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BBC to put programs online

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28 August, 2005

THE ARTICLE

BBC to put programs online

BNE: The British Broadcasting Corporation hopes to start a new service next year. It will put its TV programs and music online. Users will be able to download television and radio programs up to a week after they were originally broadcast. The new service will probably be called "MyBBCPlayer". The plan is a central part of the BBC's strategy to reach more people all over the world. It is still unclear whether users will have to pay a fee to download the programs.

The BBC is looking at new ways of using the Internet. A spokesperson said: "Every creative leader in the BBC is wrestling with the question of what the new technologies and audience behaviors mean for them and their service." Other options the BBC is thinking about include putting its two most popular channels online. However, this will be for UK viewers only. Another possible new service and "a departure from past corporation policy" is being able to buy BBC music and programs.

WARM-UPS

1. TELEVISION: Talk about your history with television with your partner(s). Use these words to help your conversation:

First memories Favorite kids' programs Black and white TV maker Importance
My daily viewing Life without TV Best programs Couch potato Internet TV

2. INTERNET: In pairs / groups, talk about what you use the Internet for. How often do you use the Internet for the following?

- News and weather
- Studying
- Music
- Games
- Mail / Messenger
- Travel information
- Shopping
- Other

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

BBC / television / TV programs / radio / downloading / download fees / wrestling / Internet TV / BBC shop / BBC radio / BBC English

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. BBC: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the BBC. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. BROADCASTERS: Talk with your partner(s) about television and broadcasting from other countries. How is the quality of programming in your country?

6. TWO-MINUTE DEBATES: Debate each of the fun arguments below with a partner for just two minutes, before moving on to the next one. Student A agrees with the first argument, Student B, the second.

- a. BBC news is best. vs. CNN news is best.
- b. Televisions will be with us forever. vs. Televisions will disappear.
- c. Internet television is a terrible idea. vs. Internet television is a great idea.
- d. The BBC must charge for downloading. vs. The BBC should never charge a downloading fee.
- e. MyBBCPlayer will change our lives. vs. MyBBCPlayer will have no effect on our lives.
- f. Internet TV will help world democracy. vs. Internet TV is just entertainment.
- g. MyBBCPlayer will make the world more British. vs. How ridiculous.
- h. It is crazy you cannot buy BBC programs today. vs. It is ridiculous you'd want to buy BBC programs.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. The BBC hopes to start a new service next year. | T / F |
| b. All of the BBC's TV programs will be available for download. | T / F |
| c. The BBC will release a new piece of software called "MyBBCPlayer". | T / F |
| d. The BBC has plans to set a charge to download its products. | T / F |
| e. Creative leaders in the BBC are wrestling with different questions. | T / F |
| f. The BBC wants to make programs about audience behavior. | T / F |
| g. The BBC's main channels will also be available to the world. | T / F |
| h. There may be an online BBC store. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| a. start | charge |
| b. originally | purchase |
| c. central | thinking about |
| d. unclear | first |
| e. fee | uncertain |
| f. looking at | fighting |
| g. wrestling | launch |
| h. options | shift |
| i. departure | alternatives |
| j. buy | main |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. hopes to start a new | past corporation policy |
| b. It will put its TV programs | all over the world |
| c. a central part of the | BBC's strategy |
| d. reach more people | with the question |
| e. still unclear whether users | service next year |
| f. The BBC is looking at | channels online |
| g. the BBC is wrestling | will have to pay a fee |
| h. Other options the BBC | and music online |
| i. putting its two most popular | new ways of using the Internet |
| j. a departure from | is thinking about |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

BBC to put programs online

BNE: The British Broadcasting Corporation _____ to start a new service next year. It will _____ its TV programs and music online. Users will be able to download television and radio programs up to a week after they were _____ broadcast. The new service will _____ be called "MyBBCPlayer". The plan is a _____ part of the BBC's strategy to _____ more people all over the world. It is still _____ whether users will have to pay a _____ to download the programs.

The BBC is _____ at new ways of using the Internet. A spokesperson said: "Every creative _____ in the BBC is wrestling with the _____ of what the new technologies and _____ behaviors mean for them and their service." Other _____ the BBC is thinking about include putting its two most _____ channels online. However, this will be for UK _____ only. Another possible new service and "a departure from past corporation _____" is being able to buy BBC music and programs.

reach
originally
fee
hopes
central
unclear
put
probably

question
viewers
options
leader
policy
audience
looking
popular

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'radio' and 'program'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "BBC" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the BBC and Internet television.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| • hopes | • ways |
| • online | • wrestling |
| • originally | • behaviors |
| • central | • options |
| • reach | • viewers |
| • unclear | • policy |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of the BBC's idea?
- d. Will you download BBC programs?
- e. Would you like your own national broadcaster to offer the same service?
- f. What do you think of the BBC?
- g. Would you pay for the kind of service the BBC wants to start?
- h. Do you think all TV programs will one day be searchable on Google?
- i. Are you surprised you cannot already download TV programs?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. How important is TV in your life?
- d. Do you think downloading past TV programs means you'll watch more television?
- e. What do you think of the idea of one day being able to watch more than 1,000 TV channels from all over the world?
- f. Do the television stations in your country have any programs the rest of the world would be interested in?
- g. Have you been wrestling with any questions recently?
- h. What is your favorite TV program?
- i. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

EXPANDING INTERNET: Discuss with your partner(s) your thoughts on the following uses of the Internet. Talk about their pros and cons.

USES	PROS	CONS
Live broadcasts of high school classes		
Live broadcasts of all university lectures		
Accessing any TV program ever made		
Live coverage of all sporting events		
Live broadcasts of police prison cells and prisoner questioning		
A 24-hour webcam in the Oval Office in the White House		
Access to all of the world's books		
Access to all of the world's music		

Change partners and discuss what you heard from previous partners.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

BBC to put programs online

BNE: The British Broadcasting Corporation _____ a new service next year. It will put its TV programs and music online. Users will be able to download television and radio programs _____ after they were originally broadcast. The new service will probably be called "MyBBCPlayer". The plan is a _____ the BBC's strategy to reach more people all over the world. It is still unclear whether users will have _____ fee to download the programs.

The BBC is looking at _____ using the Internet. A spokesperson said: "Every creative leader in the BBC is wrestling with the question of what the new technologies and _____ behaviors mean for them and their service." Other options the BBC is _____ include putting its two most popular channels online. However, this will be for UK viewers only. Another possible new service and "_____ past corporation policy" is being able to buy BBC music and programs.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the BBC. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. LETTER: Write a letter to the head of the BBC. Tell him what you think of his new idea to put programs online and to sell BBC products. Read your letters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. TELEVISION: Write an essay about how important TV is in your life. What would happen if you had no television? Tell your classmates the main points of your essay in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. F c. T d. F e. T f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| a. start | launch |
| b. originally | first |
| c. central | main |
| d. unclear | uncertain |
| e. fee | charge |
| f. looking at | thinking about |
| g. wrestling | fighting |
| h. options | alternatives |
| i. departure | shift |
| j. buy | purchase |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. hopes to start a new | service next year |
| b. It will put its TV programs | and music online |
| c. a central part of the | BBC's strategy |
| d. reach more people | all over the world |
| e. still unclear whether users | will have to pay a fee |
| f. The BBC is looking at | new ways of using the Internet |
| g. the BBC is wrestling | with the question |
| h. Other options the BBC | is thinking about |
| i. putting its two most popular | channels online |
| j. a departure from | past corporation policy |

GAP FILL:

BBC to put programs online

BNE: The British Broadcasting Corporation **hopes** to start a new service next year. It will **put** its TV programs and music online. Users will be able to download television and radio programs up to a week after they were **originally** broadcast. The new service will **probably** be called "MyBBCPlayer". The plan is a **central** part of the BBC's strategy to **reach** more people all over the world. It is still **unclear** whether users will have to pay a **fee** to download the programs.

The BBC is **looking** at new ways of using the Internet. A spokesperson said: "Every creative **leader** in the BBC is wrestling with the **question** of what the new technologies and **audience** behaviors mean for them and their service." Other **options** the BBC is thinking about include putting its two most **popular** channels online. However, this will be for UK **viewers** only. Another possible new service and "a departure from past corporation **policy**" is being able to buy BBC music and programs.