

# NEW OPPORTUNITIES

## A chance to try something new

Home isolation and self-distancing during the current health emergency makes it difficult for young people to keep up their everyday interests and activities. Formal games and physical sports, for example, seem out of the question, as do more informal activities such as just hanging around with friends. This lesson looks at how, in the present crisis, technology can help young people both to continue their existing interests and try out new ones.

## Learners will be able to:

- ▶ Reflect on the effects of the current health emergency on their everyday interests and activities;
- ▶ Analyse the new opportunities for recreation and learning arising out of the current situation;
- ▶ Identify ways in which they can use digital technology both to continue their existing interests and try out new ones;
- ▶ Develop their flexibility, adaptability and tolerance of ambiguity.

## STIMULUS

### Reflection exercise:

Learners reflect in pairs on ways in which the restrictions imposed to limit the spread of the coronavirus have affected their everyday interests and activities, e.g., socializing, hobbies, sports, learning, etc. They talk with their partner about this and share experiences of how they have been affected, and their feelings and concerns about this.

Learners tell the rest of the group about their partners, what has changed for them and how it has affected them, e.g. their feelings, concerns, etc.

Find an appropriate tool for this, e.g. WhatsApp.

Remind learners to listen carefully to their partner and remember their main points.

Ask learners to keep their presentations short.

## DISCUSSION

### After the reflection exercise:

- ▶ How does it feel when you can't do the things you used to do?
- ▶ Are there any advantages in the present situation? If so, what are they?
- ▶ Are there different ways of doing the things you used to do, without actually going out or meeting people face to face? Think of some examples.
- ▶ How can technology help with this? Suggest some ideas. Can you recommend any particular tools, e.g. apps, social media, websites, etc.?
- ▶ Could some of these tools also be used to help with doing school lessons from home – like this one? How?
- ▶ Has technology helped you to find any new interests or activities during the pandemic, things you never thought of before? If so, what?
- ▶ Is there anyone in society trying to help young people find creative things to do with their time at home? Government or someone else? Should they be doing more? Why do you think this?

Simplify the questions for young learners.

Learners can help each other think of these.

You can find information on-line for learners keen to keep up their education, e.g. [https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/coronavirus-online-learning-resources\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/coronavirus-online-learning-resources_en).

Check the internet for initiatives in your country and share relevant information with learners.

## CONCLUSION

Remind learners of the reason for the present restrictions.

Explain that, in spite of temporarily not being able to do the things they normally do in the way they used to, technology can help them to find different ways of doing the same things. It can also help them to find new interests that they might not have thought of before. Encourage learners to experiment and not to be afraid of making mistakes, because being creative involves breaking out of established patterns and seeing mistakes as a regular part of the learning process.

Share details of any learner-friendly websites that might help with this.

## ASSIGNMENT

Learners think about a new interest they have taken up during the pandemic, or one they think they might like to try.

They prepare a short presentation on this for their classmates, explaining why they have chosen it.

Paired- or small-group work would be good for this.

Encourage learners to use new, creative forms of presentation.

## FOLLOW-UP

Learners present their ideas.

They consider whether they will continue to use any new technologies they have started using when the coronavirus restrictions are over.

They reflect on examples of young people whose lives are more restricted than their own, e.g., because of a disability. They discuss what society can do to help, and what they personally or their school could do.

Remind learners of the rights of children to develop their 'personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest potential' (CRC, Article 29).