

Topic 6 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY – THE FUTURE STARTS HERE

1 Complete the text using vocabulary from topic 6.

Science & technology

The world today is moving at such a fast pace that the future never seems too far away. Whereas artificial intelligence, self-driving cars and robotics would have been found in science fiction movies in the past, they are a reality nowadays. In fact, innovations in technology are moving so quickly that the level of automation in certain industries has become a concern to some people who worry what will happen when machines start to replace the traditional workforce. The increased presence of technology in our daily lives opens up many issues. Some people claim that we will witness an overreliance on technology and that people will lose their skills and instincts, or become lazy and weak as a result. On the other hand, others argue that robots cannot only help make production more efficient and cost-effective, but also offer companionship for elderly people or supervision for children when their parents are at work.

One of the most spoken-about topics at the moment is that of autonomous vehicles, or driverless cars, as they are also known. In theory, these cars should make the roads safer as they cut out human error as a cause of accidents. However, driverless cars also pose the dilemma of whether the car is programmed to avoid a collision with another car or pedestrian and thus injure or even kill its own occupant. Would you buy a car that made this decision for you?

Of course, science and technology is not just about machines and engineering, but also genetics. We often hear the phrase “you are what you eat”, and there is an increasing level of demand to know exactly what ingredients are in the food we buy and eat. There is a lot of controversy about GMOs. Whereas some people argue that genetically-modified crops are more sustainable and can be drought tolerant, others do not like the idea of their food being engineered in this way.

Another issue is the use of technology to monitor people, whether it be through visible methods such as CCTV, or more secretive forms of surveillance such as tracking online behaviour and transactions. If you ask some people, the way things are going, we will soon be living in a society very similar to the one George Orwell depicted in his dystopic novel *1984*. Big Brother is watching!

2 Match the words on the left (1-8) with their synonyms on the right (A-H).

C	1	distinctly	A	to sabotage something
H	2	concern	B	expensive
E	3	severe	C	clearly
A	4	to undermine something	D	dislike
G	5	to mind somebody	E	serious
B	6	costly	F	healthy
F	7	wholesome	G	to look after somebody
D	8	distaste	H	worry

3 Match the words on the left (1-8) with their definitions on the right (A-H).

E	1	to nap	A	to put into action
G	2	to depict something	B	changing back and forth
B	3	alternately	C	to keep somebody busy
A	4	to deploy	D	continuous observation
C	5	to occupy somebody	E	to sleep for a short time
D	6	surveillance	F	to keep something from happening
H	7	mandatory	G	to represent something
F	8	to prevent	H	something you have to do

4 Fill in the gaps.

1. If you are accustomed to something, you are used to it.
2. The employees in a company are also known as the workforce.
3. If you do something for the greater good, you do it for the benefit of more people than just yourself.
4. A lot of car accidents aren't caused by technical malfunctions, but human error.
5. The contents of food are known as ingredients.
6. AI is short for artificial intelligence.
7. If something is disease resistant it is immune to disease.
8. An incentive is a reason for doing something.

5 What is it in German?

1. conceivable vorstellbar
2. to scrutinize something etwas genau prüfen
3. virtually nahezu
4. to sacrifice opfern
5. query Frage
6. claim Behauptung
7. companionship Gesellschaft
8. sustainable nachhaltig