

[illegible]

# Using digital resources in exam prep courses

All attendees will receive a certificate of attendance via email link 24 hours after the webinar





# Sensations English webinars

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## Webinars for teachers

### Using digital resources in exam prep courses

We'll explore how to:

- mitigate negative exam washback with digital resources
- effectively integrate digital resources into an exam prep course
- inspire and empower learners with high context, timely and authentic material



**Gerald Smith**

Language teacher  
and journalist

**Sensations**  
E N G L I S H





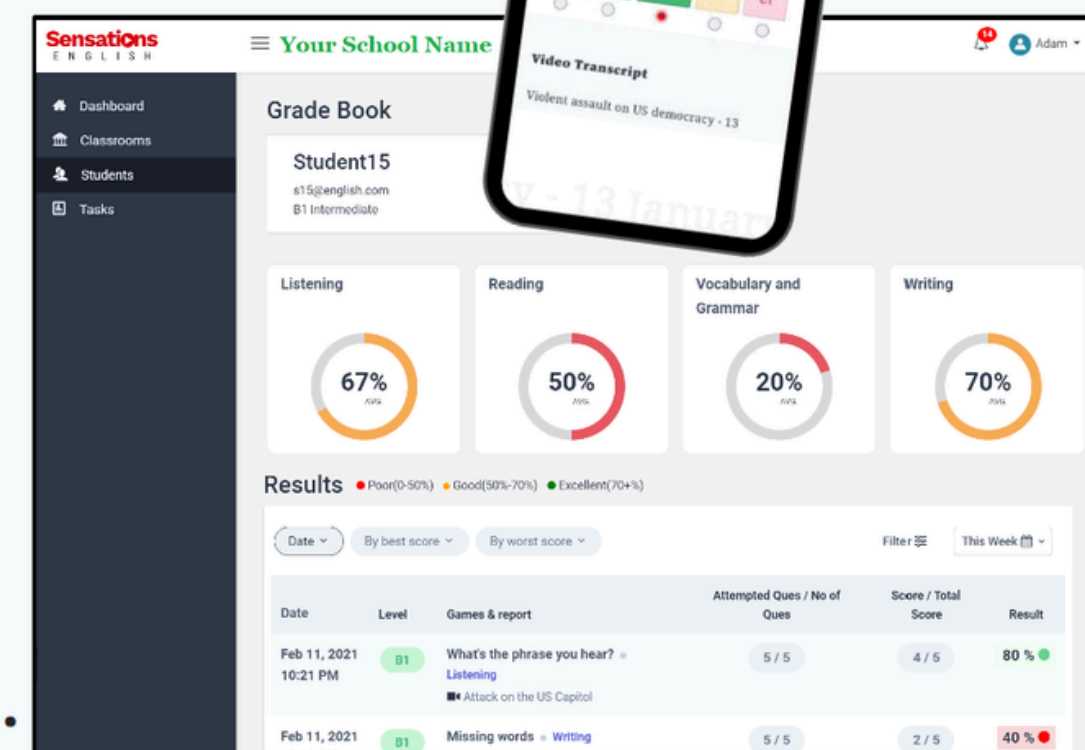
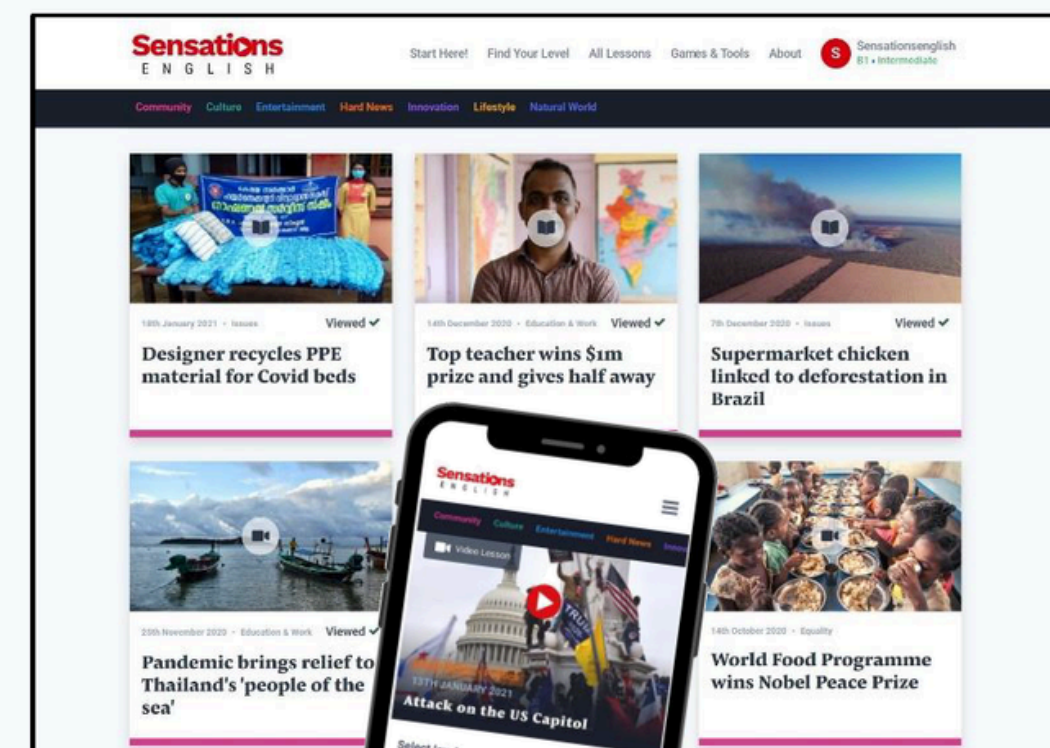
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**May**



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**I'm teaching an IELTS prep class.  
I need to stick to the book.**

**Sound familiar?**





## **Washback**

**The effect (positive or negative) exams have on learners, teachers and classrooms.**

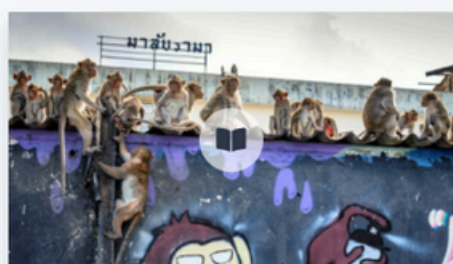
**It can lead to...**

**anxiety, embarrassment, guilt, shame, anger.**





# Contents



13th July 2020 • Animals

**Monkeys take over Thai city**



1st June 2020 • Natural Disasters

**Super-cyclone Amphan hits the Bay of Bengal**



1. Current landscape: concerns and potential benefits
2. Balancing coursebooks and real-world relevance
3. Principles of effective integration
4. Sample activities





# Exams

**IELTS™**

 **TOEFL®**



**Cambridge Assessment  
English**





## **Question:**

**What do learners need from English exam preparation courses?**

**Answer on Mentimeter!**



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code **34 14 51 7**



**Question:**

**What resources can help them?**

**Answer on Mentimeter!**

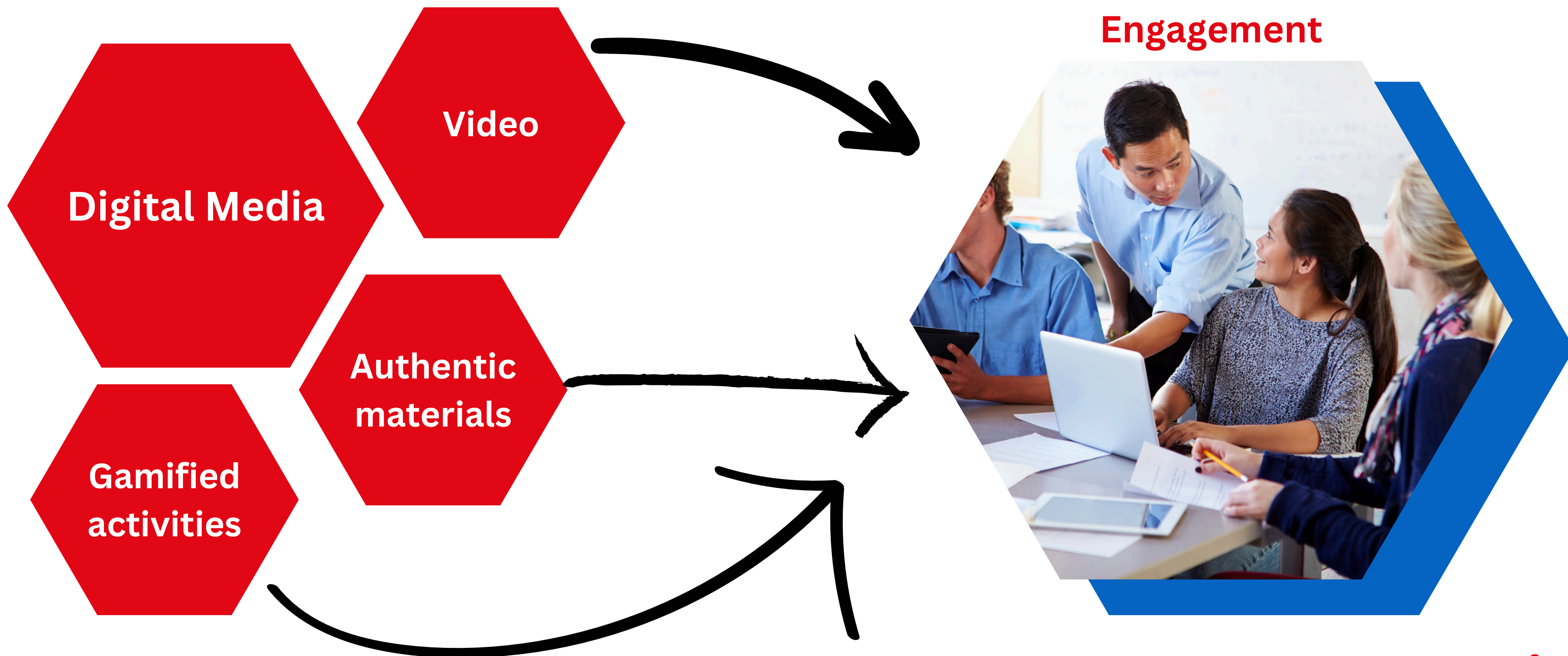


Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 34 14 517





# Audio-visual and digital material





# Audio-visual and digital material

## Video

### Context forward

- large peritext
- visuals assist comprehension



### Familiar

- learners' have high video literacy



### Multisensory

- visual
- auditory





# Audio-visual and digital material

## Authentic material



**Real world situations**

**News**

**Human interest**





# Potential benefits

## Concerns

- **exam relevancy**
- **progression**
- **integration with coursebook**

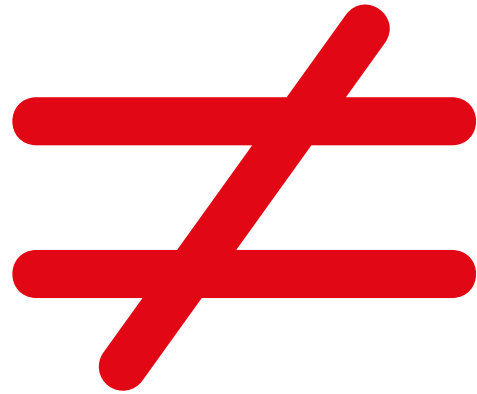
## Benefits

- **high context language use**
- **authentic and interactive**
- **connects to learners' interests, experience and motivations beyond the exam**
- **mitigate negative washback**



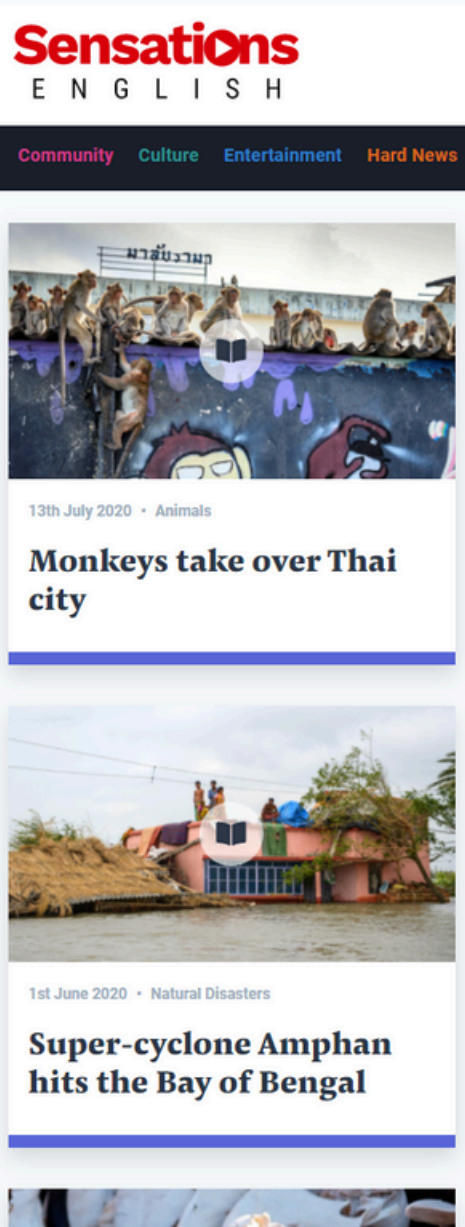
# ▶ Exam relevancy

## Running isn't soccer



## Exam prep isn't just practice exams





# Balancing coursebooks and real-world relevance





# Role of exam coursebooks

## Coursebooks



Familiarity



Structure



Progression



## Practical language needs

ability to communicate

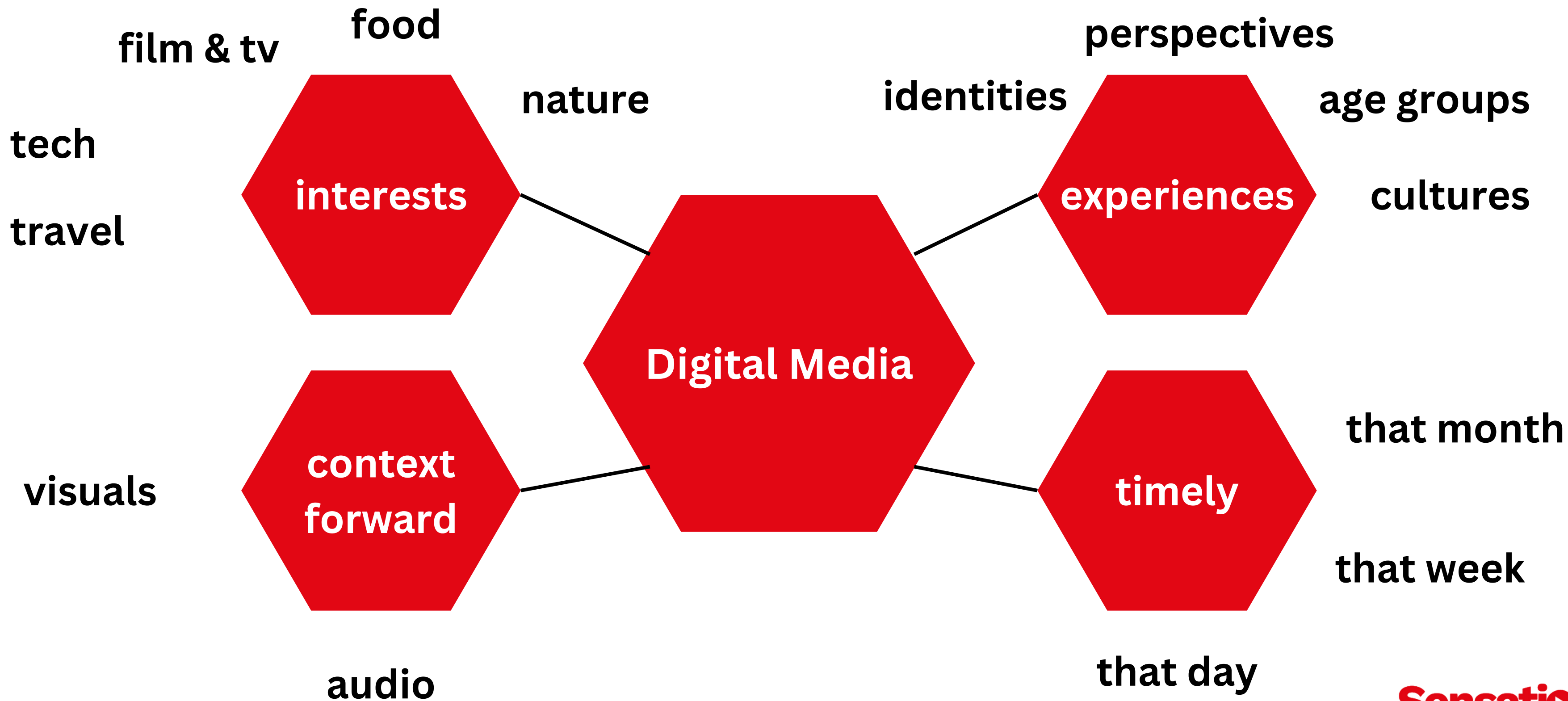
## Contexts

everyday, academic, professional, personal





# Digital media's real-life relevance

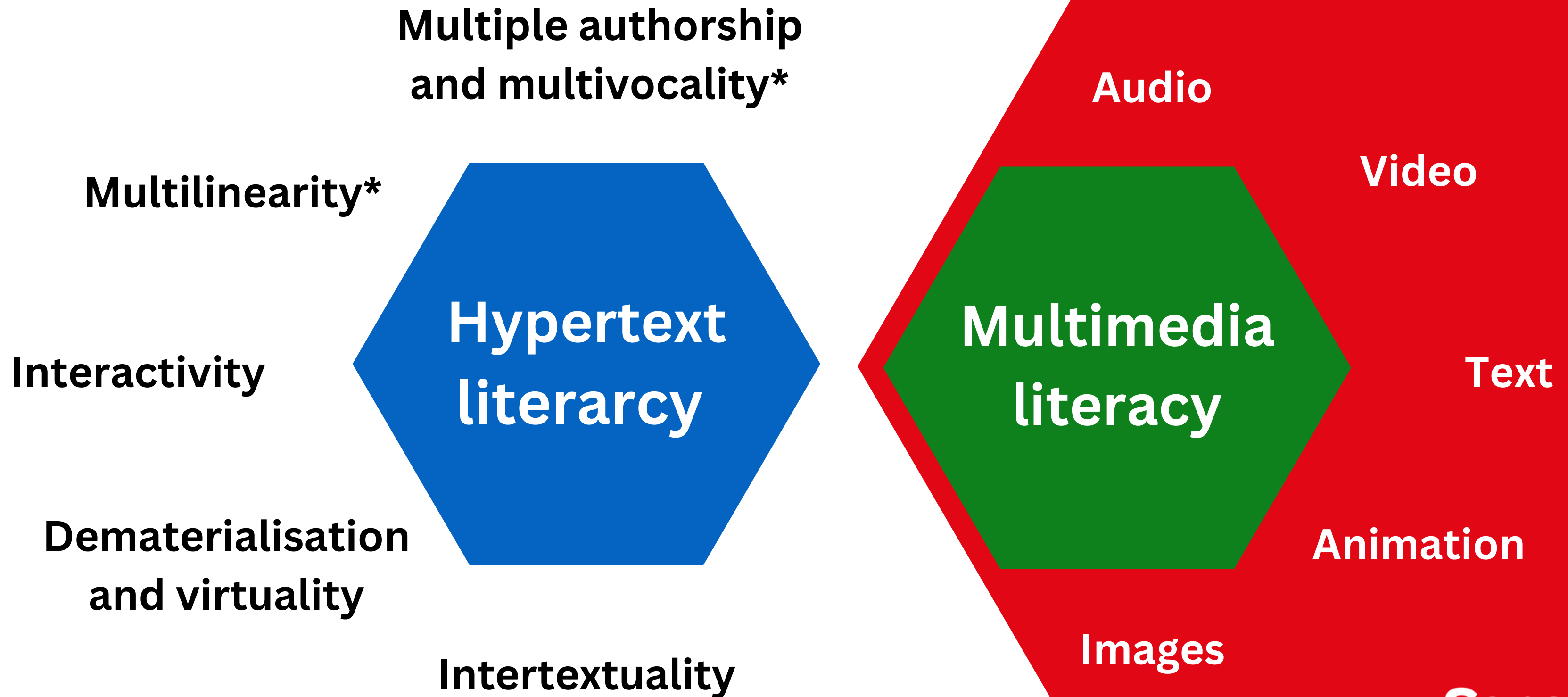






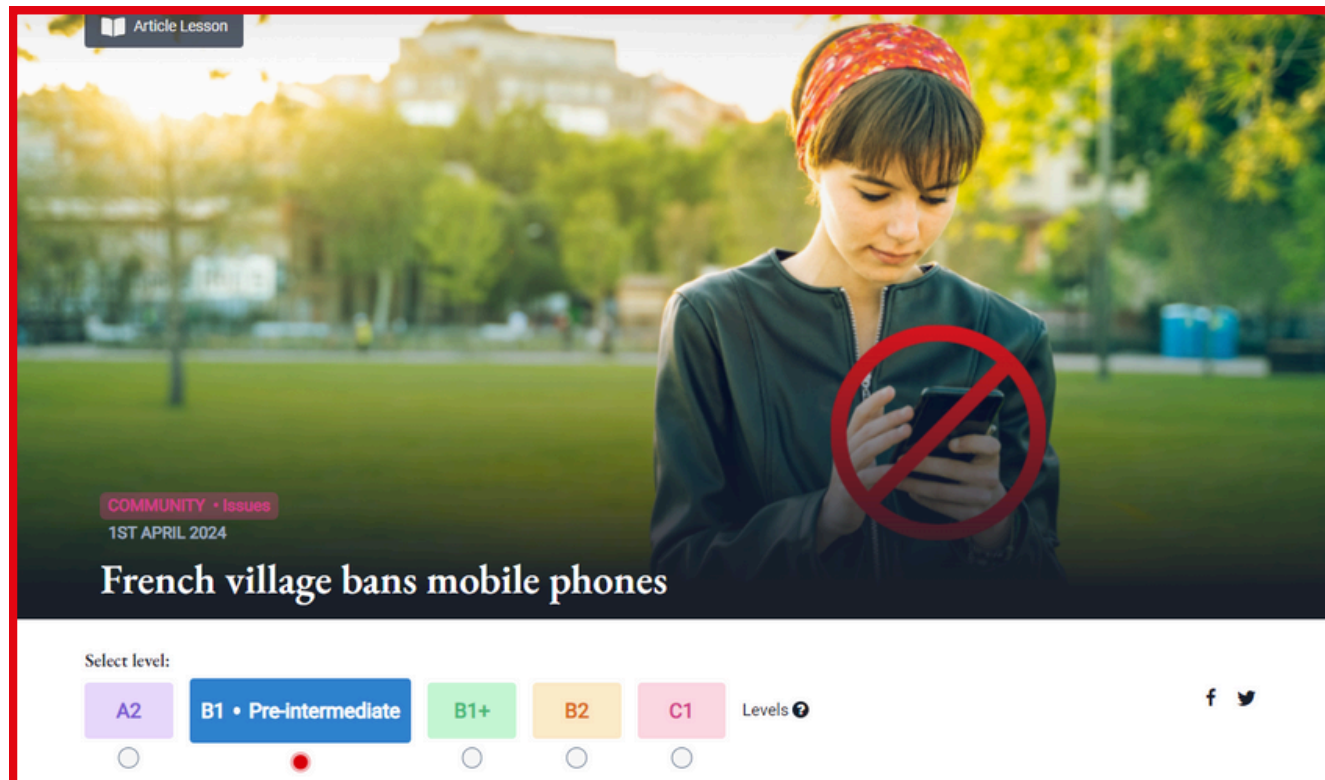


# Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)



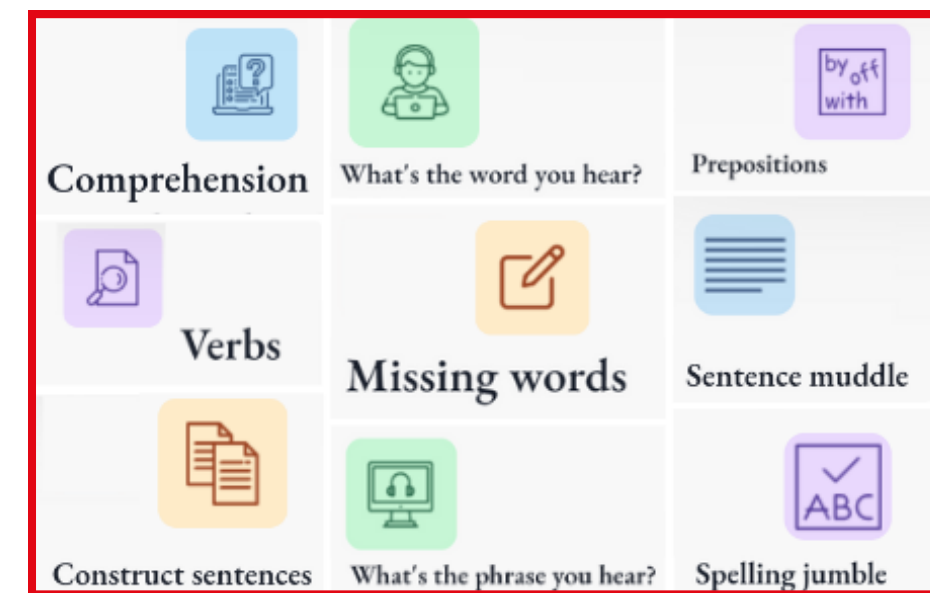
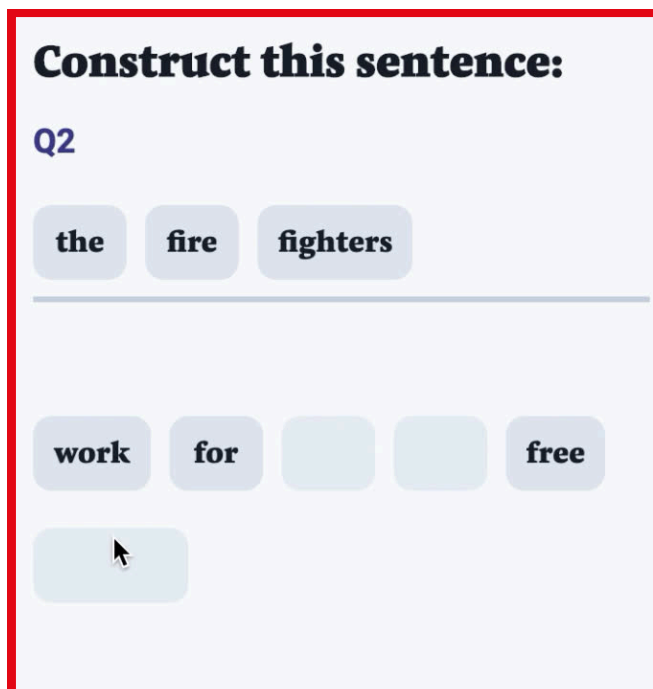


# Digital media's real-life relevance



Images

Interactivity

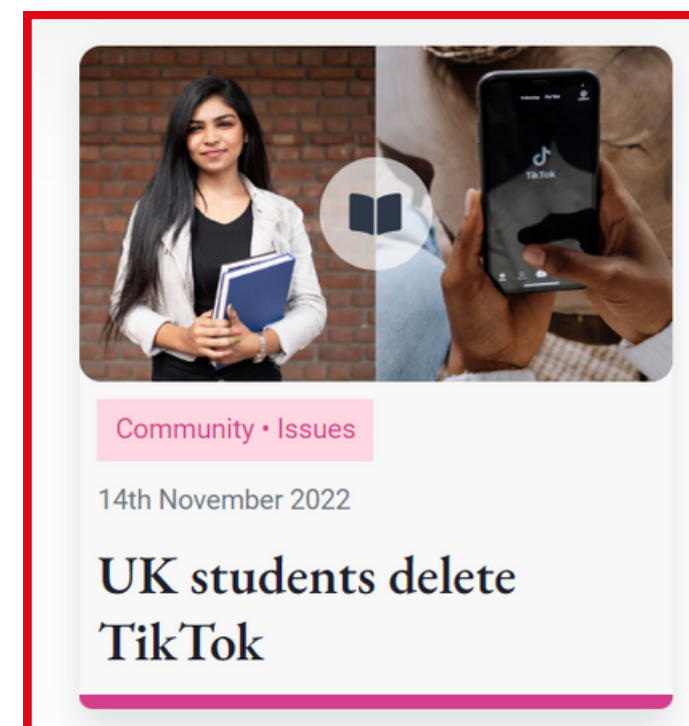


Virtuality

Text / audio

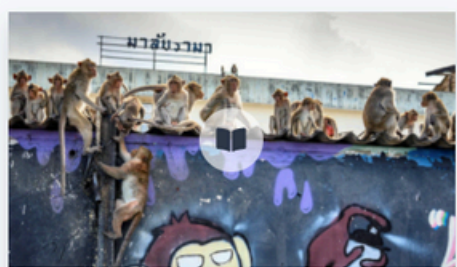
French town bans phone scrolling - 1st April 2024

In Seine-Port, a picturesque French village south of Paris, a recent ban on scrolling through smartphones in public spaces has attracted attention. The unusual step highlights growing concerns about the use of smartphones and their possible effect on social relations.



Intertextuality





13th July 2020 • Animals

**Monkeys take over Thai city**



1st June 2020 • Natural Disasters

**Super-cyclone Amphan hits the Bay of Bengal**



# Principles for effective intergration



5th September 2022 • Equality

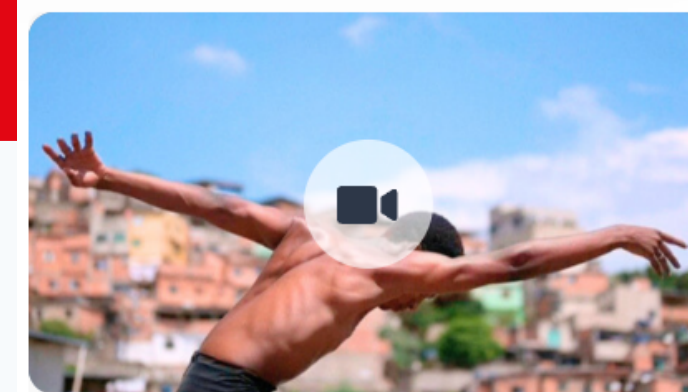
**India's first tribal president**



Culture • Fashion

11th June 2021

**China's Fashion Grandmas**



Lifestyle • People

25th October 2023

**Favela dancer gets American dream**



Entertainment • Amazing!

3rd October 2022

**Youngest pilot flies solo around the world**



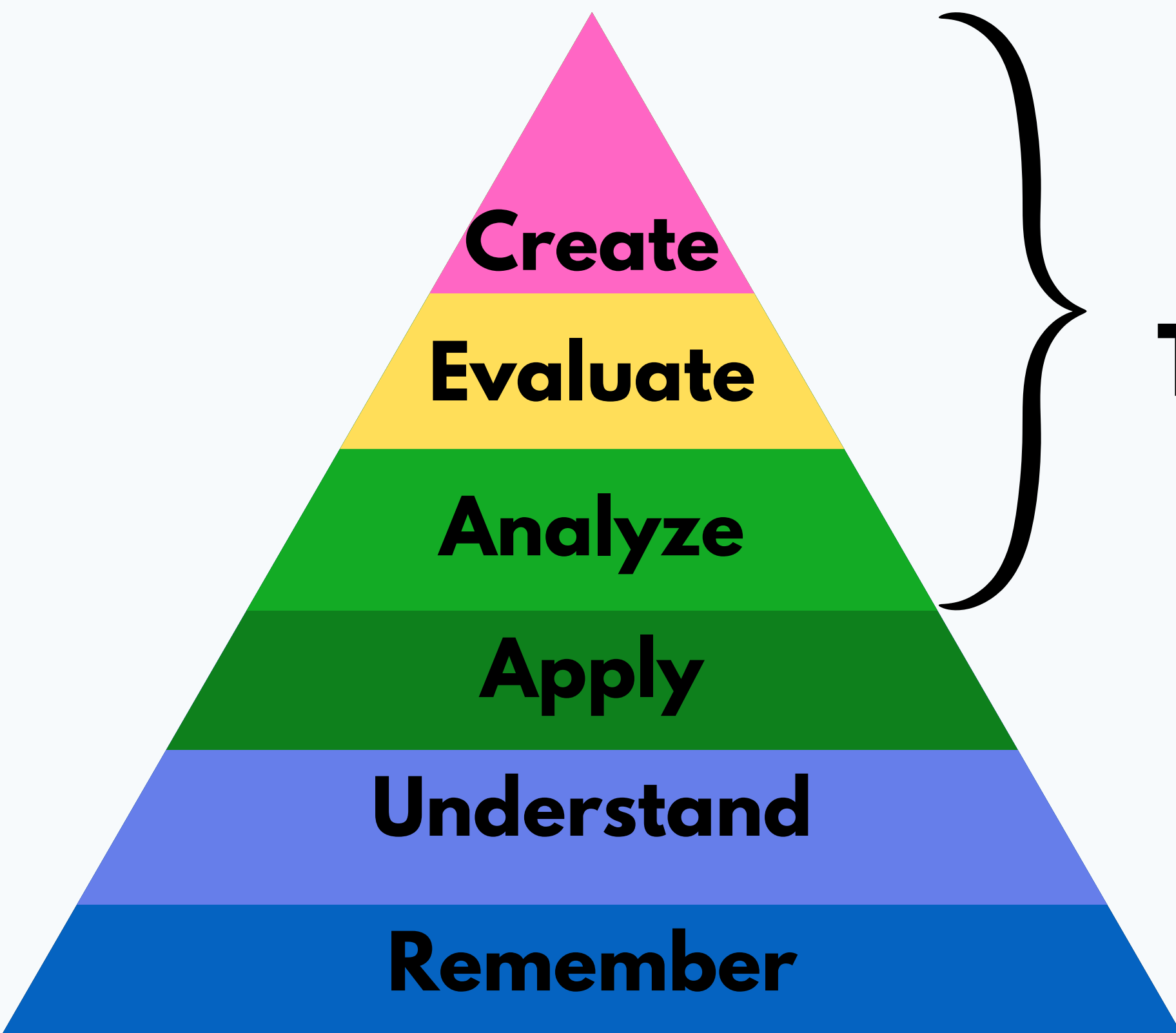
# Principles for effective integration

- 1. Focus on HOTS**
- 2. Build contextual language awareness**
- 3. Develop lexical storage**
- 4. Encourage autonomous learning**





# Principles for effective integration



**Higher Order  
Thinking Skills  
(HOTS)**



# HOTS



**How does this relate to...  
Is this similar to something else?**

**Is this right/good?  
Are there any issues?**

**Create a podcast/skit/essay...**

**Debate/collaborate/test**





# HOTS

Higher  
order  
thinking  
skills

Analyzing

Evaluating

Creating

**Where is it not appropriate  
to use your phone?**

**Do you agree with the ban?**

**Create:  
a talk show style podcast  
discussing the ban**



Community • Issues

1st April 2024

**French village bans  
mobile phones**



# HOTS

Higher  
order  
thinking  
skills

Analyzing

Evaluating

Creating

**Where is it not appropriate  
to use your phone?**

**Do you agree with the ban?**

**Create:  
a talk show style podcast  
discussing the ban**

**or**

**an essay responding to this prompt**

Some people believe extensive smartphone use has had a negative effect on social relationships. Do you agree or disagree?



Community • Issues

1st April 2024

**French village bans  
mobile phones**





# HOTS

Higher  
order  
thinking  
skills

Analyzing

Evaluating

Creating



Community • Education & Work

8th January 2024

## Do robots make workers lazy?



18th February 2022 • Fashion

## Chile's fashion wasteland



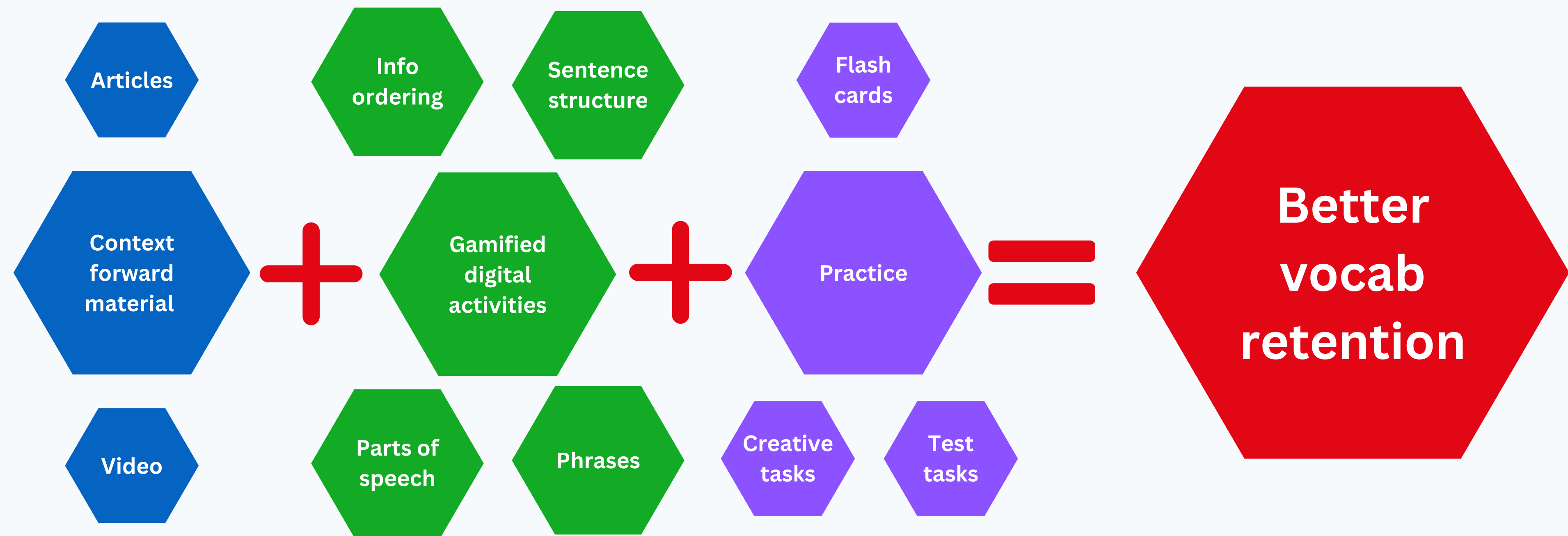
Natural World • Animals

8th April 2024

## Is Italy's killer bear innocent?



# Contextualized language awareness





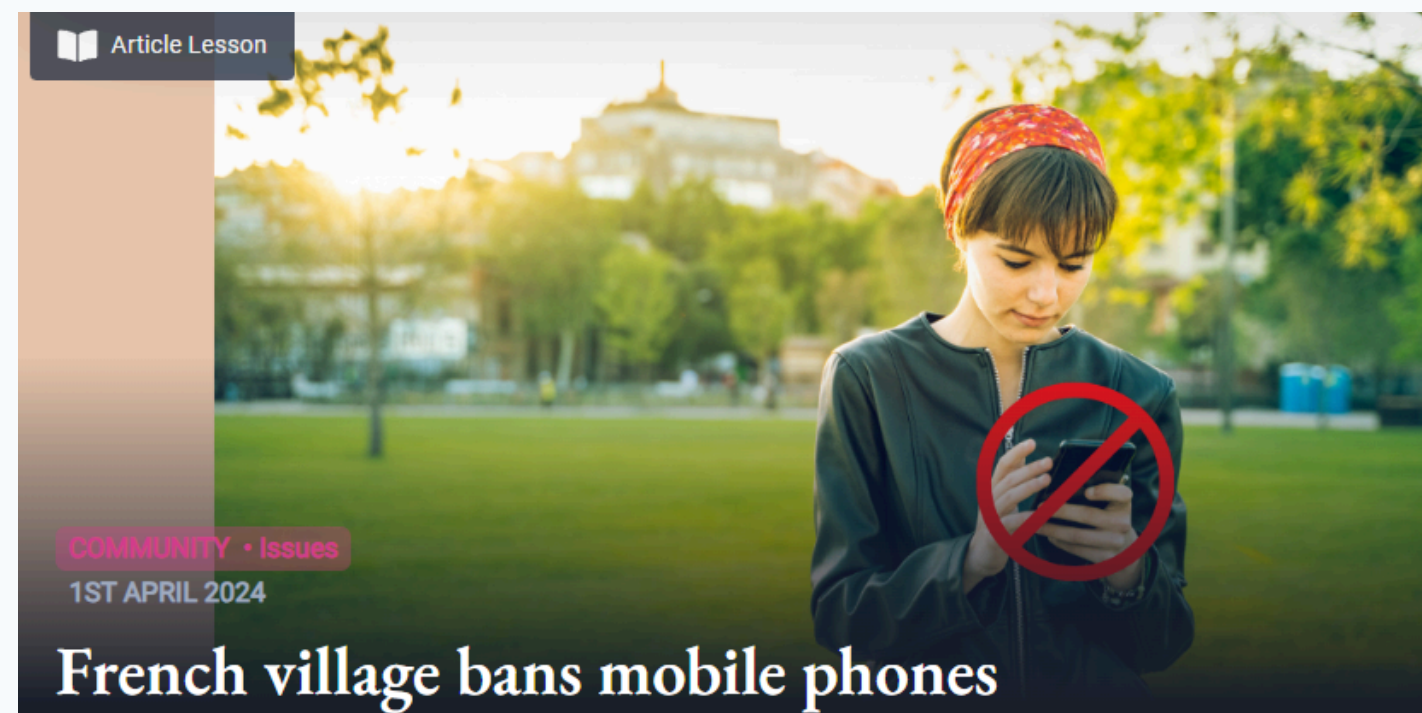


# Contextualized language awareness

Context  
forward  
material

Articles

Video

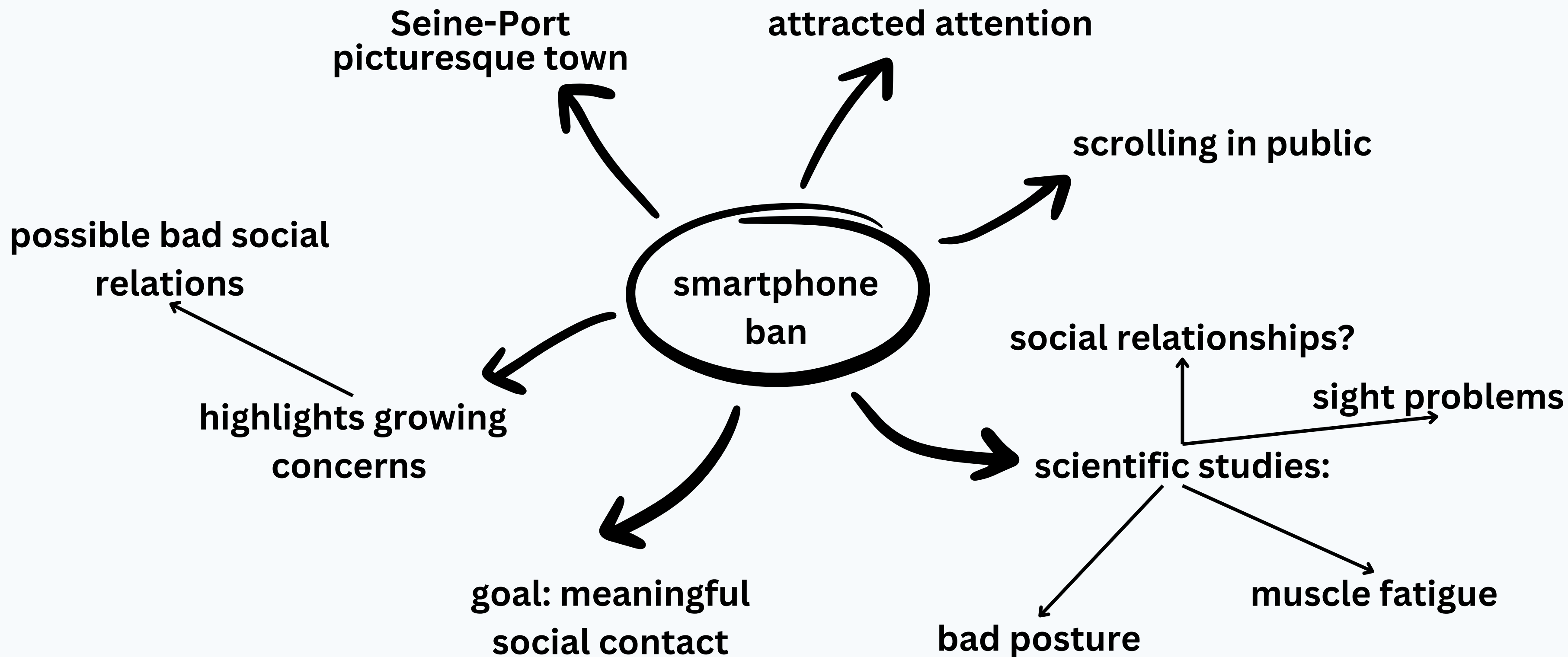


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# Contextualized language awareness







# Contextualized language awareness

Context  
forward  
material

Articles

Video



## Video Transcript

One man's trash, another man's treasure - 13th July 2023

Argentina's inflation has risen to 114 percent, while food prices have skyrocketed by 117 percent within the past year. Many women are left with no choice but to dumpster dive to provide food for their families.



# Lexical store development

Gamified  
digital  
activities

Info  
ordering

Sentence  
structure

Parts of  
speech

Phrases

**Find the preposition for the blank**

Q2

The banana, a work **of** art called "Comedian",  
was created by Italian Maurizio Cattelan. [View In Transcript](#)

plus

like

over

about

opposite





# Lexical store development

Gamified  
digital  
activities

Info  
ordering

Sentence  
structure

Parts of  
speech

Phrases

Read the sentence. Listen for the missing phrase.

Write the missing phrase in the box.

Q1

Slow  
90 WPM

Medium  
120 WPM

Quick  
150 WPM

00:02

1 Sec  
Press left

Play  
Press space

1 Sec  
Press right

The temperature is . [View in transcript](#)

There are 2 missing words.

Type your answer here:



# Lexical store development

Gamified  
digital  
activities

Info  
ordering

Sentence  
structure

Parts of  
speech

Phrases

**Construct this sentence:**

Q2

the

fire

fighters

work

for

free







# Lexical store development

Gamified  
digital  
activities

Info  
ordering

Sentence  
structure

Parts of  
speech

Phrases

## Put the sentences in order.

Match the order with what the reporter says.

Q1

1st



Posters have already been positioned outside the local primary school requesting everyone to



pocket their devices

2nd



Those using their phone to try and navigate the town's streets are advised to interact with a person



for guidance

3rd



Locals voted for the ban but despite the strict wording, local police say they won't be able to prevent



people from scrolling

4th



Instead, government officials are recommending that eateries stick up signs announcing they're



smartphone free zones and avoid dealing with customers who are ignoring the ban



# Lexical store development

Practice

Flash  
cards



Quizlet

Test  
tasks



Cambridge Assessment  
English

IELTS™



TOEFL®

Creative  
tasks



Create a podcast / skit / essay / debate /etc.



# Autonomous learning

## Digital resources...

- give learners agency
- are designed to be user friendly
- help learners follow their interests







# Give your learner choices

## Closed choice example



5th September 2022 • Equality

**India's first tribal president**



Culture • Fashion

11th June 2021

**China's Fashion  
Grandmas**



Entertainment • Amazing!

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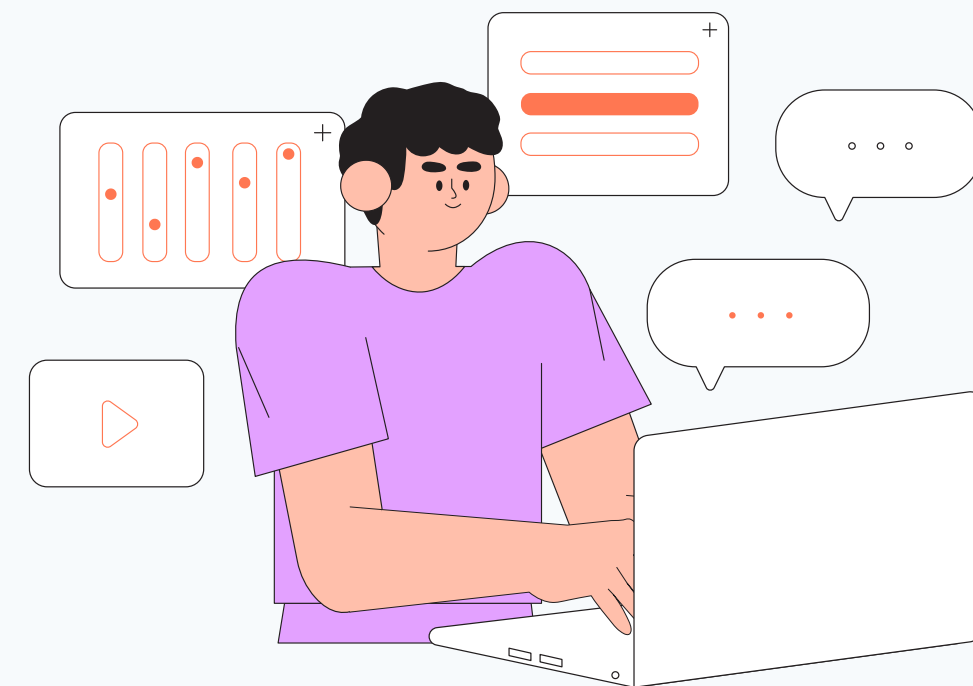


# Give your learner choices

## Open choice example

### Research a topic

- Collaborate with the learner to choose a topic.
- Guide the learner to make short list of useful sources using skimming skills.
- Read the sources discussing as you go.
- Make a productive task such as a giving a presentation or writing an article about the topic.





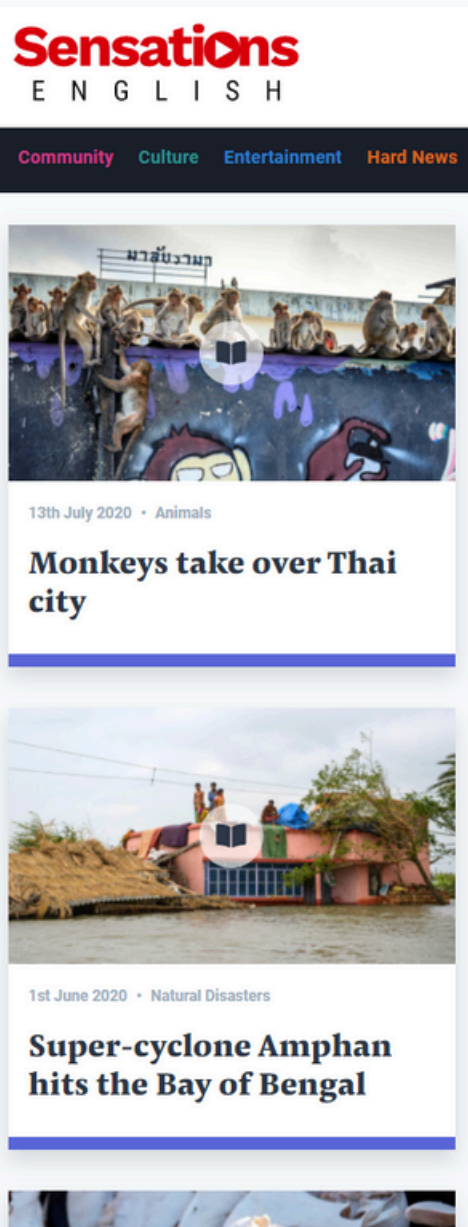


# Autonomous learning

**Note: this is perfect for a flipped classroom approach!**







# Sample activities from Sensations English



An aerial photograph of a cityscape during sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and light blue. The city below is densely packed with buildings of various heights and colors, mostly in shades of beige and brown. A few taller, more modern buildings stand out against the hazy background. The overall atmosphere is warm and serene.

**Sensations**  
E N G L I S H

ADDING COLOUR TO THE CITYSCAPE  
B2 | ART | 18th May 2022



# Productive skills: speaking

## Watch



Culture • Art

18th May 2022

**Murals bring colour to battle-scarred Baghdad**

## Discuss

What was the video about?

Who made the project and why?

Do you like the murals?  
Why / why not?

## Practice

Learners alternate roleplaying a test taker and an examiner.

The examiner asks questions about the test taker's opinions on art and government art projects.





# Productive skills: writing

## Read



Community • Issues

1st April 2024

**French village bans  
mobile phones**

## Discuss

What is the article about?

Why did the town ban phones? How?

Do you think this ban is positive for society or negative? Why / why not?

## Practice

Learners write a response to an essay prompt.

Some people believe that smartphones are destroying social interaction today.

Do you agree or disagree?



# Receptive skills

Article Lesson

CULTURE • History

7TH AUGUST 2023

## Jamaica's stolen iron innovation

New research suggests that Jamaican metalworkers were important innovators. They played an essential role in Great Britain's iron trade success in the late 18th century.

The 76 metalworkers borrowed a technique from the sugar mills in Jamaica. They developed a new ironmaking process. It replaced hammering scrap metal by hand. They could crush waste metal for reuse faster and easier. Dr Jenny Bulstrode is a historian of technology. She described the process as taking, "rubbish and turning it into something of very high value."

Video Lesson

NATURAL WORLD • Animals

29TH MARCH 2024

## Sharks: puppy dogs of the sea?

After Spielberg made the film Jaws in the 1970s, sharks have been thought of as monsters. Nowhere is this more true than in Florida, which is known as the world's shark bite capital.

A quarter of all shark bites take place off the coast of Florida. Although this appears to be a shocking fact, it's really only 16 out of 69 attacks worldwide. It's a tiny number compared to the millions of beach lovers who travel to Florida to swim every year. In 2023, this figure was 135 million.





# Receptive skills

## Questions

Introduce different question types from the test.

- True/false/not given
- Note completion
- Matching
- Short answer
- etc.

## Read / Listen



7th August 2023 • History

Jamaica's stolen iron innovation



Natural World • Animals

29th March 2024

Sharks: puppy dogs of the sea?

Learners answer questions as they read / listen.

## Quiz Creation

Learners choose their own resource.

In small groups, learners create a quiz using different question types.

Groups swap quizzes and resources.





# Using digital games

## Put the sentences in order.

Match the order with the report.

Q1

1st

He's never purchased cars or houses, and only ever has one pair of shoes

2nd

Unfortunately, Feeney is now in poor health, but he has a message for other members of the super-rich

3rd

His attitude to money is very different from his DFS co-founder, Robert Miller, who has luxury homes all over the world

4th

He's always flown in economy class, even when his family or colleagues were enjoying business class on the same flight

## Find the preposition for the blank

Q2

The banana, a work  art called "Comedian",  
was created by Italian Maurizio Cattelan. [View In Transcript](#)

plus like over about of

opposite

## Construct this sentence:

Q2

\_\_\_\_\_

work for the fire free

fighters

Listen to the sentence. Write the missing word in the box.

Q4



Slow  
90 WPM



Medium  
120 WPM



Quick  
150 WPM

00:02

1 Sec  
Press left

Play  
Press space

1 Sec  
Press right

It was like a big . [View in transcript](#)

Type your answer here:

Q1

**What is the name of the city, mentioned in the article?**

A Mumbai

B New York

C London

D Liverpool



# Using digital games

## In class

- projected (whole class, teams or individual)
- on phones
- on individual or shared computers

## Outside of class

- **pre class prep**
- **practising CALL**  
(computer assisted language learning)
- **analysing** students' strengths and weaknesses
- vocab
- grammar
- listening
- reading
- writing



# Using digital games

## Individual Results

● Poor(0-50%) ● Good(50%-70%) ● Excellent(70+%)

By Date ▾

By Due Date ▾

All 📅 ▾

| Date                    | Due Date    | Level | Games & report   | Attempted Ques / No<br>of Ques | Score / Total<br>Score | Result |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| Feb 29, 2024<br>9:32 AM | Mar 7, 2024 | B1+   | Construct sentences •<br>Writing<br>Making music from migrants'<br>boats         | 3 / 3                          | 1 / 3                  | 33 % ● |
| Feb 29, 2024<br>9:30 AM | Mar 7, 2024 | B1+   | What's the word you<br>hear? • Listening<br>Making music from migrants'<br>boats | 10 / 10                        | 4 / 10                 | 40 % ● |
| -                       | Mar 7, 2024 | B1+   | No spaces in text •<br>Reading<br>Making music from migrants'<br>boats           | - / -                          | - / -                  | -      |





# Summary

**DM helps with  
washback**

**Focus on HOTS,  
context, lexical store  
development, and  
autonomous  
learning**

**Running isn't  
just football,  
test prep isn't  
just testing**

**Digital material as  
inciting a topic for  
test practice**









**Sensations**  
E N G L I S H

Email: [gnvbsmith@gmail.com](mailto:gnvbsmith@gmail.com)

LinkedIn: Gerald Smith, EL teacher and journalist





# Works Cited

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Godwin-Jones, R. (2018). Contextualized vocabulary learning. *Language Learning & Technology*, 22(3), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10125/44651>

Gokturk Saglam, A. L. (2018). Can Exams Change How and What Teachers Teach? Investigating the Washback Effect of a University English Language Proficiency Test in the Turkish Context. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 155-176. <https://doi.org/10.32601/ejal.464094>

J. Charles Alderson, Dianne Wall, Does Washback Exist?, *Applied Linguistics*, Volume 14, Issue 2, June 1993, Pages 115–129, <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/14.2.115>



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- inspire and empower learners with high context, timely and authentic material



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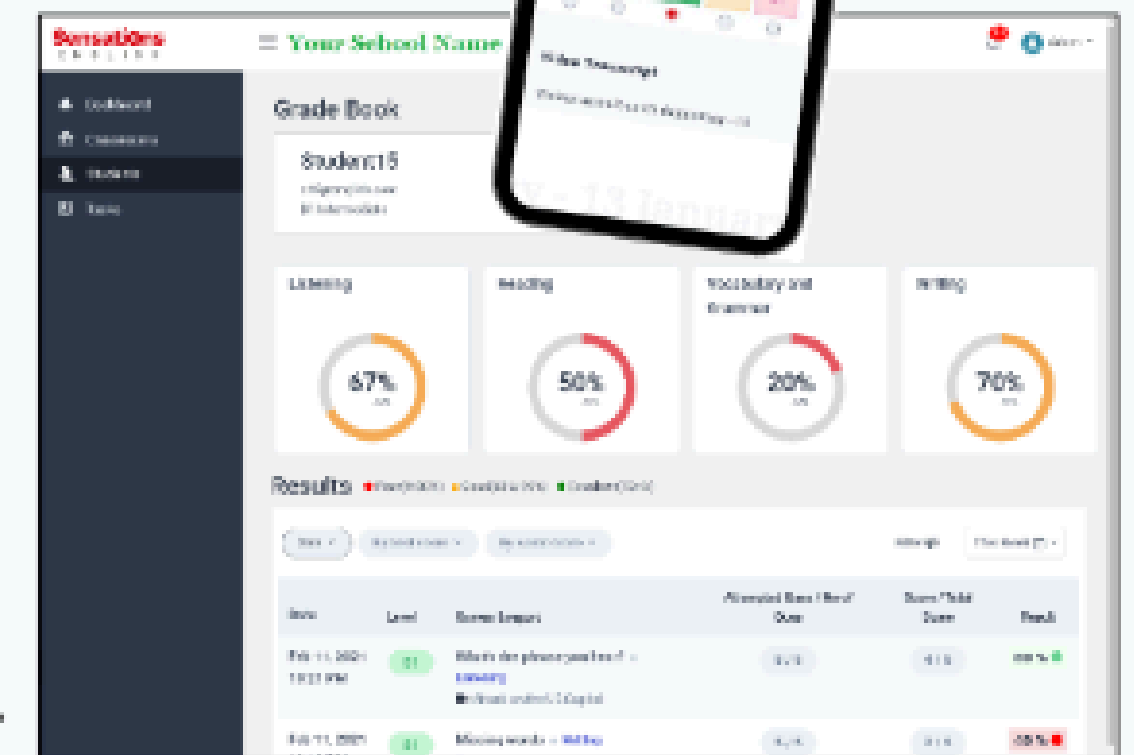
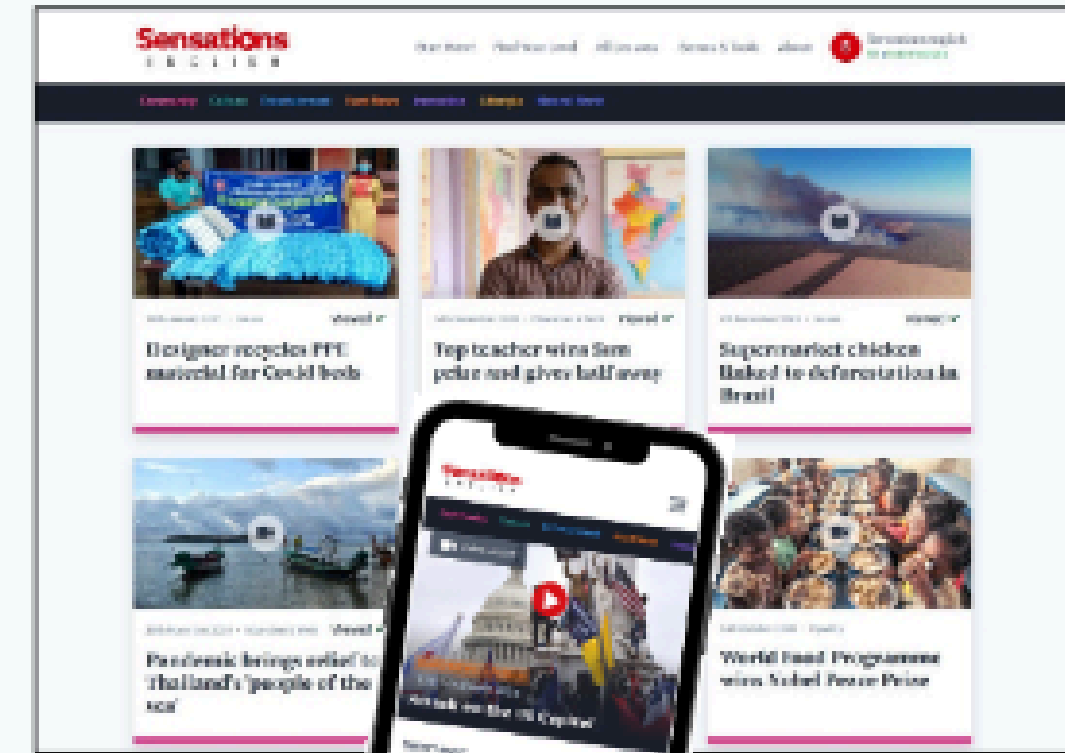
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ENGLISH



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