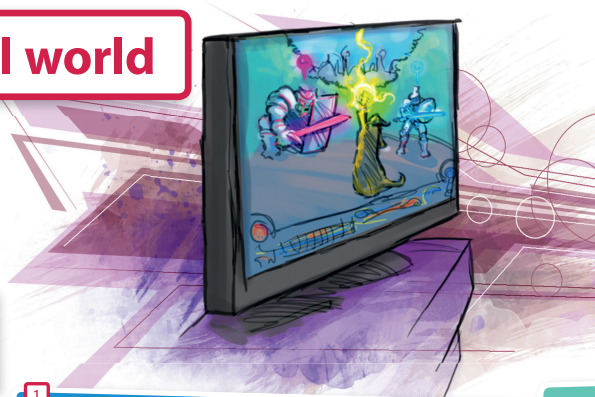


2.1

The virtual world



Speaking

1 How far do you agree with the following statement? Discuss your ideas.

Computer games are anti-social and violent, and their users are mindless nerds.

nerd /nɜːd/ noun [C] informal someone, especially a man, who is not fashionable and who is interested in boring things • **nerdy** adjective informal boring and not fashionable

2 What are the good things about playing games online? Are there any disadvantages?
3 In pairs, decide on the five most important features of any computer game, choosing from a–h below. What else do you look for in a virtual game?

- a fast pace
- b easy to get into
- c lots of action
- d puzzles to solve
- e single- and multi-player modes
- f suitable for all ages
- g great background music
- h sophisticated graphics

Exam spot

For Paper 1 Part 7 you need to match the questions to the texts in an efficient way. By **skimming** the text (reading it very quickly, not trying to understand every word but just trying to get a general idea of what it is about) and **scanning** it (running your eyes over it very quickly, just looking for particular words or information) you can find the answers more quickly. These are essential skills to learn.

Reading

4 Scan the four online reviews of computer games to answer a–d quickly.

Which game

- a is the cheapest?
- b gets the best review?
- c seems the least suitable for adults?
- d has the most impressive soundtrack?

Where did you find this information? How much text did you need to read?

1 The great thing about this game is that to get anywhere, you need to adopt its unique way of thinking – forget all normal rules. Reality is meaningless here, in a world where up can mean down, left becomes right, and everything feels remarkably weird. The puzzles can't be solved unless you are willing to spend sufficient thinking time – and you need to keep an open mind! Part of the game's charm lies in the almost complete absence of instructions, yet this can also be a drawback, leading to huge frustration. There are no set paths to wander down and you are very much guided by your own curiosity and imagination. And while you're gathering your thoughts, you can enjoy the background music, which is truly original and builds well in scary moments. Patience is definitely required for this game, but there's great satisfaction for those who rise to the challenge.

THE VERDICT

Expect the unexpected – and make full use of your brainpower! **** £39.99

2 This game's all about finding power for your ray gun, which you get by capturing tiny cartoon figures. The ray's pretty weak when you start – it needs electricity after all – so you only move small objects. This gives you enough power to turn on household appliances like fridges or vacuum cleaners, and locate the electrically charged critters hiding in them. You feel pretty hopeless to begin with, but ten minutes and several hundred hits later, you reach the point of feeling more like a superhero as the adventure develops. You overturn sofas, beds and other huge items, leaving rooms in a very messy state. And that's nothing! In higher levels, you walk the streets, so powerful that you can lift cars, trucks and eventually entire buildings. It's a shame that the gun resets to weak with each new level, but there are some impressive gameplay touches that stop you mindlessly breaking stuff – your grandma would approve!

THE VERDICT

A great sense of progression as you go from weak to strong – never thought electricity could be so much fun! **** £28.75



5 In groups of four, choose one review each and skim the text to find out what sort of game it is. Then scan your review to find one good and one bad point, looking out for phrases similar to the ones below. Compare your findings with other groups.

Good points

The great thing about

Bad points

It's a shame that

3 Did you know that car games have a poor relation? Yes, it's their motorbike cousins! Somehow motorbike games never provide the same thrill as car games, but this version comes very close and is easily the best available. There are eight different bikes, but this version comes very close and is easily the best available. There are eight different bikes, nine long tracks and a choice of race styles: Grand Prix or the muddy scrambling type, which gets quite tricky. The intelligence and speed of your 23 computer opponents are high, and guarantee a game demanding enough for the most advanced racer. So get on your bikes and take control!

THE VERDICT

A super-slick bike racer that truly does not disappoint. ***** £27.50

4 This game is not demanding, perhaps because it's primarily aimed at kids under ten, though with only six levels and no multi-player mode, it's likely to be a bit disappointing even for the youngest of players. The little guy jogs along endlessly at a slow rate, which gets extremely boring at times. Jumping works OK, with a nice double-jump facility for things that are out of reach. Graphically, the game looks good with its bright and colourful cartoony feel, and occasionally there's some really nice background animation too. It's just too bad there isn't more content – games of this type are becoming more and more complex, but not this one! Even kids will get through most of it in an afternoon, as the puzzles and tasks are far too simple.

THE VERDICT

Simplistic gameplay suitable for a very young audience ** £17.99

Vocabulary

Collocations

Vocabulary development beyond topic sets is essential for B2 level. Word formation, phrases, phrasal verbs and collocations are all important areas.

Learn which words commonly go together – nouns after a certain verb, adverbs with adjectives, etc. Some words have a close association, for example *bitterly disappointed*. Strong collocations like these are tested in the exam.

6 Read reviews 1–3 and find the nouns that go with verbs a–d. Then choose two more collocates for each verb from the box.

- a solve (review 1)
- b spend (review 1)
- c reach (review 2)
- d take (review 3)

advantage conclusion crime fortune
goal interest money problem

Grammar extra

-ly adverbs

All the adverbs below were used in the reviews of computer games. Write down their related adjectives and then say what the spelling rules are for forming these adverbs. easily endlessly graphically remarkably truly Some adverbs do not end in -ly. The most common of these are *fast, hard, late* and *well*. Note also the adverbs *hardly* and *late*, which have different meanings.

Explain the meaning of the adverbs used below.

- a She hardly thought about work while she was on holiday.
- b He thought hard before answering.
- c There have been a lot of good films lately.
- d We arrived late for the film, which had already started.

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Corpus spot

Correct any spelling mistakes that exam candidates have made with adverbs in these sentences.

- a Unfortunately, I'm quite busy at the moment.
- b If I were you, I would definitely spend my evenings reading by the fireside.
- c You just have to say your name and the computer opens the door automaticly.
- d Entering the restaurant, you immediatly feel comfortable.
- e We realy started to work hard the morning before the show.
- f You must adjust the laser extremily carefully to get it in the correct position.
- g I would like more information, especially about accomodation.
- h The computer completly takes hold of our lives.

Review of present tenses

- 1 Identify the underlined tenses in examples a–d. Then complete the grammar explanation below.
 - a The little guy jogs along endlessly at a slow rate.
 - b While you're gathering your thoughts, you can enjoy the background music.
 - c It's a shame that the gun resets to weak with each new level.
 - d Games of this type are becoming more and more complex.

The present tense is used for permanent situations (example) or to talk about actions which are habitual or repeated (example). On the other hand, the present tense is used for temporary situations (example), or for situations that are changing or developing (example ...).

- 2 Explain the other uses of each tense that are illustrated in these examples.
 - a We're buying a new computer next weekend.
 - b If you finish all the levels within an hour, you get extra points.
 - c Don't talk to me while I'm playing!
 - d Once you decide where to go, let me know.
 - e All the planets in our solar system orbit the sun.

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- 3 Correct any mistakes with tenses in these sentences. Some sentences are correct.
 - a Electronic books are becoming more and more popular.
 - b This week only, the shop sells all software at 20% off.
 - c Don't shut down the computer as I'm downloading a film.
 - d As soon as you are playing this game, you realise the graphics are tremendous – everything is so realistic.
 - e My neighbour gives me access to his wifi this week but I'm planning to install my own on Monday.
 - f When you visit the website, you are getting a choice of free downloadable applications.
 - g Once I find a useful site, I'm bookmarking it for future reference.

- 4 Choose the correct present tense for each of these sentences, using the verbs in brackets.

- a My new game is sensational – as soon as you a level, you something completely different to do. (finish, get)
- b Generally, online customer support, though some computer manuals are still not accessible enough for users. (improve)
- c The developers a number of bugs in their latest app. (deal with)
- d In the latest version, a dragon overhead and when you it. (fly, explode, hit)
- e The company an interface to allow users to personalise their documents. (develop)
- f Back-up copies time to prepare, but they are essential. (take)
- g Whenever you, the system you to enter your password and then it a random security question. (log on, require, generate)
- h If a computer, you, the file you, on unless you, it regularly. (crash, lose, work, save)

- 5 Skim the extract from an article about 'googlewhacking' on the opposite page. Then fill each gap with a suitable present tense of one of the verbs in the box. Use each verb once only. There is one extra verb you do not need.

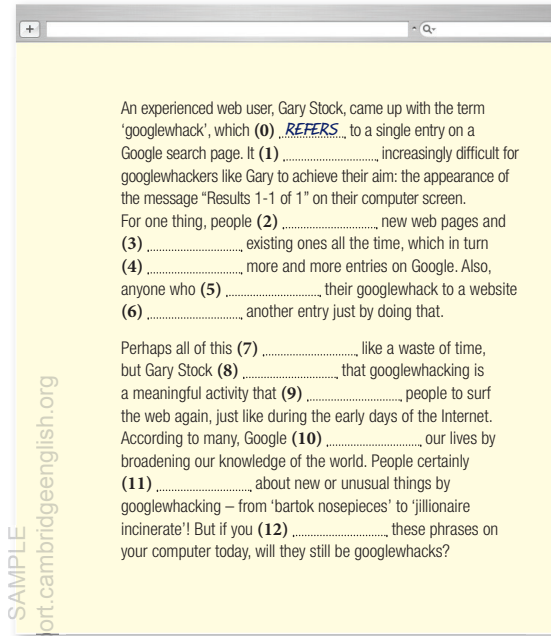
add become believe change create encourage find out google mean refer sound spend submit update

Compare your answers with another student.

In which gaps can both the present simple and the present continuous be used? Is there any change in meaning?

Which of the verbs that you used do not have a present continuous form? Verbs not normally used in the continuous tenses are called 'stative' verbs. Do you know any more verbs like this?

🔗 page 167



An experienced web user, Gary Stock, came up with the term 'googlewhack', which (0) REFERS to a single entry on a Google search page. It (1), increasingly difficult for googlewhackers like Gary to achieve their aim: the appearance of the message "Results 1-1 of 1" on their computer screen. For one thing, people (2) new web pages and (3), existing ones all the time, which in turn (4) more and more entries on Google. Also, anyone who (5) their googlewhack to a website (6) another entry just by doing that.

Perhaps all of this (7) like a waste of time, but Gary Stock (8) that googlewhacking is a meaningful activity that (9) people to surf the web again, just like during the early days of the Internet. According to many, Google (10) our lives by broadening our knowledge of the world. People certainly (11) about new or unusual things by googlewhacking – from 'bartok nosepieces' to 'jillonaire incinerate'! But if you (12), these phrases on your computer today, will they still be googlewhacks?

Vocabulary

Word formation

Recognise words that are formed from a common base word and record them together to help you remember them. For example, at B2 you should know the noun *truth*, the adjective *true* and the adverb *truly*. Word formation using prefixes and suffixes is tested in the exam. You will also need to know some words with negative prefixes, as in this word family: *happiness, unhappiness; happy, unhappy; happily, unhappily*. Many nouns have a related adjective formed with the suffix *-y*, as shown at the end of the dictionary example for *nerd* on page 16.

- 6 Make adjectives in this way from the nouns below. The first three are used in the reviews. What are the spelling rules in and d?
 - a trick
 - b mess
 - c mud
 - d ice

- 7 Many of these adjectives came up on pages 16–17. Divide them into two meaning groups, positive and negative. Which adjectives contain a prefix or a suffix? Which one contains both?

accessible colourful dull
excellent favourable hopeless
impressive mindless sophisticated
tricky unhelpful

Three of these adjectives are tested in 8, and some may also be useful in the writing task on pages 20–21.

- 8 Use the word given in capitals to form a word that fits in the numbered gap. Look at the words on either side of the gap to decide whether an adjective, adverb or noun is needed.

Tablet computers are growing in (0) POPULARITY. They generally weigh far less than laptops and are much more (1) for people on the move. Many (2) that are developed for tablets incorporate a pen-friendly user interface and/or the (3) to handwrite directly into a document. They are very (4) when it comes to viewing photo slideshows or movies, though reading books (5) on a tablet can be (6), depending on the screen display.

- 0 POPULAR
- 1 ACCESS
- 2 APPLY
- 3 ABLE
- 4 IMPRESS
- 5 ELECTRONIC
- 6 TRICK

