

## Science and Technology

The importance of science and technology has grown dramatically over the last century. Technical and scientific advancements have influenced every aspect of human life: communication, transport, business, health care, housework, etc. Vast sums of money are being invested in new research in order to make our lives more manageable. The most important advantage of scientific progress is obvious. It saves us time and money and raises our standard of living. Just think of the times when people had no phones. They depended on the post and messengers which took a long time and many were sometimes unreliable means of communication. No washing machines usually meant a day of hard work for our great great grandmothers.

Long-distance travelling was time consuming and exhausting without the means of transport that we know today. And most of us can't even imagine our lives without antibiotics and painkillers! The popularity of inventions and discoveries vary. A lot of surveys have been carried out to find the greatest invention and discovery. Even though the results may differ, they have one thing in common: while men prefer technical inventions such as cars and computers, women appreciate more practical achievements such as washing machines and contraceptive pills. Nevertheless, scientific progress has brought about some problems too. One may think that making our lives easier means more free time for an individual. That is not necessarily true, particularly concerning means of communication. Ironically, mobile phones and computers are robbing us of free time and privacy more than anything else before.

Another disadvantage is of course the threat of abuse. Just think of chemical and biological weapons or the potential risks of genetic engineering! While some believe genetic manipulation means a great breakthrough in medicine, others may feel it brings us closer to eugenics. It seems that each step forward in the field of science and technology also has its side effects, the dangers of which we are sometimes not aware of. It is up to mankind then to be wise and responsible enough to handle these new opportunities with care

and respect.

**Answer the following questions:**

1. When speaking about advances in technology, the word *obsolete* is often used. What does this word mean and in what context is it usually used?  
Almost all of us use computers.
2. What positive impacts do they have?
3. Are there any disadvantages to using computers?
4. How much time do you spend at your computer?
5. What do you use it for?
6. Enumerate the ten top inventions of the 20th century.
7. How have criminals kept up to date with new technology?