

From the creators of Pinterest and Twitter: a new app to fix what social media broke

Level: Intermediate (B1-B2)

Time: Approximately 90 minutes

Overview: This article discusses the launch of the new app designed to tackle the issues caused by social media.

Business topic: Startups, social media, apps

Business language: Doer nouns in Business English

Activities: Key words, Understanding the article, business language (doer nouns), discussion of opinions about social media apps, presentation, pitching a new app

Groups: Whole class, pairs, small groups

1. Warmer

- a. Ask students to discuss the questions as a whole class. Encourage them to say whether they use social media apps, and if so, what negative side effects they have noticed, e.g. dedicating too much time to them.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to match the words with the definitions. When they have finished, ask them to read the whole article carefully and to look at how the key words are used in context. Point out that the paragraph numbers are listed after the words to help them locate the words quickly.

Key:

1. *technologist*
2. *launch*
3. *grapple with*
4. *antidote*
5. *navigate*
6. *thread*
7. *disrupt*
8. *devastation*

9. *pitch*
10. *capitalise on*
11. *wrought*
12. *headquartered*
13. *scrapbooking*

- b. Ask students to use words from the previous activity to complete the sentences. When you go over the answers, make sure that students understand all of the sentences and the key words.

Key:

1. *grapple with*
2. *antidote*
3. *devastation*
4. *headquartered*
5. *pitch*
6. *thread*
7. *disrupt*
8. *capitalise on*
9. *wrought*
10. *scrapbooking*
11. *launch*
12. *technologist*
13. *navigate*

3. Understanding the article

- a. Ask students to tick (✓) the true statements and to rewrite the false statements so that they are true.

Key (suggested answers for false statements):

1. ✓
2. *False – They raised the funding for it.*
3. *False – It is by invite only.*
4. ✓
5. *False – It is to have a more meaningful life.*
6. *False – It sends you notifications every morning.*
7. ✓
8. ✓
9. ✓
10. ✓

4. Business Language – doer nouns in Business English

- a. Ask students to use their knowledge or the article to complete the table. Encourage them to try first without the article, and only then scan the article to look for the right word. Remind them that deducing the meaning of a new word by analysing the suffix is often a good way to expand their vocabulary. When you check the answers, make sure students pay attention to what suffixes we use in English to signify the *doer*, i.e. a person doing an action (-or, -er, -ist).

Key:

| Verb | Object noun | Doer noun |
|------------|----------------------|--------------|
| found | foundation | founder |
| — | technology | technologist |
| develop | development | developer |
| design | design | designer |
| invest | investment | investor |
| execute | execution | executive |
| capitalise | capitalism / capital | capitalist |

- b. Ask students to complete the sentences with the words from the table in task a. You can follow this activity with another one in which students use other words from the table to write sentences of their own. Explain that a *venture capitalist* is a person who takes on the risk on financing startups and new businesses.

1. *founder*
2. *developer*
3. *design*
4. *foundation*
5. *development*
6. *execution*
7. *investor*
8. *capitalist*

5. Discussion

- a. Put students in pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss the questions.

6. Wider business theme – app startup

- a. Ask students to think of creating and launching their own app. Before they get to the task, hold a class discussion on what elements go into designing an app like the one mentioned in the article. Split students into groups or pairs and have them work on their app idea. Set a timer if needed.
- b. Put students in groups and ask them to pitch their app ideas to their groups.