Facebook phenomenon
A local radio discussion

Notes for teachers

This resource goes with the Facebook Phenomenon audio file. This consists of a local radio presenter having a discussion in the studio with another reporter about the Facebook phenomenon.

Both speakers are native speakers of English. There is a full transcript of the audio file at the back of this resource as well as a listening cloze version, and a crossword. In the classroom, this resource could be used in many ways. Below are some possibilities.

Before listening

• You could start by identifying what students already know and can say about Facebook. You could ask students to work together to generate a definition, an opinion, and a prediction for the future.
• You could work on the list of words that have been removed for the cloze version of the transcript: backlash, banning, clamping, consensus, critique, multi, networking, parody, phenomenon, presumably, reluctant.

During listening

• First, students could work without the transcript, listening for the gist of the story. You could use some questions to frame this. For example, what do we learn about …the popularity of Facebook? …the creator of Facebook? …the Facebook song?
• Students could then look at the cloze version of the transcript, listen again to the audio (as many times as needed) and fill in the blanks. To make the task easier, give students the list of words first, and time to look up those they are not familiar with. To make the task more difficult, don’t give them word list!
• After a third listening, students could add more detail to their responses to the questions.

After listening

• Students could write and record their own vox pops about Facebook, and use them to add audio files and transcripts to this resource for other classes to use.
• Students could discuss and/or write their predictions for the future of other popular websites (e.g. YouTube) or technologies (e.g. mobile phones).

Extension activities

• Students could do the crossword to revise some of the key words from the transcript. The answers are on the final page of the resource.

Note

All definitions used in the crossword are adapted from the Collins Cobuild English Dictionary.
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TRANSCRIPT CLOZE

Q With me here in the studio today is our roving reporter Charles Rowe. Er, finding out a little bit more about the Facebook .................................. , and apparently it would appear that it’s had its fifteen minutes of fame. Now you’ve been out and about on the streets of Bristol, haven’t you Charles? And what’s the general ..............................................? Are people still using Facebook on a day-to-day basis?

A People are getting fed up with it because it takes too much time out of your time at work to use, and bosses are getting unhappy with their co-workers, that they’re not using their time properly and they’re spending too much work time on Facebook. And a lot of bosses are actually ....................................down and saying, ‘No, we’re ........................................... it.’

Q And obviously, as a result of that, people can’t access Facebook on such a regular basis, .............................................. ?

A No they can’t. And then of course, if you can’t use it at work, which is where most people use it, then fewer people are going to use it probably in their free time as well.

Q Now Facebook as a business has actually been hugely successful, hasn’t it?

A Yeah, the chap who came up with it is now a ........................................... -millionaire, so he’s doing very well out of it.

Q And purely from Facebook alone just being a social .............................................. site?

A Yeah, it’s one of those things where if you’ve got a social networking site like Bebo or MySpace, or Facebook, then you can do very well out of it.

Q Now there’s also been quite an interesting .............................................. here in Bristol, a group of people have come up with a Facebook song, haven’t they?

A Yeah, they’ve done a .............................................. of Facebook by saying, ‘We’re getting bored of Facebook.’ Those are the lyrics, and, er …

Q It’s a .............................................. , isn’t it? A parody to the Billy Joel song.

A Yes, it’s a parody of Billy Joel’s, ‘We didn’t start the fire’, and, er, the thing is they have actually started a fire because in a way a lot of people are very interested in watching the video and it’s quite funny. So if you go on to YouTube.com you’ll see the video and you’ll have a few laughs!

Q And just out of interest Charles, are you on Facebook yourself?

A Er, I am but I don’t know what to do with it. I’m a .............................................. Facebooker.

Q A reluctant Facebooker. Perhaps we could come up with a new term for that. Okay, thanks very much for joining me in the studio today Charles.

A Thank you.
The answers to the cloze exercise are underlined.

Q With me here in the studio today is our roving reporter Charles Rowe. Er, finding out a little bit more about the Facebook phenomenon, and apparently it would appear that it’s had its fifteen minutes of fame. Now you’ve been out and about on the streets of Bristol, haven’t you Charles? And what’s the general consensus? Are people still using Facebook on a day-to-day basis?

A People are getting fed up with it because it takes too much time out of your time at work to use, and bosses are getting unhappy with their co-workers, that they’re not using their time properly and they’re spending too much work time on Facebook. And a lot of bosses are actually clamping down and saying, ‘No, we’re banning it.’

Q And obviously, as a result of that, people can’t access Facebook on such a regular basis, presumably?

A No they can’t. And then of course, if you can’t use it at work, which is where most people use it, then fewer people are going to use it probably in their free time as well.

Q Now Facebook as a business has actually been hugely successful, hasn’t it?

A Yeah, the chap who came up with it is now a multi-millionaire, so he’s doing very well out of it.

Q And purely from Facebook alone just being a social networking site?

A Yeah, it’s one of those things where if you’ve got a social networking site like Bebo or MySpace, or Facebook, then you can do very well out of it.

Q Now there’s also been quite an interesting backlash here in Bristol, a group of people have come up with a Facebook song, haven’t they?

A Yeah, they’ve done a critique of Facebook by saying, ‘We’re getting bored of Facebook.’ Those are the lyrics, and, er …

Q It’s a parody, isn’t it? A parody to the Billy Joel song.

A Yes, it’s a parody of Billy Joel’s, ‘We didn’t start the fire’, and, er, the thing is they have actually started a fire because in a way a lot of people are very interested in watching the video and it’s quite funny. So if you go on to YouTube.com you’ll see the video and you’ll have a few laughs!

Q And just out of interest Charles, are you on Facebook yourself?

A Er, I am but I don’t know what to do with it. I’m a reluctant Facebooker.

Q A reluctant Facebooker. Perhaps we could come up with a new term for that. Okay, thanks very much for joining me in the studio today Charles.

A Thank you.
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Crossword

CLUES

1. Very likely to be the case
2. A sudden, strong reaction against a recent development in society or politics
3. Unwilling to do something, hesitant before doing it, or doing it slowly and without enthusiasm
4. A general agreement amongst a group of people
5. The process of establishing contacts
6. Consisting of many things of a particular kind
7. A written examination and judgement of a situation or of a person's work or ideas
8. Stating officially that something must not be done, shown, or used
9. A humorous piece of writing, drama, or music which imitates the style of a well-known person or represents a familiar situation in an exaggerated way
10. -------- down: taking strong official action to stop or control people or activities

Now write a definition for the word that appears in the highlighted vertical column.
Crossword answers

1. presumably
2. backlash
3. reluctant
4. consensus
5. networking
6. multi
7. critique
8. banning
9. parody
10. clamping