

## READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 1



### What if Coronavirus Covid-19 had happened in 2005?



Nothing, since the end of the Second World War, compares to this pandemic in terms of the (1) **impact/ power/ result/ consequence** on everyday life.

However, as we spend our time holding video-conferencing sessions, FaceTiming family members, and updating social networks, there is one thing that may make us (2) **notice / realise/ achieve/ discover** how thankful we should be. Imagine how it would be if this had happened in 2005, just before the smartphone era began.

Smartphones are now the (3) **central/ main/ clear/ dominant** way we connect to the internet. (4) **Despite/ Although/ However/ Even**, many of the digital tools we are using to keep connected did not exist back then or were only available to a few people.

Facebook was one year old, but was still an American college phenomenon, Neither Instagram nor WhatsApp had been (5) **discovered/ produced/ conceived/ made**. The term "social media" would have caused confusion.

YouTube was born that year, Twitter came along the following year, and it was not until 2007 that Apple (6) **launched/ established/ began/ initiated** the iPhone.

Skype had been started by Estonian entrepreneurs in 2003, but was still just an internet telephony and conference-call service. It did not add video until 2006.

Fifteen years ago in Britain, about eight million homes had a broadband connection. Their desktop computers could (7) **enter/access/reach/connect** the internet at speeds up to 10 Mbps – which means that it would take about 90 seconds to download an album. Today, 96% of UK homes have broadband internet connection with an average download speed of 54Mbps.

All sorts of services that are currently considered to be (8) **decisive/vital/serious/suitable** were only just beginning in 2005.

If you did want to video chat you needed expensive (9) **facilities/equipment/installations/resources**. Now we are using FaceTime and WhatsApp to see as well as speak to family and friends.

We are also discovering services such as Zoom and Bluejeans. At one point last week Zoom, which was used almost exclusively by business customers before the Covid-19 outbreak, was second only to TikTok in Apple's App Store chart.

The teleworking phenomenon, predicted for two decades, has at last become a reality - but only because enough of us have the connectivity and digital tools to (10) **carry on/ carry out/ carry with/ carry off** our jobs effectively.

As for online shopping, services such as Ocado, which delivers supermarket goods, had been (11) **operating/existing/working/performing** for a few years but represented just 3% of sales.

In recent days we have seen how vital the delivery vans and drivers have become to the way we live. Fifteen years ago, before cloud technology existed, online sellers would have faced an even bigger struggle to (12) **organise/handle/manage/cope** with increasing demand than they have this last week.

With millions of children forced to stay (13) **out / back / away / in** from school, online education platforms are now playing an important role in the learning process.

Back in 2005, the focus was on improving IT systems in schools rather than introducing distance learning (14) **despite / so that / since / due to** many children would not have had a computer or an Internet connection at home.

As for entertainment, flat-screen televisions were a new development, and high definition was coming, but TVs were not connected to the internet, which (15) **explained / meant / signified / represented** there were no streaming services such as Netflix.

There has been much concern in (16) **nowadays / recent / latest / last** years about what smartphones and social media are doing to our way of life. We are told that online friends are not real friends, that there is no substitute for face-to-face contact, and that (17) **watching / seeing / staring / noticing** at screens all day is bad for our health.

But we may emerge from this crisis with a new (18) **appreciation / awareness / opinion / attraction** for these technology tools.

**Source: adapted from Coronavirus: What if this had happened in 2005?**

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## ANSWERS:

1. Impact
2. Realise
3. Main
4. However
5. Conceived
6. Launched
7. Access
8. Vital
9. Equipment
10. Carry out
11. Operating
12. Cope
13. Away
14. Since
15. Meant
16. Recent
17. Staring
18. Appreciation