Pre-reading Discussion

1. Do you think technology causes more frustration or solves more problems? Why?
2. If you could redesign one gadget, which one would it be and how?

If Only My Laptop Could Talk

Last Tuesday, my laptop decided to restart for updates — exactly as I was about to present to a client. *If only technology understood urgency.*

We live surrounded by objects that claim to make life easier. Yet, if you've ever argued with a voice assistant, you'll know they can be as stubborn as humans. I wish my coffee machine could remember my settings, my phone could block spam calls automatically, and my printer... well, I wish it would just work.

These "smart" devices are only as clever as the people programming them. If only developers tested them in real-life chaos — public transport, crowded offices, or during a video call when your cat walks across the keyboard.

One day, maybe our gadgets will predict what we want before we even want it. Until then, we'll keep pressing "Remind me later" and hoping for the best.

Comprehension Questions

1. What happened to the author last Tuesday?

   _____

2. What do they wish the coffee machine could do?

   _____

3. Why does the author say devices are "only as clever as the people programming them"?

   _____

4. Give two examples of situations where devices might fail in "real-life chaos."

_____

_____

5. What does the author predict might happen one day?

_____

Vocabulary & Idioms

Part A – Match the phrase to its meaning:

A. Claim to make life easier

B. As stubborn as

C. Test in real-life chaos

D. Predict what someone wants

E. Remind me later

F. Hope for the best

1. Refuse to change or cooperate, like another person/thing
2. Try something under realistic, messy conditions
3. To guess someone's needs before they express them
4. To delay taking action for now
5. Expect a good outcome without certainty
6. Say that you will improve convenience or efficiency

Answers:

A → _____

B → _____

C → _____

D → _____

E → _____

F → _____

Part B – Personalisation:

Create **two original sentences** for 3 of the idioms, ideally using tech or work contexts.

Grammar Focus – Wish & If Only

Types & Uses:

Structure	Use	Example
Wish + past simple	Present/future unreal situations	I wish my printer worked.
Wish + past perfect	Regret about the past	I wish I had saved the file.
Wish + would	Annoyance about present behaviour	I wish my laptop would stop freezing.
If only	Same uses as *wish*, stronger	If only technology understood urgency.

From the text:

- *If only technology understood urgency.* (present unreal)

- *I wish my coffee machine could remember my settings.* (present unreal)

- *I wish it would just work.* (annoyance)

Grammar Practice – Rewrite & Expand

Rewrite using *wish/if only* and expand with a reason:

1. My Wi-Fi is too slow. (present unreal)

   _____

2. I didn't back up my work. (past regret)

   _____

3. My colleague sends too many emails. (annoyance)

   _____

4. I can't install the software. (present unreal)

   _____

5. I left my phone at home yesterday. (past regret)

   _____

Speaking – Tech Trouble Hotline

Setup:

Caro: You are "Tech Support."

Nico: Call about absurd problems you invent.

Task: You must respond using *wish/if only* + at least one idiom from the vocabulary list.

Examples:

- *My fridge keeps sending me spam emails. → If only it would mind its own business!*

- *My smartwatch keeps telling me to stand up during meetings. → I wish it could detect when I'm busy.*

Discussion – Future Tech

1. What technology do you think we'll laugh at in 20 years?
2. What's one device you *wish* existed but doesn't yet?
3. Should devices ever be allowed to make decisions for humans without asking? Why/why not?

Creative Task – "If Only My ___ Could ___"

- Choose any object and give it an unrealistic superpower.
- Share 3–4 sentences using *wish/if only* + vocabulary.
- Example: *If only my office chair could make coffee. I wish it would automatically adjust to my posture. I wish it could also schedule my meetings.*