Robot Tax

Today let's talk about a robot tax. By that, I mean a tax on robots. It is a subject that is currently being discussed, in earnest. Robots are taking over the jobs us humans have done before. If there are fewer workers, it means less tax for governments, right? So the governments have to raise taxes in another way and the introduction of a robot tax can't be too far away.

These days, robots work in many places, for example, in car factories, on car assembly lines. They cook food and help package it. They are said to be the future workers on farms, picking fruit and vegetables. Who knows? Of course, it begs the question of what workers will do if there is less work for them, if a robot is doing it. One answer to that is, think about the jobs done today, compared to 40 years ago, before we all started using computers. The office of yesterday, has been replaced by people sitting at laptops, all day, typing things into them. Hopefully, it demonstrates how life in offices, and new jobs have evolved, as a result of IT development. So, who knows, how offices will look in 40 years?

Bill Gates has actually proposed a robot tax, as he anticipates robots to replace workers in many sectors, in the next 20 years. Do we, therefore, all go and lie on a beach, or play golf? His answer was, by robots being taxed, would allow the money raised, to retrain people and financially support displaced workers. He suggested they could move into new jobs, in education, health care, or other areas, where human labour is needed. One can argue whether this is a good idea or not. Like it or lump it, robots are here to stay and will take many jobs. Computer automation is actually increasing jobs in many industries, so new jobs in new sectors are replacing the old jobs lost, in a way not imagined years ago. The future will be much the same.

SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three jobs that robots do. Go round the room swapping details with others.

LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

1) The article – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

2) The article - Students should look through the article with the teacher.
1) What is the article about?
2) What do you think about the article?
3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
5) Discuss the article.

3) Article quiz - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A questions
1) Who is Bill Gates?
2) What does 'IT' stand for?
3) What does 'like it or lump it' mean?
4) What is 'IT development'?
5) What might be done on farms in the future?

Student B questions
1) What is a 'car factory'?
2) What is a 'car assembly line'?
3) What is a 'laptop'?
4) What is a 'robot'?
5) One can argue what?

Category: Technology/ Robot Tax / Automation
Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words about **'Robots'**. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs – think of three positive things about robots. Write them below. Discuss!
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

Add three negative things about robots. Talk about them!
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 3

Individually - prepare to speak for one minute to the class about robot tax. *Allow three minutes to prepare notes on what you will say.*

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 4

In pairs - **Student A** is someone who works on a car assembly line. **Student B** is a student on a work experience training session at the car plant. You get talking in the canteen about robot automation in car factories. *3 mins.*

DISCUSSION

Student A questions
1) What do you think about what you've read?
2) Will a robot take over your job?
3) Will we see robots taking over jobs on farms?
4) Will someone develop a machine to pick apples on farms?
5) How will offices look in 40 years?
6) Who will be the next Bill Gates?
7) Do we all go and play golf and lay on the beach if a robot will do our work?
8) How do you foresee the future – will it be full of robots doing our jobs?
9) What will workers do if robots take over their jobs?
10) Have you learnt anything today?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Discussion FM* radio studio in London. Today's interview is about: *Robot Tax.*
1) Someone from a car assembly line.
2) Someone from a farm.
3) Someone from an IT development company.
4) A robot designer.

The teacher *will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.*

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In groups - Discuss four industries currently using robots. Talk about them. Add in another four sectors where they could be introduced (more) in the future. Why? How could you introduce a robot tax into these ideas? *5 mins*

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

> **Robot tax - what's wrong with Bill Gates idea of taxing robots – and what's right about it**

The teacher *can moderate the session.*

DISCUSSION

Student B questions
1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
2) Do you agree with Bill Gates that a robot tax is a good idea? Justify.
3) Would taxing robots hamper development of the sector?
4) Would you like to work with a robot?
5) A robot tax would surely allow a displaced worker to be retrained?
6) Is it logical to have a robot tax? Explain.
7) Should governments use the tax system to redress the balance between men and machines?
8) Should robots pay taxes?
9) How would you suggest a robot tax be paid? Explain.
10) Did you like this discussion?

GAP FILL: READING

Robot Tax

Today let's talk about a robot (1)___. By that, I mean a tax on robots. It is a (2)___ that is currently being discussed, in (3)___. Robots are taking over the jobs us humans have done before. If there are fewer workers, it means less tax for governments, right? So the governments have to (4)___ taxes in another way and the introduction of a robot tax can't be too far away. These days, robots work in many places, for example, in car factories, on (5)___ lines. They cook food and help package it. They are said to be the future (6)___ on farms, picking fruit and vegetables. Who knows? Of course, it begs the question of what workers will do if there is less work for them, if a (7)___ is doing it. One answer to that is, think about the (8)___ done today, compared to 40 years ago, before we all started using computers.

raise / robot / car assembly / jobs / earnest / workers / tax / subject

The office of yesterday, has been replaced by people sitting at (1)___, all day, typing things into them. Hopefully, it demonstrates how (2)___ in offices, and new jobs have evolved, as a result of IT development. So, who knows, how offices will look in 40 years?

Bill Gates has (3)___ proposed a robot tax, as he anticipates robots to replace workers in many sectors, in the next 20 years. Do we, therefore, all go and lie on a beach, or play golf? His answer was, by robots being taxed, would allow the money raised, to (4)___ people and financially support displaced workers. He suggested they could move into new jobs, in education, health care, or other areas, where human (5)___ is needed. One can argue whether this is a good idea or not. Like it or lump it, robots are here to stay and will take many jobs. Computer (6)___ is actually increasing jobs in many industries, so new jobs in new (7)___ are replacing the old jobs lost, in a way not imagined years ago. The (8)___ will be much the same.

automation / sectors / labour / actually / life / laptops / future / retrain

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

Robot Tax

Today let's talk about a robot tax. (1)___ that, I mean a tax on robots. It is a subject that is currently being discussed, in earnest. Robots are taking over the jobs us humans have done before. (2)___ there are fewer workers, (3)___ means less tax for governments, right? (4)___ the governments have to raise taxes in another way and the introduction of a robot tax can't be too far away. These days, robots work (5)___ many places, for example, in car factories, on car assembly lines. They cook food and help package it. They are said to be the future workers (6)___ farms, picking fruit and vegetables. Who knows? Of course, it begs the question (7)___ what workers will do if there is less work for them, if a robot is doing it. One answer to that is, think about the jobs done today, compared to 40 years ago, before (8)___ all started using computers.

if / we / on / in / it / by / of / so

The office of yesterday, has been replaced by people sitting at laptops, all day, typing things into (6)___. Hopefully, it demonstrates how life in offices, and new jobs have evolved, as a result of IT development. So, who knows, how offices will look in 40 years?

Bill Gates has actually proposed a robot tax, as he anticipates robots to replace workers in (5)___ sectors, in the next 20 years. Do we, therefore, all go and lie on a beach, or play golf? His answer was, by robots being taxed, (4)___ allow the money raised, to retrain people and financially support displaced workers. He suggested they (3)___ move into new jobs, in education, health care, or (8)___ areas, (2)___ human labour is needed. One can argue (7)___ this is a good idea or not. Like it or lump it, robots are here to stay and will take many jobs. Computer automation is actually increasing jobs in many industries, so new jobs in new sectors are replacing the old jobs lost, in a way not imagined years ago. The future will be (1)___ the same.

much / where / could / would / many / them / whether / other

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GAP FILL: LISTENING

Robot Tax

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Bill Gates has actually proposed a robot tax, as he _____ to replace workers in many sectors, in the next 20 years. Do we, therefore, all go and lie on a beach, or play golf? His answer was, by robots being taxed, would allow the money raised, to retrain people and _____ displaced workers. He suggested they could move into new jobs, in education, health care, or other areas, where _____ needed. One can argue whether this is a good idea or not. Like it or lump it, robots are here to stay and will take many jobs. Computer automation is actually increasing jobs in many industries, so new jobs in new sectors are replacing the old jobs lost, in a way not imagined years ago. _____ much the same.

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WRITING/SPELLING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - *In pairs/As a class,* list **20 different things about robot tax.** Explain what they do, etc. *Five minutes. Talk briefly about each of them.*

2) Sentence starters - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

1) Robot tax _____

2) I think _____

3) Robots _____

3) Write down 50 words about: ***Robot Tax.*** Your words can be read out in class.

4) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: ***Robot Tax.***

SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:
Pass = 12
Good = 15
Very good = 18
Excellent = 20

1)	robot	11)	actually
2)	assembly	12)	anticipates
3)	governments	13)	sectors
4)	less	14)	therefore
5)	earnest	15)	labour
6)	discussed	16)	answer
7)	subject	17)	automation
8)	factories	18)	argue
9)	package	19)	whether
10)	vegetables	20)	people

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Robot Tax – *10ᵗʰ March 2017*

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