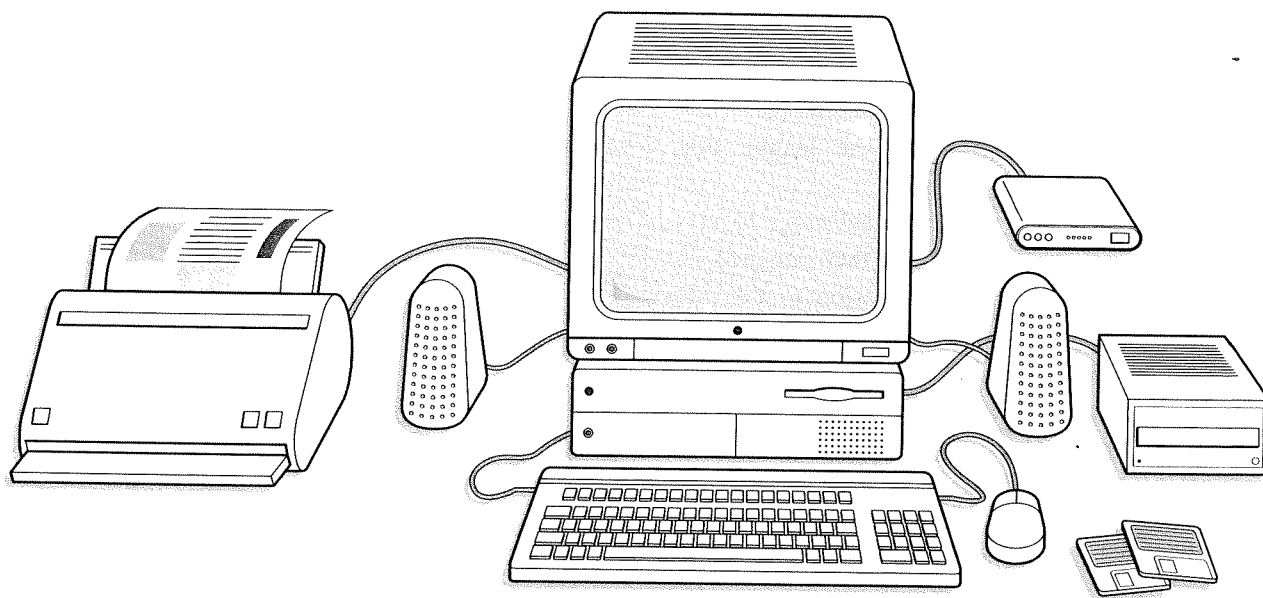


## Developing reading skills

### Lead-in

- 1 Label the computer system shown in the picture, using the words in the box.



**CD-drive   disk drive   floppy disks   keyboard  
modem   monitor   mouse   printer   speakers**

- 2 Make a list of people who use computers. What do they use them for?
- 3 Who might say the following?
- 1 'I love computers. In fact I have one at home and I use it to play games. The games are on floppy disks but the programs are on the hard drive.'
  - 2 'I couldn't live without my laptop. I take it everywhere with me.'
  - 3 'We upgraded our old computers by having CD-ROM drives installed.'
  - 4 'Having databases of names and fingerprints is useful for us.'
  - 5 'Our students can connect to the Internet to download software and also to find information for different research projects they are working on.'

### Reading task: Gapped text

#### Strategy: Understanding reference words

- 1 Skim through the following text to get the general idea of the meaning. Do not worry about words you do not know. Choose a suitable title for the text. (Do not focus on the words in *italics> or on the gaps 1–3 at this stage.)*
- a The development of the computer
  - b The problems of having a computer
  - c Personal computer components

#### tip

Look for words like *it, him, her, this, that, them, they, such, etc.*, which are small but important, to help in understanding a text. Try to work out what these words refer to in the sentences before or after them.

Although computers have been around for a long time, it wasn't until recent years that *they* became accessible to almost everyone. Approximately 60 million computers are sold each year. In the 19th century, Charles Babbage, an English mathematician worked out the principles of the modern computer. **1**

One of Babbage's designs had many features of a modern computer. *It* had an input screen and a store for saving data, together with a printer that made permanent records. Today, a typical computer has components to display and print information. *These* are the monitor and the printer. **2**

Nowadays, most computers come equipped with CD-ROM drives, which provide users with immediate access to a huge source of information; for *those* who want entertainment, the CD-ROM and the addition of speakers can bring a game or activity to life. With the development of the Internet and the World Wide Web, many computer-users now have access to an even bigger range of facilities, by linking up with other computers around the world. **3**

Another feature of high-technology machines is video conferencing. *Such* a facility enables people to see each other while they are talking on the phone through the Internet. If the people communicating through the Internet have mini-cameras connected to their computers, they can speak to each other face-to-face in real time. The need to be better informed is creating more powerful machines to provide society with all kinds of information and services.

- 2** Read the text again more slowly. Choose from the sentences **A–D** the one which best fits each gap (1–3) in the above text, using the reference words in **bold** to help you. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.
- A** **This** is achieved through a modem and a telephone line.
- B** Both of **these** involve training
- C** **It** also has a keyboard and a mouse to enter commands and data which is stored on and retrieved from the hard drive or floppy disks.
- D** At **that** time, the technology to put the theory into practice did not exist.
- 3** Look at the words in *italics* in the above text and write the words or information they refer to.
- 1** *they* (line 1) refers to .....
- 2** *It* (line 5) refers to .....
- 3** *These* (line 7) refers to .....
- 4** *those* (line 10) refers to .....
- 5** *Such* (line 14) refers to .....

### tip

The reference word (*it, her, this, etc.*) does not always refer to words or ideas in the sentence immediately before or after the gap. You might also need to look at earlier or later sentences.

- 4** Complete the following text with suitable reference words. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.
- Despite the advantages of using computers, there are also drawbacks. First, (1) ..... are generally expensive to buy, maintain and update. There are also fears that the use of computers in education reduces human interaction and (2) ..... may cause developmental problems in some students. A further problem is the availability of software. Educational computer programs can be bought but (3) ..... programs may not suit the needs of individual classes. Teachers can adapt (4) ..... software to suit (5) ..... needs in the classroom, but this is time-consuming and often complicated.