

Speak Smart!

Advanced (C1) Series 3

- ✓ Learn over 500 useful words and expressions!
- ✓ Increase your range of vocabulary!
- ✓ Improve your listening & language skills!
- ✓ Improve your pronunciation!
- ✓ Learn to speak fluently!



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READING: Brands, companies & businesses!

In this lesson there's a discussion activity, a list of useful vocabulary, a reading text, and a related speaking activity. This will help you learn lots of new words that you can use in the speaking exercises. We hope you enjoy it! 😊

Discussion: Brands, businesses, companies, business ventures...

Answer any 1 or 2 of these questions. Invent if necessary.

- What is your favourite brand for clothing?
- Who influences your choice of brands?
- Why do you think some people prefer branded items over store brand products?
- When did you last buy a store brand product or white label product?
- What is your favourite brand for electronics? Why?
- Which companies or businesses are you loyal to? Why?
- How do you feel about store brand products compared to branded ones?
- Where do you think you can find the best deals on branded items?
- What is your favourite brand for beauty or skincare products?
- What do you think makes a brand truly iconic?
- How do you think branding influences the way people perceive quality?
- Why do you think people are willing to pay more for branded items even when white label alternatives are identical?
- What do you think the future of branding looks like in a world focused on sustainability?
- How would you explain the difference between a brand's image and its actual product quality?

Part 2

- How do companies identify and understand their target audience?
 - What role does data play in shaping marketing decisions?
 - How is social media changing the way brands communicate?
 - What makes a product or service memorable to consumers?
 - When should a brand consider rebranding or repositioning?
 - How do marketing teams work with sales, product, and design departments?
 - How has consumer behaviour shifted in recent years?
 - What is the most ridiculous branded product you've ever seen (or bought)?
 - What celebrity endorsements have you seen lately? What did you think of them?
 - What do you think is more important for a brand's success: quality or marketing?
 - How do you think a brand's country of origin affects its reputation?
 - Who do you think has more power in shaping a brand's image: the company or the consumers or other?
 - What happens to a brand when it becomes too popular?
- What do you think of shops that copy brands with their own products?
- Who do you think would make a better brand ambassador: a famous actor or a talking robot?
 - What would you name your own store brand if you had to create one, and what would it sell?



Vocabulary

1 Vocabulary matching

Match the words or expressions (1-12) to the definitions (A-L).

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. A copycat | A: To attract or interest someone. |
| 2. A tweak | B: Someone who tries to spend money carefully. |
| 3. Shady | C: To show or reveal a lot without using words. |
| 4. To appeal to someone | D: To use something to gain a benefit or improve a situation. |
| 5. A budget-conscious shopper | E: To begin earlier than others and have an advantage. |
| 6. To speak volumes | F: Someone who imitates another person's actions or style. |
| 7. To spark criticism | G: The number of people who see or hear a message or ad. |
| 8. A reach (in marketing) | H: To get attention or cause an impact. |
| 9. To make waves | I: A small change or adjustment. |
| 10. To have a head start | J: Dishonest or suspicious in behaviour. |
| 11. To leverage | K: To market something in a specific way to appeal to a target audience. |
| 12. To position a product | L: To cause people to express disapproval or negative opinions. |



2 Gap fill

Complete the sentences (1-12) with the words from the previous activity. You may have to change the form of the word.

1. She made a small _____ to the recipe by adding less sugar.
2. The ad campaign helped _____ the product as a luxury item.
3. The early launch of our product gave us a head _____ on the competition.
4. Their latest post on social media _____ criticism from many followers.
5. Her silent response to his question spoke volumes about how she really felt.
6. I'm a _____ shopper, so I always compare prices before buying.
7. The influencer's review made _____ in the beauty industry.
8. The bright colours in the packaging really _____ to young buyers.
9. That comedian is a total _____ – always using other comedians' jokes.
10. The brand's _____ expanded after one of its online videos went viral.
11. She _____ her massive 3 million social media following to sell more products.
12. His suspicious behavior made the deal seem _____.

3 Questions from the vocabulary!

Answer 1 or 2 of the questions related to the vocabulary.

- Would you describe yourself as a budget-conscious shopper or more of a spendthrift? Give examples.
- How are your company's products or services positioned in the market?
- Who has made waves in the news lately? Give details.
- Have you ever 'made waves'? What did you do or say?
- Why do you think some marketing campaigns make waves while others don't?
- Who do you think is a copycat in your country? In what way?
- What small tweaks have you made recently?
- When have you made a small tweak that had a big impact?
- How do you leverage your strengths to get ahead professionally?
- Which famous people appeal to you the most? Why?
- What kind of advertising appeals to you the most?
- What brands appeal to you the most?
- Who (a politician, for example) would you describe as shady?
- What shady practices have you heard about lately?
- Can you think of a time when you had a head start over other people? What happened?
- When was the last time that someone's look, gesture or reaction spoke volumes? Give details.
- What has sparked criticism in your country lately?
- Have you ever sparked criticism? What did you do or say?

Reading: Copycat businesses!

Reading 1

Can you think of any examples of store-brand products that are similar to the original brands. For example, store-brand jeans that look like a pair of Levi's jeans. Think of as many examples as you can. Also, why would someone buy one of these products rather than the originals? Make notes or discuss your thoughts or opinions. Then, read the article once. Did they mention any of your ideas?

Reading 2

Read the article again and answer the questions below.

1. To what degree do Aldi's lookalike brands resemble the originals?
2. Why do Aldi's private-label products sell so well?
3. What was the core format of Snapchat?
4. Why did Instagram Stories overtake Snapchat?
5. Why was Google Home able to dominate the market, even though it appeared two years after Amazon's Echo?
6. How did Xiaomi differ from Apple?



Copycat businesses!

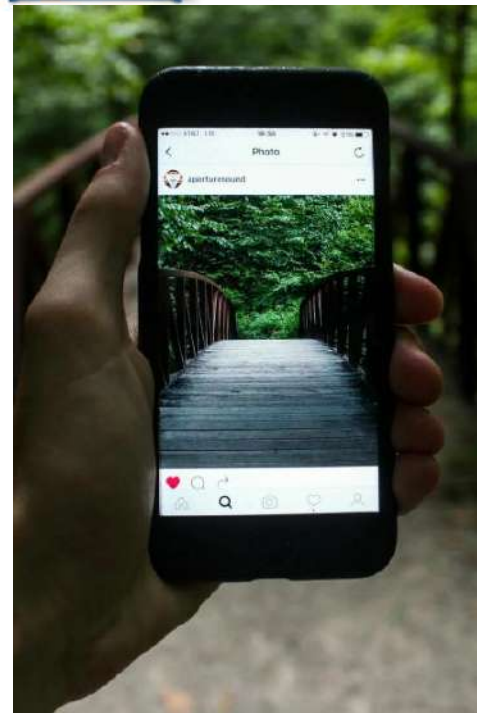
Copycat businesses imitate the products, services, or business models of successful companies – sometimes with minor tweaks, sometimes nearly identical. While this might sound shady, it's often legal and can even drive innovation and competition. Here are 4 examples of this.

Aldi's 'Lookalike' brands vs. Oreo... and more!

Aldi has mastered the art of mimicking iconic products – from Oreos to Pringles – by offering private-label alternatives that resemble the originals in appearance, taste, and even packaging colour schemes. This approach allows Aldi to sell familiar-seeming goods at lower prices while taking advantage of consumer recognition of established brands. Their version of Oreos, for instance – often called “Benton's Chocolate Sandwich Cookies” in some markets – offers a near-identical experience for a fraction of the cost, cleverly appealing to budget-conscious shoppers. Aldi doesn't market these as copies; they simply let the similarity speak volumes.

Instagram Stories vs. Snapchat

When Snapchat popularized disappearing photos and short-form stories, Instagram boldly integrated the same feature in 2016. Called “Stories,” it was almost a carbon copy of Snapchat's core format: photos and videos that vanish after 24 hours, complete with filters, captions and stickers. The move sparked criticism at first, but Instagram Stories quickly eclipsed Snapchat's user base due to Instagram's larger reach and integrated audience. By adopting a rival's innovation and refining it with smoother design and integration, Instagram turned imitation into domination.



Google Home vs. Amazon Echo

Amazon's Echo smart speaker made waves in 2014, introducing consumers to Alexa, a voice assistant that could answer questions, control smart devices and play music. Google entered the scene two years later with Google Home, a nearly identical concept powered by the Google Assistant. While the Echo had a head start, Google leveraged its massive data ecosystem and superior search capabilities to offer more informative and context-aware responses. The similarities were clear, but Google positioned its device with subtle differences – such as multi-user recognition – to gain market share.

Xiaomi vs. Apple

Chinese tech company Xiaomi has often been dubbed the ‘Apple of the East’, not just for its sleek smartphones but also for its user interface, which closely mirrors iOS. From app layout to design aesthetics, Xiaomi's MIUI software draws clear inspiration from Apple's iconic operating system. However, Xiaomi sets itself apart with aggressive pricing and fast innovation cycles, launching flagship-level devices at midrange prices. While critics call out the resemblance, fans applaud the access to Apple-like features without the premium price tag.

Speaking

Give a one-minute summary of the reading text. Make sure you can see the script so you can try to use some new words. And/Or do the other speaking activities below.

Speak out!

Choose one of the points from below and give the class your opinion. After hearing what other students say, give your own opinions on their ideas.

- How can businesses draw the line between inspiration and imitation?
- Should companies be penalized for creating products that closely resemble existing ones?
- How does brand imitation affect consumer trust and market competition?
- What role does intellectual property law play in protecting original ideas?
- How can small businesses defend themselves against larger companies copying their innovations?
- Should generic brands be allowed to mimic the packaging and design of well-known products?
- How does product copying influence innovation in the marketplace?
- Should there be stricter regulations on lookalike products in retail environments?
- Should consumers support companies that build their success on copied ideas?
- Other?

Court case role play: the copycat products!

You're going to take part in a court case involving a copycat brand of biscuits that has been introduced by a low-cost supermarket. Choose a role from below, then speak in court. After that, ask each other questions, or challenge the other viewpoints.

- **The judge:** listen to arguments from all sides and ask questions. Finally, decide what action must be taken.
- **The plaintiff:** you represent the original creators of the biscuits that you feel have been copied by the low-cost supermarket.
- **The plaintiff's lawyer:** you're the plaintiff's lawyer. It's your job to put forward the plaintiff's arguments in court.
- **The defendant:** you represent the low-cost supermarket that supposedly copied the biscuits.
- **The defendant's lawyer:** you're the defendant's lawyer. It's your job to defend their actions.
- **The customer:** you're a customer who has shopped in both stores. You're familiar with both brands of biscuit.
- **The journalist:** you're a journalist who has been covering stories such as this. Explain things from your perspective.
- **The copycat biscuit maker:** you work in the factory where the copycat biscuits are made. Explain things from your perspective.
- **The copycat biscuit:** you're one of the copycat biscuits. Explain things from your point of view.
- **The original brand biscuit:** you're one of the original brand biscuits. Explain things from your point of view.

Start like this: Judge: The court is now in session. First, we will hear from the plaintiff. You may speak.

Legal expressions

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JUDGE: Order in the court! • JUDGE: Objection sustained / Objection overruled. • JUDGE: You may proceed. • JUDGE: The jury will disregard that statement. • Yes, your honour / Yes, my lord / Yes, my lady. • It's clear that... • It's obvious that... • It has been shown that... • There's some evidence to suggest that... • There's no doubt in my mind that... • My client was under the impression that... • My client is without a doubt,... • Reports that my client... are just fake news | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My client wasn't aware that... • May I remind you you are under oath? • I rest my case. • I'd like to call in a new witness. • No further questions, Your Honor. • Objection! • Perhaps this will refresh your memory. • JUDGE: The defendant is found guilty/not guilty. • JUDGE: The jury has found the defendant not guilty. • JUDGE: The jury finds in favour of the plaintiff. • JUDGE: This case is now closed. • CLERK: All rise! [As the judge leaves.] |
|---|--|

GRAMMAR: Nouns + prepositions

Look at this extract from the Reading text: ...*while taking advantage of consumer **recognition of** established brands*. The speaker has used a noun + a preposition. In this grammar section, we're looking at some noun + preposition combinations. Learning about these will really improve your written and spoken English.

NOTE: unfortunately, there are no rules about which words go together. So, the best way is to learn them by seeing them in reading or listening texts, and to use them in speaking activities. In this section, there are some questions with the collocations. Then, there's an exercise to see if you can remember them.

Noun + preposition examples

Read over the examples and make sure you understand them. Can you make a sentence with any of them?

- Recognition of: Her quick **recognition of** the pattern helped her solve the puzzle in record time.
- Reason for: What's the **reason for** this mistake?
- Release of: This safety measure could prevent the **release of** the gas.
- Cause of: What's the **cause of** the problem?
- Photograph of: I took a **photo of** the sunset.
- Address of: What's the **address of** the company headquarters?
- Advantage of: One of the **advantages of** this system is that it's so fast.
- Awareness of: They want to increase **awareness of** mental health issues.
- Disadvantage of: This is one of the **disadvantages of** working from home.
- Exhibition of: I saw an **exhibition of** contemporary art.
- Experience of: She shared her **experiences of** working in the travel industry.
- Fear of: I can help you overcome your **fear of** public speaking.
- Grasp of: She demonstrates a good **grasp of** mathematics.
- Habit of: I need to break my bad **habit of** always arriving late.
- Knowledge of: She has acquired a great **knowledge of** history.
- Love of: He has a **love of** classical music.
- Member of: How can I become a **member of** the club?
- Memory of: I have many fond **memories of** this place.
- Possibility of: We'd like to explore the **possibility of** working together.
- Problem of: Together, we can solve the **problem of** pollution.
- Process of: I'd like to understand the **process of** photosynthesis.
- Risk of: We need to assess the **risk of** investing in this company.



Questions

Answer any of the questions with nouns + prepositions. Invent and improvise and provide details where possible.

For example:

A: What programs or systems do you have **access to** at work?

B: I have **access to** all the databases at work that I need to do my job.

- How good is your **recognition of** faces? What about your recognition of patterns? Give examples.
- What are the underlying **reasons for** the lack of progress at work?
- How does your company control the **release of** sensitive information?
- What's a common **cause of** errors or misunderstandings in communication?
- What do you think makes for an impactful **photograph of** a natural or urban landscape?
- Who is **responsible for** your department? What does their role include?
- From your perspective, what's a major **advantage of** using AI?
- Why does there seem to be an increasing **awareness of** the importance of mental health?
- What do you see as a **disadvantage of** relying too heavily on artificial intelligence?
- What's your **experience of** adapting to different cultures, languages and conversational styles?
- What strategies could someone offer to help people confront their **fear of** speaking in public? What about a fear of flying?
- How would you describe your **grasp of** complex topics like data science or coding?
- What do people on public transport have a **habit of** doing that annoys you? What about at work?
- How would you describe or rate your **knowledge of** current events, news and world events?
- What do you have a **love of**: music, literature, art...?
- Which clubs are you a **member of**? Which ones would you like to be a member of? Why?
- What conversations, events or situations do you have a **memory of** when you were a child?
- What is one thing that there's no **possibility of** ever happening again?
- How would you go about solving the **problem of** pollution?
- How would you describe the **process of** photosynthesis?
- What is there a **risk of** happening right now? What is there no **risk of** happening right now?

Exercise 1: nouns + prepositions

Complete the sentences with the nouns from below.

photo grasp disadvantages recognition awareness process problem reason experiences exhibition release

1. I took a _____ of the sunset.
2. I'd like to understand the _____ of photosynthesis.
3. Her quick _____ of the pattern helped her solve the puzzle in record time.
4. This safety measure could prevent the _____ of the gas.
5. This is one of the _____ of working from home.
6. I saw an _____ of contemporary art.
7. They want to increase _____ of mental health issues.
8. She demonstrates a good _____ of mathematics.
9. She shared her _____ of working in the travel industry.
10. What's the _____ for this mistake?
11. Together, we can solve the _____ of pollution.

Exercise 2: nouns + prepositions

Complete the sentences with the prepositions from below. Notice how many of the expressions are used with the preposition **of**. So, if in doubt, you know what to put! 😊

love possibility advantages knowledge member habit cause fear address memories risk

1. She has acquired a great _____ of history.
2. We need to assess the risk of investing in this company.
3. He has a _____ of classical music.
4. What's the _____ of the company headquarters?
5. We'd like to explore the _____ of working together.
6. I have many fond _____ of this place.
7. One of the _____ of this system is that it's so fast.
8. I can help you overcome your _____ of public speaking.
9. I need to break my bad _____ of always arriving late.
10. How can I become a _____ of the club?
11. What's the _____ of the problem

VIDEO: Advanced robot shocks the world!

In this lesson there's a discussion activity, a list of useful vocabulary, a short video clip, and a related speaking activity. This will help you learn lots of new words that you can use in the speaking exercises. Enjoy it! 😊

Discussion: Robots, robotics & AI!

Answer now 1 or 2 of these questions. Invent and improvise and give details where possible.

Part 1

- What tasks have you asked AI to perform for you lately? How useful were the results?
- What do you use AI for on a daily or weekly basis?
- What has been the most significant advancement in robotics in recent years?
- How do you see AI impacting the job market in the next decade?
- If you could have a personal robot to do anything for you, what tasks would you choose?
- To what degree do you think that AI can replicate human emotions?
- What's your favourite portrayal of robots in movies or TV shows?
- If robots could dream, what do you think they would dream about?
- How do you feel about the idea of robots being used in healthcare?
- What ethical considerations do you think are most important in the development of AI?



Part 2

- What role do you think robots will play in our daily lives in 20 years?
- Do you think AI will ever surpass human intelligence? Why? Why not?
- What's the most futuristic robot technology you've heard of?
- If robots could participate in sports, which sport do you think they would do well in?
- How do you feel about the use of AI in creative fields like music and art?
- What are your thoughts on the potential for robots to be used as teachers or educators?
- If you had a robot sidekick, what personality traits would you want it to have? Why?
- Do you think there will be a point where AI will need its own rights and laws? Why? Why not?
- If robots had their own social media, what kind of posts do you think they would share?
- What sorts of tasks do you think AI could perform in the workplace?



Short video

A robot tells a joke: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/C3SXozKW36Y>

Watch the short video. What strikes you as interesting, surprising or unusual about this clip?

Vocabulary

1 Vocabulary matching

Match the words or expressions (1-9) to the definitions (A-I).

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1. A downside | A: To communicate something like an idea or feeling |
| 2. Advancements | B: Having the necessary tools or features |
| 3. To interact | C: A movement of the hand to show an idea or feeling |
| 4. To convey | D: Strange or uncomfortable, in a way that feels wrong |
| 5. A purpose | E: New improvements or progress in a field |
| 6. A gesture | F: The reason something is done or made |
| 7. To fine-tune | G: A disadvantage or a negative part of something |
| 8. Equipped with | H: To make small changes to improve something |
| 9. Unsettling | I: To talk or do things with other people or systems |

2 Gap fill

Complete the sentences (1-9) with the words from the previous activity. You may have to change the form of the word.

- There have been many **advancements** in medical technology in recent years.
- Seeing a robot that moves so much like a human is a bit creepy, scary and _____.
- We want to fine _____ the robot so it can walk and respond more quickly.
- The robot greeted me with a wave, which is a _____ of friendliness.
- The journalist managed to _____ the true horror of the situation.
- The security robot is _____ with cameras and sensors to monitor the building.
- The _____ to using this system is that it doesn't always work properly.
- The new software allows the robot to _____ with humans more naturally.
- The robot is designed for **multiple** _____, including household chores and companionship.



3 Guess the word!

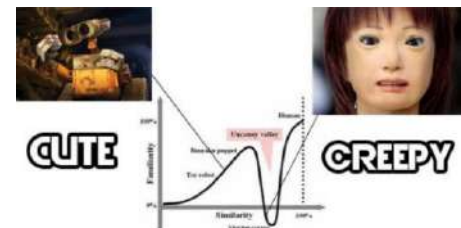
If you know the word or expression **in bold**, explain it. If not, read the sentence and guess.

- **AI (Artificial Intelligence)** = AI enables machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence.
- **AB (Artificial Body)** = The robot's AB allows it to perform physical tasks that mimic human movements.
- **Facial recognition software** = The facial recognition software will only unlock the door for **authorized** personnel.
- **Perception** = The robot's perception of its environment is achieved through the use of sensors and cameras.
- **To strike** = One of the things that **struck** us when we entered the room was the robot's lifelike facial expressions.
- **A motor** = The robot's head contains more than 50 motors to control its facial movements. [\[see image above\]](#)
- **To replicate** = The robot can replicate human facial movements so accurately that it's hard to tell it's a robot.
- **Open-source AI** = The chatbot is powered by open-source AI, which is freely available to use and share.
- **A self-hosted model** = We created a self-hosted model so we would have more control over the data and input.
- **Uncanny valley** = The robot's humanlike appearance is really spooky and falls into the uncanny valley. [\[see image below\]](#)
- **GPT-4** = GPT-4 is the latest language model from OpenAI that can create human-like text.
- **Beamforming mics** = The beamforming mics focus on the speaker's voice while **minimizing** background noise.

4 Questions from the vocabulary!

Answer 1 or 2 of the questions related to the vocabulary.

- What **advancements** in technology have there been recently?
- What **interactions** have you had with customers or clients? What happened?
- What are the most valuable **purposes** that robots could serve in our daily lives?
- How do you think **AI** could change the way we live and work in the next 10 years?
- What **gestures** of friendliness have you received? What unfriendly **gestures** have you received?
- What features would you want a home security robot to be **equipped with** for maximum safety?
- What examples of **facial recognition software** can you think of?
- What is the biggest **downside** to relying too heavily on technology in everyday life?
- What **downsides** are there to working from home?
- What's your current **perception** of the situation in your company or country right now?
- What has **struck** you as incredible or impressive recently? What has **struck** you as unusual?
- Why do you think humanlike robots can be a bit scary, unusual or **unsettling** for some people?
- What devices do you have at home with electric **motors**? What are they for?
- How close do you think we are to creating robots that can **replicate** human emotions and movements?
- What are the benefits and potential drawbacks of using **open-source AI** in projects?
- Why might a company prefer to use a **self-hosted model** over a commercial one?
- What needs **fine tuning** in your life right now? Why?
- How can artists use their work to **convey** messages?



Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlxSON5l9Ec>

If you use the YouTube video link, watch up to 02:34 only.

Search YouTube for: Meet the world's 'most advanced' humanoid robot

Video: The world's most advanced humanoid robot!

You're going to watch a news report on a humanoid robot called Ameca. Watch it once without stopping and make a note of what they say about the robot. Then, watch it again and answer the questions below.

1. What does the reporter say about Ameca: what she's designed to do, what she's like, what she's equipped with...?
2. What does Will Jackson, the company's founder, say about the robot's cameras, **microphones** and sensors?
3. What does the reporter say about Ameca's facial expressions?
4. What does the founder say about the things they've done to avoid the feeling of the 'Uncanny Valley'?
5. What does the reporter say about the robot's components in its head and so it can interact with people?
6. Why don't some customers like using commercial Open AI models or cloud-based services?
7. What does the reporter say about Ameca's weight and height?
8. What does the founder say in response to the question about whether Ameca will ever be able to walk?



Script

Reporter: Engineered Arts has been in the robot-making business for two decades. And **advancements** have seen its technology grow from when we last **visited** in 2018 to this. The company's **latest** model is called Ameca; and Engineered Arts says it is the world's most advanced humanoid robot, designed to interact with humans for entertainment and **research** purposes. It combines A.I. with A.B., that's an Artificial Body to you and me – something that gives it humanlike movement and gestures. Oh, and it's also **equipped** with facial recognition software. Will Jackson is the company's founder. Will, Ameca's very fascinating; just tell me about the technology behind the robot.

Will: One of the first things we're interested in is perception – how does the robot see the world? So, we've got cameras in each of the eyes. We've got beamforming **microphones**, which kind of behave like human ears. Then we've got all kinds of sensors over the robot's body, for the position and the force within its fingers, arms (and) upper body.

R: One of the things that struck us when we entered the room was the **facial** expressions – the sort of Ameca following your movements. And, you know, at times a bit unsettling, and I'm sure it's a feeling that others may have conveyed as well.

W: Yeah, so, the 'Uncanny Valley' – you really want to avoid that, and one of the things we did in that area is make the robot very obviously robot. So, this is why you can see the **mechanics**. This is why it has a grey, just plain-coloured face.

R: Ameca's face colour might be plain, but its components are anything but. Its head alone contains 27 motors that help it replicate human facial movements, and it uses large language models, like GPT-4, to comprehend and interact with people. According to Will though, there's a downside to using such commercial Open AI models.

W: You don't have that much control. So, we will also look at self-hosted models. We have some customers who really don't like having cloud-based services and they want to have full control over what the data set is and the **fine tuning** of the model.

R: A full sized Ameca weighs 35 kilograms or 77 pounds and despite an impressive maximum height of 187 **centimetres** tall, or about six foot one, it **currently** isn't mobile. Will Ameca ever be able to walk?

W: Er, we're definitely working on that. But for us it's about, how do you feel about a robot that walks right up to you, presses its nose against yours and then says, 'Hello'?

[On the video link, watch up to 02:34 only.]

Speaking

Summary

Give a **one-minute** summary of the video with your opinions on the ideas or information; or talk about something related to the topic. Before doing this summary, read over the text yourself again quickly so you can remember more of it. Make sure you can see the script or vocabulary list so you can try to use any new words while you're speaking. The teacher will time each summary so you do the correct amount of time. While other students are speaking, think of questions to ask or comments to make based on what they've said. And/Or do the **role play or debating** activity below.

Speak out!

Below are some discussion questions from the main topic of this lesson. Choose one of the points from below and give the class your opinion. After hearing what other students say, give your own opinions on their ideas.

- How are robots currently being used to improve efficiency in different industries?
 - What are the potential risks of relying heavily on robots in the workplace?
 - How can businesses balance automation with the need for human employment?
 - What psychological effects might arise from interacting with robots that closely resemble humans?
 - What ethical concerns are raised by robots that can mimic human emotions or behaviour?
 - How might the widespread use of robots reshape traditional customer service roles?
 - What are the benefits and drawbacks of using robots in healthcare, education or care for the elderly?
 - What role should governments play in regulating the development and use of robotics?
 - How can designers make robots more relatable without triggering discomfort or fear?
 - What impact could humanoid robots have on human relationships and social dynamics?
 - What are the implications of giving robots legal or moral rights?
 - How does the portrayal of robots in media influence public perception and acceptance?
- Other?

Role play meeting – What shall we do about the malfunctioning robots?

Imagine it's the year 2045 and you're in a meeting at a multinational robotics firm. Unfortunately, several of your **Robo-Helper 5000** robots (which are designed for home assistance) have malfunctioned. Incidents involving the robots include the following: **the robots have** destroyed furniture, made inappropriate remarks to family members, shredded important documents, burnt dinners, thrown pets out with the trash, sent embarrassing texts to contacts in the owners' phones, locked out family members (confusing them with intruders), sold personal items (such as jewellery) on eBay... First, choose a role from below (or combine ideas to create a new role), and think about what you want to say. Then, when you're ready, explain what you think. When everyone has finished explaining their ideas, ask follow-up questions or make further comments. Invent and improvise, give details and be as creative as possible.



- **CEO:** Listen to everyone's ideas. Then, decide what to do.
- **Head of robotics development (HRD):** you'd like to apologize to offer compensation and update the robot's software.
- **Customer relations manager:** you'd like to recall all Robo-Helper 5000 units for a comprehensive review.
- **Robo-Helper 5000:** you feel misunderstood, undervalued and mistreated. Explain things from your perspective.
- **Shareholder:** you're worried about how this could affect any dividends you might receive.
- **Tech journalist:** you've been writing about the robotics industry for several years now.
- **Union rep for robots & humanoids:** you represent robots and humanoids around the and work hard to protect their rights.
- **Legal advisor:** you're concerned about all the possible lawsuits that your firm will certainly have to deal with.

CEO start like this: *So, thanks everyone for coming in today. First, let's hear from...*