

Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

Privacy Concerns Arise As Digital Life Trends Toward Cloud Computing, 05/05/2009

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/science/jan-june09/cloudcomputing_05-05.html

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension

[Student Worksheet](#) (reading comprehension and discussion questions without answers)

PROCEDURE

1. WARM UP

Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

2. MAIN ACTIVITY

Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

3. DISCUSSION

Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.]

INITIATING QUESTIONS

1. How often do you use a computer?
2. Where do you save your data?
3. Do you worry about backing up your data or the security of your data?

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS – [Student Worksheet](#)

1. What is cloud computing?

ANSWER

For individual users, cloud computing means relying on Web applications to write papers, listen to music, organize pictures, and saving everything on to a remote server instead of a personal computer's hard drive.

2. Why is cloud computing helpful?

ANSWER

Saving work "in the cloud" instead of on a computer, CDs or DVDs frees up space on school servers, and can cuts costs.

3. Why can cloud computing be important for schools?

ANSWER

On top of being cheaper "New technologies make interactive collaboration possible on the Web, between students in the same class, or around the world," says consultant Thomas Bittman.

Additionally, open-source textbooks, allow teachers to write and edit classroom material that better fits their curricula and lesson plans. Because these books are stored "in the cloud," other teachers and students can access them and share their feedback.

4. Why does Facebook, the social networking site, have to borrow money?

ANSWER

Facebook is having trouble maintaining services such as free picture uploads. Earlier this year, BusinessWeek reported that Facebook is looking to borrow up to \$100 million for additional servers to support its growing online social network.

5. What is Moore's Law?

ANSWER

Moore's Law, named after Intel co-founder Gordon Moore, states the ability of a computer chip to process information has doubled every two years. However, according to Moore, computing speed is about to hit a wall. Moore says "The doubling will slow down" around the year 2010.

6. Why were Facebook users worried earlier this year?

ANSWER

Earlier this year, many Facebook users panicked when the site changed its terms of service. The new policy implied that the company had control over data users had deleted, raising fears it could reveal embarrassing photographs or other material to parents, teachers and prospective employers.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. Did you know that some companies could use your data if you store it on their servers? Does that make you nervous? Why or why not? Does that change your feeling about these companies?

2. Do you think that the benefits of cloud computing outweigh the costs? Explain your answer with specific details.

3. How do you use cloud computing? How does your school?

4. Look into the future 10 years. How has cloud computing changed our lives?

Extension Activity

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.