

THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2101/210102-online-learning.html>

The year 2020 has been a tumultuous one for educators. Hundreds of thousands of teachers across the globe had to get to grips with online platforms to deliver their lessons. Millions of students were stuck at home doing their lessons via websites like Zoom. This has created an unprecedented transformation in education as technology has taken centre stage. The quality of education differed around the world according to the quality of Internet connections, the level of preparedness of teachers and their competence in engaging with the technology. It also depended on what kind of devices students had at home. Many students were deprived of lessons because they had no computer, tablet or smartphone.

The Education Ministry in Malaysia has rolled out a new initiative to help underprivileged children. Around 150,000 eligible pupils from 500 schools will receive a device to enable them to participate in online lessons. The Education Minister hopes to build on the success of this initial rollout to expand the programme. He said: "Apart from assisting pupils and schools in need, this pilot project is to find the best implementation method before it is proposed for expansion." The plans include enhancing educational television programming for students with no Internet access, and employing sign language interpreters to help the hard of hearing. A teacher said she was happy her government was prioritizing students' needs.

Sources: <https://www.theborneopost.com/2020/12/28/covid-19-makes-online-learning-the-way-forward-in-education/>
<https://www.theedgemarkets.com/article/covid19-turns-online-learning-way-forward-education>
<https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/12/22/150000-students-nationwide-to-receive-electronic-devices-to-enable-online-l/1934205>

WARM-UPS

1. ONLINE LEARNING: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about online learning. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

tumultuous / globe / online platforms / transformation / education / devices / tablet / initiative / device / success / pilot / project / method / expansion / sign language

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. FACE-TO-FACE: Students A **strongly** believe face-to-face is better than online; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

4. ONLINE: What are the good and bad things about learning on line? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	Good Things	Bad Things
Teacher		
Computer		
Other students		
Classroom		
Technology		
Interaction		

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

6. SUBJECTS: Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to learn online at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- English
- Yoga
- Coding
- Chemistry
- Tennis
- Art
- Karate
- Origami

VOCABULARY MATCHING

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. tumultuous | a. Never done or known before. |
| 2. get to grips with | b. Suffering a severe and damaging lack of basic material and cultural benefits. |
| 3. platform | c. Excited, confused, or disorderly. |
| 4. unprecedented | d. A standard for the hardware of a computer system. |
| 5. transformation | e. Begin to deal with or understand. |
| 6. competence | f. A total, great or dramatic change in form or appearance. |
| 7. deprived | g. The ability to do something successfully or efficiently. |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 8. initiative | h. Of a person not enjoying the same standard of living or rights as the majority of people in a society. |
| 9. underprivileged | i. Take part. |
| 10. participate | j. Intensifying, increasing, or further improving the quality, value, or extent of. |
| 11. rollout | k. An act or strategy intended to resolve a difficulty or improve a situation; a fresh approach to something. |
| 12. pilot | l. A person who interprets, especially one who translates speech orally. |
| 13. enhancing | m. Done as an experiment or test before introducing something more widely. |
| 14. interpreter | n. The official launch or introduction of a new product or service. |

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2101/210102-online-learning.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. The article says millions of teachers got to grips with online platforms. **T / F**
- b. The article says online lessons have transformed education. **T / F**
- c. The article says the level of teacher competence in technology differs. **T / F**
- d. Many students could not learn online because they had no computer. **T / F**
- e. Malaysia will help up to 150,000 students to learn online. **T / F**
- f. Malaysia said it wants to help students become pilots. **T / F**
- g. Malaysia will use sign language interpreters online. **T / F**
- h. A teacher said Malaysia was not considering the needs of students. **T / F**

2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms. The words in **bold** are from the news article.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. tumultuous | a. trial |
| 2. get to grips with | b. change |
| 3. transformation | c. unveiled |
| 4. competence | d. improving |
| 5. deprived | e. roller-coaster |
| 6. rolled out | f. entitled |
| 7. eligible | g. disadvantaged |
| 8. pilot | h. focusing on |
| 9. enhancing | i. understand |
| 10. prioritizing | j. ability |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. The year 2020 has been a tumultuous | a. their lessons |
| 2. get to grips | b. programming |
| 3. stuck at home doing | c. technology |
| 4. created an unprecedented transformation | d. with online platforms |
| 5. their competence in engaging with the | e. interpreters |
| 6. rolled out a new | f. in education |
| 7. build on the success | g. students' needs |
| 8. enhancing educational television | h. one for educators |
| 9. employing sign language | i. of this initial rollout |
| 10. her government was prioritizing | j. initiative |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2101/210102-online-learning.html>

1. What kind of year does the article say teachers have had?
2. What did teachers have to get to grips with?
3. Who has been stuck at home?
4. What has taken centre stage?
5. Why were some students deprived of lessons?
6. What has Malaysia's Education Ministry rolled out?
7. How many schools may take part in an initiative?
8. What will Malaysia's government enhance?
9. What kind of interpreters will Malaysia's government employ?
10. What did a teacher say the government was prioritizing?

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2101/210102-online-learning.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'online' and 'learning'.

online	learning

- 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 activity. 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. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• educators• grips• stuck• stage• differed• deprived	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• rolled• 500• pupils• method• sign• needs
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ONLINE LEARNING DISCUSSION

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

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'online'?
3. What do you think of online learning?
4. Would you prefer face-to-face or online learning?
5. What are the advantages of online learning?
6. What experiences do you have of online learning?
7. Why might teachers like teaching online?
8. What is the best platform for online learning?
9. Who is online learning good for?
10. Should all students be learning online in the future?

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ONLINE LEARNING DISCUSSION

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

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'learning'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What subjects are good and bad to learn online?
15. Will we need teachers in the future?
16. Why might teachers hate teaching online?
17. Would robots be better at teaching English than people?
18. What are the pros and cons for learning English online?
19. Is online learning best for the hard of hearing?
20. What questions would you like to ask online teachers?