ISE III

Sample Independent listening task – Technology in classrooms

Examiner rubric

You're going to hear part of a talk about education. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

The task will play once

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

Give the candidate some blank notepaper.

Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me what the speaker suggests are the disadvantages of using technology in the classroom and whether you think they are in favour of it. Are you ready?

The task will play once

Now tell me what the speaker suggests are the disadvantages of using technology in the classroom and whether you think they are in favour of it. I'll stop you after one minute.

Audio script

In recent years there has been a growing trend to being new technology into the classroom. Even in remote areas students can be found with laptops and tablets. This new age of digital literacy has the potential to teach students to navigate, analyse and filter information that they find on the internet. As such it should be seen as the perfect educational tool, but does it really work? On the one hand, some teachers see the use of technology in the class as a way to empower students. It can create a new dynamic in their learning environment that allows for more student-centred lessons instead of more traditionally teacher centred ones. It can prepare them with 21st century skills that will serve them well in future jobs They also maintain that students are more engaged in classes when they are using technology that is already familiar to them. Conversely, people worry that if these tools are brought into the classroom they will demand a change in the student's behaviour. Many students own laptops, smartphones or tablets and are already accustomed to using them for entertainment, shopping or social networking. But does that make it an effective learning tool in the classroom? Indeed, they can distract more than instruct. Seeking info on the internet or flicking from screen to screen doesn't necessarily indicate that students are learning or indeed thinking deeply about what they are studying. Another possible disadvantage is that some teachers might not have the technical skills necessary to keep up with more digitally literate students. Unless they are well-trained they may struggle to teach effectively with this new digital tool. Although increased digital literacy will no doubt find its place in education and schools, its place in the classroom should be carefully considered. While technology is a tool for sourcing information and encouraging independent study, good writing and interactive language skills should not be forgotten. A computer can only tell if an answer is right or wrong. It can't guess the intent of the student. A good teacher can interpret where a student is having difficulty and address that need appropriately. It would be wiser to invest the funds that would be needed for such technology in the training of teachers so they are better equipped in their role as educators.

Answers

Main point/gist: The use of technology in the classroom and whether it works or not for the students and the teacher (any broadly similar formulation is acceptable).

Disadvantages	Advantages
▸ Needs a change in students' behaviour ▸ Students will have to learn to see technology as a learning tool not a means of entertainment ▸ Can distract not instruct ▸ Hard to know if a student is really thinking about what he/she sees on a screen ▸ Teachers might not be trained well enough ▸ Poorly trained teachers could struggle ▸ A computer can't gauge a student's ability in the way a good teacher can ▸ More money would be better spent training teachers instead of buying new technology	▸ Can teach students to navigate, analyse and filter information ▸ Empowers students – creates student-centred learning environment instead of teacher-centred ▸ Gives students 21st century skills they'll need in jobs ▸ Students more engaged

Overall thinks it's a good idea, but the priority should be to invest in teacher training.