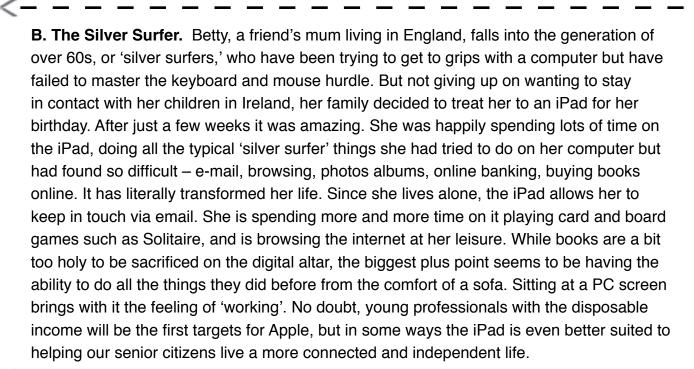**A. iPads in Schools**. Every pupil at Cedars School in Greenock, Scotland, is now armed with an iPad. "On the first day, it ran and ran. I couldn't make the battery die, and I realised that this alone would transform the technology experience in the classroom", says the Head Teacher, Mr Arnold. He believes that Apple's 'there's an app for that' approach could revolutionise the classroom. For infants, the school uses the likes of jigsaw puzzle-style apps to develop motor skills, abc PocketPhonics for tracing letters, and Maths Bingo (which Arnold calls "the biggest hit") for basic maths. Elsewhere, older pupils are immersed in iBooks, which replaces the class's paper books with eBooks, and Keynote for presentations. And with any child aged 10 or older allowed to take their iPad home, homework is sent and received via email. This enables teachers to set more flexible tasks, eliminates most excuses and has reduced the amount of incomplete homework. "It's not the future, it's the present", says Mr Arnold. "It's how we are all getting our information now, so why should it be any different for our children?"

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B. The Silver Surfer. Betty, a friend's mum living in England, falls into the generation of over 60s, or 'silver surfers,' who have been trying to get to grips with a computer but have failed to master the keyboard and mouse hurdle. But not giving up on wanting to stay in contact with her children in Ireland, her family decided to treat her to an iPad for her birthday. After just a few weeks it was amazing. She was happily spending lots of time on the iPad, doing all the typical 'silver surfer' things she had tried to do on her computer but had found so difficult – e-mail, browsing, photos albums, online banking, buying books online. It has literally transformed her life. Since she lives alone, the iPad allows her to keep in touch via email. She is spending more and more time on it playing card and board games such as Solitaire, and is browsing the internet at her leisure. While books are a bit too holy to be sacrificed on the digital altar, the biggest plus point seems to be having the ability to do all the things they did before from the comfort of a sofa. Sitting at a PC screen brings with it the feeling of 'working'. No doubt, young professionals with the disposable income will be the first targets for Apple, but in some ways the iPad is even better suited to helping our senior citizens live a more connected and independent life.

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C. The Child with Autism. Until Charlie had an iPad in his hands just over a year ago, he had been ambivalent about computers and technology. Charlie is on autism spectrum, with huge challenges in his abilities to speak and communicate. He has always loved music and photos and, although we have guided his fingers to push buttons, tap keyboards, and move a computer mouse, he has always seemed to get stuck with knowing which buttons to push. Enter the iPad. I was dubious at first, remembering the laptop that we'd lost after it was thrown across a room and the iPod that we'd found in the kettle. But for the first time, here was a device that Charlie could use entirely on his own to listen to music and see photos. The touch screen, the size of the iPad, the vividness of images on the display, the sound quality - all are perfectly suited for him. And best of all, the iPad is so intuitive that Charlie was able to work out how to use it all by himself.

Comprehension Questions

1. Who uses the iPad as a learning tool?

2. Who got an iPad for their birthday?

3. Who mentioned the iPad's 'battery life' as the key factor guaranteeing its success?

4. Who had mixed feelings about computers before using the iPad?

5. What's a 'silver surfer'?

6. Who really likes the range of apps that come with the iPad?

7. Who finds using a mouse difficult to use?

8. Who gained greater independence through the iPad?

9. Why did someone doubt that the iPad was any different from PCs before trying it?

10. What sort of things do older people like and not like to do on the iPad?

11. What's the most popular app with school children?

12. Who likes the idea that with the iPad you can surf the internet from anywhere in your house?

13. Who believes it's not just something for 5 years' time, but is for right now?

1. **Discuss these questions with a partner. Be prepared to tell your classmates the most significant points that come out of your discussion.**

   What are the most important electronic devices for you in your daily life?

   Which one couldn't you live without?

   Do you use any electronic devices for your studies?

   How do they help you learn English? Have you got any tips for other students?

   What new electronic devices would you like to try?

   How could you use technology more to improve your learning effectiveness?

2. **Computers and other digital electronic devices work faster and faster and can do more and more each year. So just what are we doing with all these devices that quickly become last year's model? Are we reusing, recycling or just throwing these old devices away?**

   Do you reuse, recycle or throw away these things?

old school books	batteries	food packaging	leftover food
bank statements	cooking oil	old clothes	plastic bags
grass cuttings	old toys	junk mail	plastic bottles
old furniture	newspapers	computers	mobile phones

Reuse	Recycle	Throw away

   What about your home or school or town? Can you give some examples of things you can easily recycle where you live?

Conversation Questions
Discuss these questions with a partner.

Can you name any registered charities? Are they national or international charities?

Are there many charity shops in the town or city where you live?

How do charities collect money?

Have you ever given money or old mobiles and computers to charity?

Do you think locally-run, national or international charities are more effective? Why?

What are some of the good points and bad points about large charitable organisations?

Do you think that governments should support charities more, or leave it to people to decide which ones they will support?

If your government had the idea of building a 'Big Society' in which everyone was encouraged to work for a charity of their choice, which type of charity would you like to work for? Why? What type of work would you like to do?

Irish Autism Action
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