


<i>Information Technology Workshop</i>			
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*Information Technology Workshop* is a series of 28 self-contained lessons covering all the important aspects of information technology (IT). This book is designed to offer lower-intermediate students a practical foundation in information technology so that they can communicate effectively in English in the real world.

The book begins with a set of lessons on the computer and its components (Lessons 1-7). This is followed by a set on the Internet (Lessons 8-26). The series ends with two lessons on the topic of Man and IT (Lessons 27-28). A glossary of computational vocabulary is provided at the end of the book. For each entry (printed in bold), the glossary provides the pronunciation, the part of speech, and the definition (taken or adapted from the Oxford Student's Dictionary).

Each lesson consists of six sections. After the introductory section, entitled "Before you start" there is a section involving reading comprehension. This is followed by a section focusing on vocabulary related to the topic of lesson. The fourth and fifth sections provide practice in developing speaking and writing skills. The sixth section contains supplementary activities, and comes with the catchy title, "Get real."

In the introductory section, the students engage in a pre-activity, which is either an exercise or a guided discussion about the topic of the lesson. The activities may involve pair work or group work. The exercises come in a variety of types: matching exercises, re-ordering exercises, check-list exercises, listing exercises, and gap-filling exercises.

The second section provides the students with an authentic text taken from a variety of sources, such as a user's manual, a computer book, an advertisement, an interview, a message on a help menu of a computer program, or website. In most cases, the paragraphs are numbered for convenience of reference, and keywords and important vocabulary items are highlighted. The purpose here is to build vocabulary as well as reading comprehension skills. The section includes a matching exercise, in which the student has to match given headings with an appropriate paragraph or part of the text. Other types of reading comprehension exercises included in the section are: true-false, short answers, gap filling, "odd one out," and re-ordering.

The third section focuses on the specialized vocabulary used in the information technology domain. For each word in the section, information is provided on word meaning, word phrase, register, hyponym, antonym, affixes, and word derivation. The exercises in this section include matching (in which the students have to match highlighted words with given definitions) and gap filling (which asks the students either to fill the blanks with given words or to find appropriate words to fit given definitions). Crosswords, multiple-choice questions, and "odd one out" exercises provide additional practice.

Functional language in the form of speaking and/or writing activities provides the framework for the fourth and fifth sections. In the fourth section, exercises involve giving a reason (in naming text or picture files), making a judgment, expressing an idea, and agreeing and/or disagreeing. Other activities involve comparing two computers based on their specifications, describing a picture, a CD-ROM, or a video game, and talking about a web page or an image. Activities in this section can be done in pairs or in group and involve matching, ranking, using charts, icons, email addresses, short message texts, and graphics. Most of the speaking activities are in the form of either a guided discussion or a task.

The fifth section consists of a writing activity. The writing task may involve giving instructions or expressing an idea by writing an e-mail message, a description (of a method for sending a document or a picture, for example), a short paragraph (to give an opinion about music or a web page), a frequently asked question (FAQ), or a flowchart (to describe the procedures of some given topics).

The sixth section consists of a supplementary activity, which may be described as project work. It requires students to use a computer or surf the Internet to search for specified information. After retrieving the appropriate information, the students have to complete a given task and report back to the rest of the class.

Overall, this book is suitable for use in both the general English and English for Specific Purposes classroom. It can also be employed in vocational schools. The length of the reading texts is reasonable and their level of difficulty is suitable for lower-intermediate students. The learning activities and practice exercises are diversified and related directly to the topic of the lesson. The lessons have been designed so that they can be completed in about an hour. They are also suitable for out-of-classroom use, and may be adapted for self-study purposes in the case of adult students. This book is a useful addition to the list of teaching materials currently available for English language instruction not only because it is timely and relevant to modern culture in the Computer Age, but also because it follows faithfully the principle of student-centered pedagogy and encourages autonomous learning.

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