answer could they have found?
- Think of three other 'crazy' uses for webcams.

3 Contacts

a) *Make a mind map of all the technology by which you can contact someone directly (you can talk to them and they can answer) or indirectly (you can see or hear them but they can't contact you).*

b) *Which is the best method for these situations?*

- You want to talk to your aunt and uncle in Canada.
- You need to fix a date and time to see the dentist.
- You see an ad for a part-time job in the local paper and want to apply for it.
- You want to tell your friend to meet you in 10 minutes at the swimming pool.
- You want to show your cousin in Croatia pictures of your birthday party.
- You want to send best wishes to a friend in Scotland whose dog has died.

4 Can you check?

a) *What do you know about Facebook and Twitter? What are they used for?*

b) *Are you a member of Facebook or Twitter? Why/Why not?*

c) *Do you look at YouTube videos? What do you know about it?*

- Can you check who the person is?
- If someone made a page on the internet about you and you didn't like it, what could you do about it?
- If you saw a video on which a person or animal was hurt, what would you do?

d) *Work in a group. What do you know about information that you find on the internet? For example, if you look for information on the internet, do you know who put the information there? How can you check it? Write an information card in English for younger pupils.*

Lösungen

Lösungsvorschläge Seite 1

Ex. 1
a) Picture 1: The theatre is in the open air on the coast. If you are going to see a performance there, you could look at the webcam to see what the weather is like. If you want to visit Cornwall, you could look at the webcam to see if a visit to the Minack theatre would be interesting.
   Picture 2: You can look at this busy area of New York to prepare for a visit there. You can see what people in New York are wearing and what the weather is like. Perhaps you have a friend in New York who wants to wave to you!
   Picture 3: If you want to go swimming or surfing in the sea, it's important to know what the weather and the water are like. Is it too cold? Are there any waves? Is the tide in or out?
   Picture 4: It's the same if you want to go skiing. You can find out what the weather is like and if there is any snow. It is also useful if you are planning a skiing trip next year. You can look at the webcam regularly to find out when the snow is best and when there are not too many people there.
b) A webcam could be useful to watch birds or animals. The webcam can be put up when they are not there, then people can watch them without going too near them. It could also be useful to see if something really happens: a webcam on Loch Ness could watch to see if the monster appears. Webcams are also useful for safety: to stop people doing silly things, like crossing a dangerous street.
c) Dear Sir or Madam,
   I am writing to suggest that you should set up a webcam in the High Street near the post office. As you know there was a robbery there last week and the police don't know who did it. If a webcam had been there, they would have been able to see the robbers and identify them. A webcam might also frighten robbers away and make the High Street safer for people who go shopping there.
   I hope you will consider the idea.
   Yours faithfully,

Lösungsvorschläge Seite 2

Ex. 2
• The Cambridge scientists worked in a building with seven floors, lots of offices, and only one coffee pot. The coffee pot was very slow and lots of people wanted coffee, so sometimes, if you came from another floor to get a cup of coffee, the coffee pot was empty.
• They could have bought more coffee pots for the other floors. They could have bought a bigger, faster coffee pot.
• You could have a webcam inside the front door of a building with flats in it. It would show people whether the postman had brought the letters or the newspapers had arrived yet. You could have a webcam near your pet's food bowl, so that you could see your cat or dog or hamster when you are at school and make sure that your pet is eating properly. You could put a webcam in your room to see if your parents go in there when you are not there.

Ex. 3
a) The mind map should include radio, TV, film, letters, telephone, mobile phone, texting, e-mails, the internet, and internet services like Facebook and Twitter.
b) Aunt and uncle in Canada: phone, Skype, e-mail, letter. / Date at the dentist's: phone, personal visit. / Applying for a part-time job: letter, e-mail. / Meeting in 10 minutes: phone call or text. / Party photos: e-mail or website for sharing photos (e.g. Flickr) / Best wishes to a friend: a card sent by post, an e-mail, a greetings card website.

Lösungsvorschläge Seite 3

Ex. 4
Individuelle Schülerlösungen