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## Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets  
with answers

Lesson 18

Wired



**BBC WORLD SERVICE**  
LEARNING ENGLISH



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## Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

### Lesson 18: Wired

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1. Level, topic, language, aims, materials
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5. Student worksheets 1, 2, 3

**Level:** Intermediate and above

**Topic:** The internet and the workplace

**Language:** To be wired and other phrases using the word 'wire'

**Aims:** Listening skills – A short talk

Language – phrases using the word 'wire'

**Materials:** Worksheet 1 – Introductory speaking and vocabulary exercises,  
Listening section 1  
Worksheet 2 – Listening section 2  
Worksheet 3 – Extra work: Vocabulary  
Tapescript – Available in teacher's notes  
Recording of the talk – Available online at [bbclearningenglish.com](http://bbclearningenglish.com)

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### Lesson 18: Wired

#### LESSON STAGES

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##### A

Explain to the students that they are going to listen to a talk by Professor Crystal and that the talk is about a word which has come from modern technology.

##### B

Hand out **Student Worksheet 1**. Students do **Speaking Exercise 1** in small groups or pairs.

##### C

Students do the **Vocabulary Exercise 2**, without dictionaries at first.  
Practise the pronunciation of the vocabulary, as they will hear it in the talk.

##### D

Students read **Listening Exercise 3** and then listen to Section 1 of the talk.  
They answer the questions.

Students listen again and answer **Listening Exercise 4**

##### E

Hand out **Student Worksheet 2**  
Students answer **Listening Exercise 5**  
Students listen to section 2 of the talk and check their answers for **Listening Exercise 5**

##### F

Students try to answer **Listening Exercise 6**. They listen again to **Listening Section 2** to check/complete their answers.

##### G

If you wish to do some extra work with the class, hand out **Student Worksheet 3**  
For the vocabulary exercise, give the students copies of the tapescript and play the complete talk as they read.

The language work looks at other phrases that use the word 'wire' or a derivative

## **Lesson 18: Wired**

### **TAPESCRIPTS**

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#### **Listening Section 1**

To be wired. Well, if you're talking about electricity that's not surprising I suppose, wires join electrical things. But people being wired? If I say to you "are you wired?" or you say to me, "yes, you're wired"? It's another one of those descriptive words that came in in the 1990s, based on technology. It really was referring to the I.T. world, the world where computers connect to the internet, and because your computer was now wired in through a cable into a telephone line, people were said to be 'wired' meaning you are connected to the internet.

#### **Listening section 2**

And so after a while it developed a figurative use. People would say, you know, "are you wired?" and what they would mean is, are you ready to handle this, can you talk to me in a reasonably efficient way? Or if say "Jane is wired" it means "oh, Jane can cope with anything, she's able to handle all the things that I might throw at her, and her at me". Actually, all this is history now: in the last year or so, "wired" has been replaced very largely by "wireless" as the coolest term to use around, because "wireless fidelity technology", or "wi-fi" as it's called, w-i hyphen f-i, "wi-fi technology" is now in. Wireless is replacing wired. Now I say, "are you wireless?" meaning 'are you ready for me?' I expect that'll be said in the near future. It hasn't happened yet, but it will!

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## Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

### Lesson 18: Wired

#### ANSWER KEY

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#### VOCABULARY

2.

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| a. <b>to join something</b>      | to connect something to something else                  |
| b. <b>I.T.</b>                   | Information technology                                  |
| c. <b>a cable</b>                | a wire or lead  |
| d. <b>figurative</b>             | metaphorical, not literal                               |
| e. <b>to cope with something</b> | to be able to do something easily, without problems     |
| f. <b>to replace something</b>   | to be instead of something, to substitute for something |

#### LISTENING SECTION 1

3.

- a. to be wired
- b. to be connected via a cable into the telephone network and then to the internet.  
(This first meant the computer was connected, and then the person who used the computer)

4.

- a. True – “if you’re talking about electricity that’s not surprising I suppose: wires join electrical things – but people being wired?”
- b. False – “(it) came in in the 1990s”
- c. False – “your computer was now wired in through a cable into a telephone line”

#### LISTENING SECTION 2

5.

- b. to be ready and able to do something an efficient way

6.

- a. No – “Actually, all this is history now: in the last year or so, “wired” has been replaced very largely by “wireless” as the coolest term to use”
- b. Wireless technology
- c. No – “It hasn’t happened yet, but it will!”

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## **Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes**

### **Lesson 18: Wired**

#### **EXTRA WORK**

**1.**

- a. descriptive
- b. to handle something
- c. coolest

#### **LANGUAGE**

**2.**

- a. went down to the wire (to go down to the wire)
- b. behind the wire
- c. got our wires crossed (to get your wires crossed)
- d. a live wire
- e. wire (to wire somebody something)
- f. wiry
- g. wired (to be wired)

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## WORKSHEET 1

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You are going to listen to a short talk given by Professor David Crystal about language change and new developments in English.

### SPEAKING

**1. Discuss these questions with other students**

- a. Do you know who invented the internet and when?
- b. When did you first use the internet?
- c. Do these places have access to the internet?  
Your school or college      Your place of work  
Your home      A local café or bar  
Your local park      Your local library
- d. Do you think the internet has made the world a better place?

### VOCABULARY

**2. Match these words and phrases to their definitions**

- a. **to join something**      Information Technology
- b. **I.T.**      metaphorical, not literal
- c. **a cable**      to connect something to something else
- d. **figurative**      a wire or lead
- e. **to cope with something**      to be instead of something, to substitute for something
- f. **to replace something**      to be able to do something easily, without problems

## LISTENING SECTION 1

**3. Now, listen to Professor Crystal talking about a word that has entered the language from the world of technology. Answer these questions.**

a. What is the new verb phrase?

to be \_\_\_\_\_

b. What is the meaning of this phrase, with regard to the internet?

**4. Listen again and decide if the following statements are true or false, according to Professor Crystal.**

a. Professor Crystal suggests that it is strange to talk about people being wired

b. The word appeared in 1919

c. The word is used because there are many wires in a computer

## WORKSHEET 2

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### LISTENING SECTION 2

5. The phrase ‘to be wired’ developed a more metaphorical meaning. Which meaning do you think it has from those given below?
- a. to be full of energy
  - b. to be ready and able to do something in an efficient way
  - c. to be ready with a lot of information, to know many things

Listen to Section 2 of the talk and check your ideas. Were you correct?

**6. Listen again and answer these questions**

- a. Does the expression ‘to be wired’ have a strong future?
- b. What is the new type of technology?
- c. Are people already using words from this new technology in a figurative way?

Listen again to check your answers.

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## WORKSHEET 3 - EXTRA WORK

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### VOCABULARY

1. Look at the tape script and find words or phrases that mean the following.

- a. says what something is like, how something appears or looks
- b. to be able to cope with something
- c. most fashionable

### LANGUAGE

2. The word 'wire' has a few different meanings and is connected to a range of expressions. Complete the explanations and example sentences with expressions from the box below. You may need to change the grammar of the phrases in the box.

behind the wire	wiry	to go down to the wire	to get your wires crossed
a live wire	to be wired	to wire somebody something	

- a. The discussion went on to the final minute, it \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Prisoners of war are kept \_\_\_\_\_
- c. There was a misunderstanding because we \_\_\_\_\_, we didn't realise what each other was thinking.
- d. He's full of energy and life, he's \_\_\_\_\_
- e. You can \_\_\_\_\_ me the money, you can send it by telegram
- f. He is quite thin but also quite strong. He is \_\_\_\_\_
- g. She is behaving so strangely, really nervously and anxiously. Do you know why she is so \_\_\_\_\_?