



OPTIMISE YOUR EXAM PREPARATION CLASSES THROUGH PERSONALISATION

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Intro

Preparing teenagers for exams can be soulless and dry at times, and the tasks we get our students to do can be divorced from their lives and personal experience. In this session, we're going to look at how to bring in an element of student-centred personalisation to exam classes to aid interest and motivation.

Person

Personal

Personality

Personalise / -ize

Personalisation / -ization

PERSONALIZE

to make or change something so
that it is especially suitable
for a particular person = **CUSTOMIZE**

PERSONALISATION





*A hand to hold
forever more
through life's journey.*

PERSONALISE YOUR ORDER



Your Fontpack: Liberty BT

Wording Template: Brides Parents only Inviting

Inner Verse
A hand to hold
forever more
through life's journey.

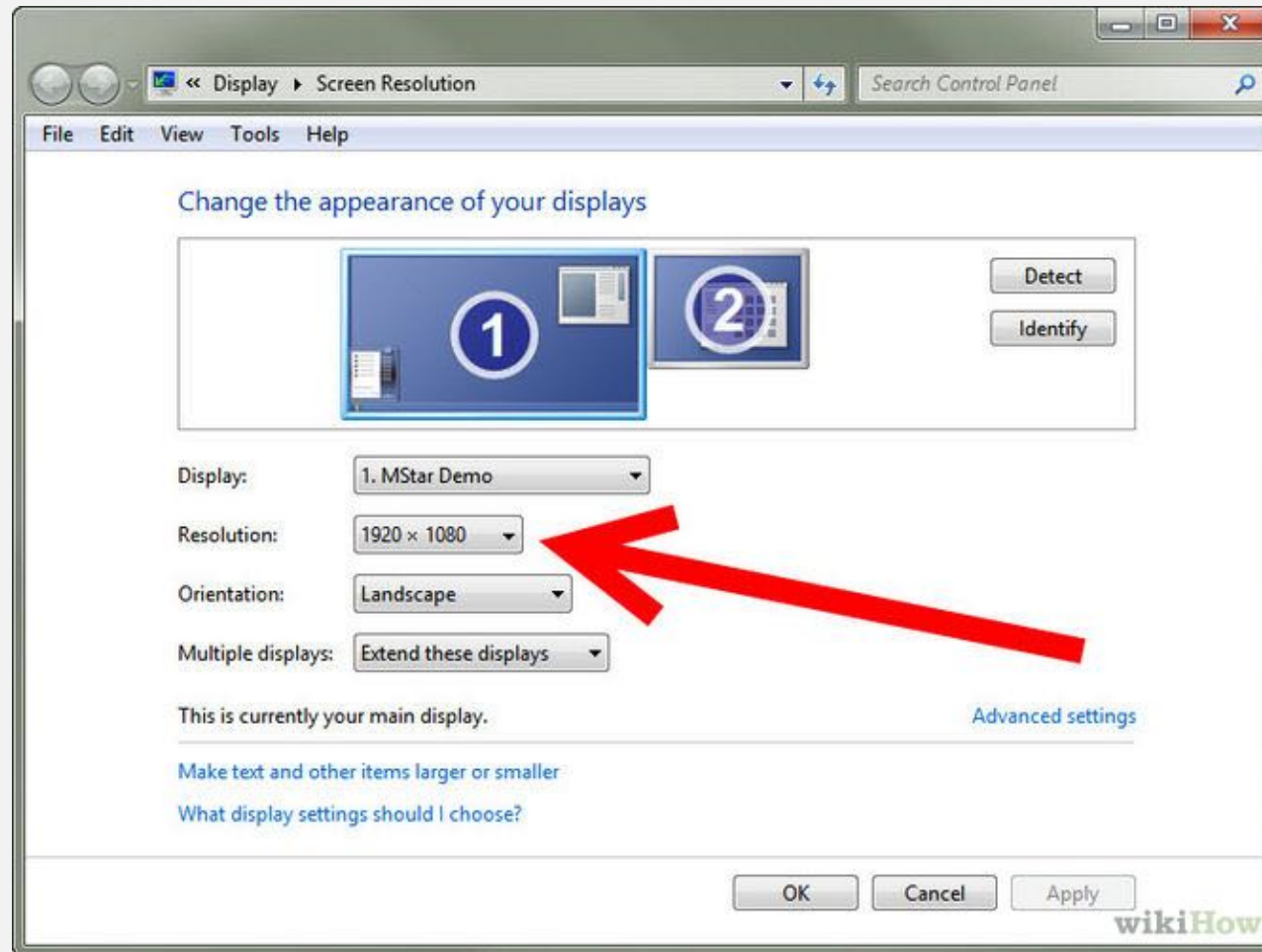
Main Wording
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Jackson

request the pleasure of the company of

at the marriage of their daughter

Nicole Leanne

to

















PERSONALISATION

making or changing something so that it is especially suitable for a particular person

- * choice of different options/positions/etc**
- * time**
- * budget**
- * style / fashion / appearance / look**
- * needs / requirements / abilities**
- * preferences / likes / dislikes / opinion / beliefs**
- * geography / location**

PERSONALISATION

making or changing something so that it is especially suitable for a particular person

More appropriate

Better experience

Better results

Greater satisfaction

PERSONALISATION IN THE ELT CLASSROOM

making or changing something so that it is especially suitable for a particular person

What?

Who? / Who for?

How?

Why?

PERSONALISATION IN THE ELT CLASSROOM

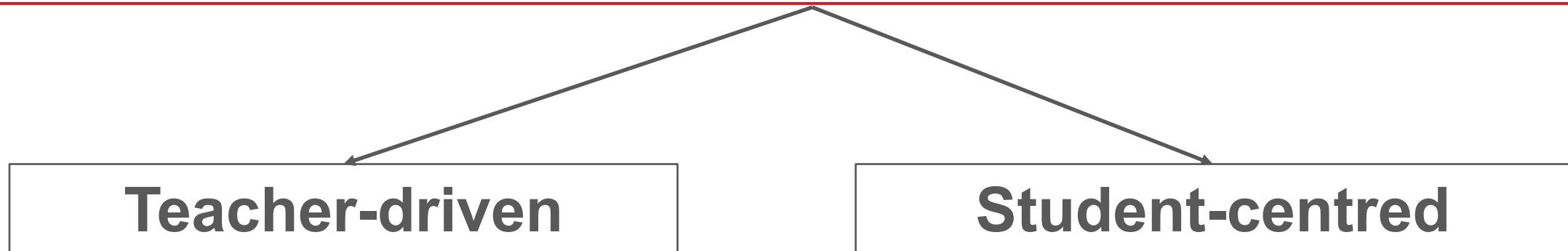
the education system

Is it set up for personalisation?

**(classrooms / coursebooks /
— syllabus / exams / timetables / etc)**

PERSONALISATION IN THE ELT CLASSROOM

Personalisation



PERSONALISATION IN THE ELT CLASSROOM

Personalisation

**Provided by the
coursebook**

**Supplementary to the
coursebook**

PERSONALISATION 1

**personalisation provided
within an exam-based course**

Have your say!

At what age do you think teenagers should be allowed to go on holiday with their friends? Why?

PLUS POINTS

- Quick
- No planning
- Simple
- Provided
- Students can express their own opinions...
- ...and relate what they've read / heard to their own experience
- Students practise 'Speaking' when doing Reading/Listening

Have your say!

At what age do you think teenagers should be allowed to go on holiday with their friends? Why?

DRAWBACKS

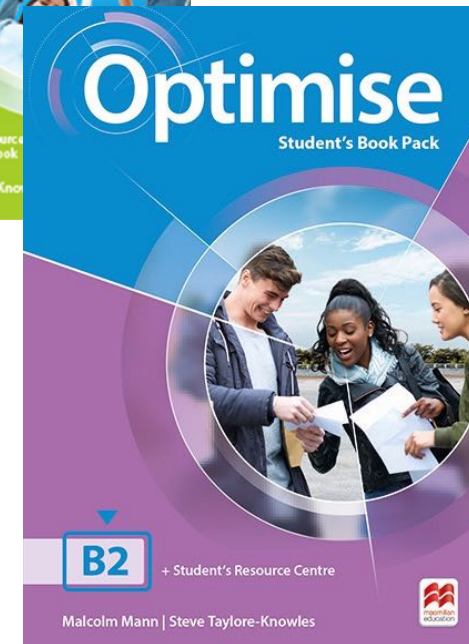
- **Only speaking**
- **Limited range of tasks**
- **Limited focus**
(mainly opinion/ preference)
- **Only in Reading and Listening sections**

Have your say!

At what age do you think teenagers should be allowed to go on holiday with their friends? Why?

SOLUTION FOR *OPTIMISE*

- Expand: not just Reading and
- Listening
- Not just ‘speaking practice’
- Increased range of tasks
- Increased focus (not just opinion/preference)
- More systematic/integrated



PERSONALISATION: FOCUS

Not just expressing opinion and preference

- **Expressing opinion**
- **Expressing preference**
- **Critical thinking**
- **Reflection**
- **Research**
- **Writing**
- **Presentation**
- **Discussion**

PERSONALISATION: FOCUS

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

PERSONALISATION: FOCUS

THINK

RESEARCH

CULTURE

LEARN

ME

- **opinion**
- **preference**
- **critical thinking**

PERSONALISATION: FOCUS

THINK

RESEARCH

CULTURE

LEARN

ME

- **finding information (online, class surveys, interviews, from books, etc)**

PERSONALISATION: FOCUS

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

- The students' own culture, language, country, local area, etc

PERSONALISATION: FOCUS

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

- Reflecting on how you learn/study (English, and other subjects)

PERSONALISATION: FOCUS

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN

ME

- **Personal/daily life, family, friends, interests, etc**



READING | Multiple choice | A magazine article

- 1 Look at these sayings and statements. What do you think they mean? Which of them do you agree with?

An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

Don't go outside with wet hair or you'll catch a cold.

Don't go swimming for an hour after you've eaten.

Feed a cold, starve a fever.

Chicken soup cures a cold.

EXAM SKILL

Deducing meaning from context

- When you need to guess the meaning of a word/phrase in a text, think about the general idea and subject of the text.
- Then focus on the sentence/paragraph the word/phrase appears in and look for clues to its meaning.
- This context can help you to make a logical guess.

- 2 Find these sentences in the article. Choose the best word or phrase to complete each description.

1 *But are all old wives' tales false, or does modern science back any of them up?*

The second part of the sentence begins with 'or', suggesting contrast, so the phrasal verb 'back up' here probably means **disprove / support / negate**.

2 *They say it's to avoid muscle cramps, because the body is busy digesting the food.*

The advice is aimed at avoiding something, so 'muscle cramps' are probably some kind of exercise / food / pain.

- 3 Choose the correct word. If you aren't sure, find the phrases in the article and deduce the meaning.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1 fever (paragraph 3) | low / high temperature |
| 2 dehydration (paragraph 3) | condition caused when the body has too much / little water |
| 3 nutrient (paragraph 3) | unhealthy / healthy things we get from food |
| 4 inflammation (paragraph 4) | red, hot / cold and/or swollen area of the body |
| 5 inevitably (paragraph 5) | used to say that something is unlikely / certain to happen |

Science fact or science fiction?

Chocolate makes you live longer. Carrots help you to see in the dark. If you go outside with wet hair, you'll catch a cold. These are some of the old wives' tales that have been passed down through generations. If I had a pound for every time my mum stopped me leaving the house with wet hair, I'd be rich. But are all old wives' tales false, or does modern science back any of them up? I've been to see GP, Dr Jane Turner to ask if there's any scientific proof for any of these common myths.

By Dani Wells, Year 11

'Don't go swimming for an hour after you've eaten.'

My mum and dad often say this. They say it's to avoid muscle cramps, because the body is busy digesting the food. Interestingly, Dr Turner thinks there's an element of truth to this. She told me, 'I wouldn't agree it has to be an hour – that seems too long to me – but I would say if you've had a big meal, you should at least wait until you've started to digest it. I'd say at least 15 or 20 minutes would probably be enough.'

'Feed a cold, starve a fever.'

I've never fully understood what it meant, so I asked Dr Turner to explain it. 'Well, this is saying: if you have a cold, eat and drink well, but if you have a fever, don't. It's totally wrong, and I believe it's based on a misunderstanding with the word "starve". Originally, the saying used to be "feed a cold, starve off a fever". This means eat and drink well to prevent your cold developing into a fever. That was probably sensible advice. You should try to eat and

drink well as it's important to avoid dehydration. And if your body doesn't get the vitamins and nutrients it needs, it loses strength.

'If you have a cold, eat chicken soup.'

We've all heard this one, haven't we? And Dr Turner agreed. 'I think it's probably good advice – unless you're vegetarian or vegan, of course! A bowl of chicken soup is comforting, so it may well have a positive psychological effect. Also, I've heard of a study which suggests it may reduce inflammation, so it's worth a try.'

So what about going outside with wet hair? Does it inevitably lead to getting a cold, or can I tell my mum she's wrong? 'No, this one's not true at all. Colds are caused by viruses, not wet hair or generally "being cold". This has actually been tested several times. They've split people into two groups, one where the people were warm, and one where the people were cold. They then exposed them to a virus. There was no difference between the two groups in terms of how many people caught a cold.'



line 25

line 46

OPTIMISE YOUR EXAM

Multiple choice

- Always start by reading everything carefully.
- For some questions you need to refer to a whole paragraph, e.g. Exercise 4, questions 1 and 2.
- Find the correct reference in the paragraph. Some options may look correct but may refer to something different.

- 4 2.07 For questions 1–5, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

- 1 What do we learn about the writer's mother in the first paragraph?
 A She probably never believes in her sayings.
 B She only regularly tells Dani one folk saying.
 C She'd never let Dani go outside with wet hair.
 D She often says what some people call 'old wives' tales'.
- 2 What advice does Dr Turner give in the second paragraph?
 A Don't swim for more than 20 minutes with a full stomach.
 B Don't go swimming just after a large meal.
 C Completely ignore the old wives' tale about swimming.
 D Digest your food very quickly before going swimming.

- 3 Dr Turner suggests that the phrase 'starve off' in line 25
 A is used to mean 'starve' but doesn't mean that anymore.
 B means something similar to 'eat and drink well'.
 C changed over time into 'starve' and this made the saying false.
 D not heard in modern-day English.
- 4 Talking about chicken soup, Dr Turner says
 A she doesn't understand the science behind the treatment.
 B she always has a bowl whenever she has a cold.
 C it only helps us get well because it affects us psychologically.
 D vegetarians and vegans are at a disadvantage if they get ill.
- 5 The word 'exposed' in line 46 means they allowed them to
 A see the virus.
 B avoid the virus.
 C come into contact with the virus.
 D study the virus.



THINK | RESEARCH | CULTURE | LEARN | ME

What old wives' tales and sayings, similar to the ones in the article, do you have in your own culture/language?



THINK | RESEARCH | **CULTURE** | LEARN | ME

What old wives' tales and sayings, similar to the ones in the article, do you have in your own culture/language?

► **Workbook Unit 6:** Reading, page 44, exercises 1, 2, 3

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WHICH IS IT?

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

Can you think of a time when friends of yours argued? Work in pairs. Describe what happened. Say:

- what caused the argument
- what happened as a result
- how the argument ended

WHICH IS IT?

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

What is the best way of doing this kind of task? Choose from the two approaches below and discuss with a partner.

- Keep thinking about gap (1) until you get the answer. Then do gap (2) and spend time thinking about that one. Keep going until the end.
- Read through the text to get the general meaning. Then fill in any gaps you think you know. Then think carefully about the gaps that are left.

WHICH IS IT?

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

Are there any myths or interesting stories about how cities in your country were founded?

WHICH IS IT?

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

Some fish are not good for us because they contain mercury, a poisonous substance.

Go online and find out:

- the names of some fish which have it
- which groups of people are particularly at risk

WHICH IS IT?

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

Which of the people from The X Factor or shows like it in your country have become most successful?

Write a short paragraph about one of them, similar to the paragraph above.

WHICH IS IT?

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

Imagine you could interview any musician or band. Who would you choose and what would you ask?

PERSONALISATION 2

**to consolidate and extend an exam-based course
or exam practice material**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF 'PERSONALISED' CONSOLIDATING

The problem:

Exam practice material:

- soulless and dry
- divorced from students' own lives

The solution:

Relate it back to:

- students' own lives
- students' own interests and experience

WHAT PERSONALISATION TASK COULD FOLLOW – OR COME BEFORE – THIS?

THINK
RESEARCH
CULTURE
LEARN
ME

- Expressing opinion
- Expressing preference
- Critical thinking
- Reflection
- Research
- Writing
- Presentation
- Discussion

Reading and Use of English • Part 3

For questions 17 – 24, read the text below. Use the word given in capitals at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Write your answers **IN CAPITAL LETTERS** on the separate answer sheet.

Example: 0 S K I L F U L

Playing chess

Have you ever played chess? Some say you need to be very (0) to play it well but it is quite easy to learn. I started learning when I was only six years old and it helped me develop my powers of (17) If you want to achieve (18) as a chess player, the main requirement is an ability to analyse a situation (19) Chess even helped me find various (20) to the mathematical problems I was given for homework.

SKILL

CONCENTRATE

SUCCEED

EFFECTIVE

SOLVE

At first, one of my big problems was not having enough (21) Learning chess at school taught me the importance of waiting to make the right move! My teacher was critical of my tendency not to think (22) before making a move. I discovered that every single error in chess gets instant (23) , enabling your opponent to take control and putting you at a great (24) in the game.

PATIENT

CARE

PUNISH

ADVANTAGE

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF 'PERSONALISED' CONSOLIDATING

The problem:

Most exam tasks are divorced from students' own lives

The solution:

Introduce tasks and text types that the students can relate to

Exam task:

Writing: article for young person's magazine

Pre-task preparation:

- **social media post + comments**

Exam task:

Speaking: problem-solving task

Pre-task preparation:

- **Text message or WhatsApp etc thread**

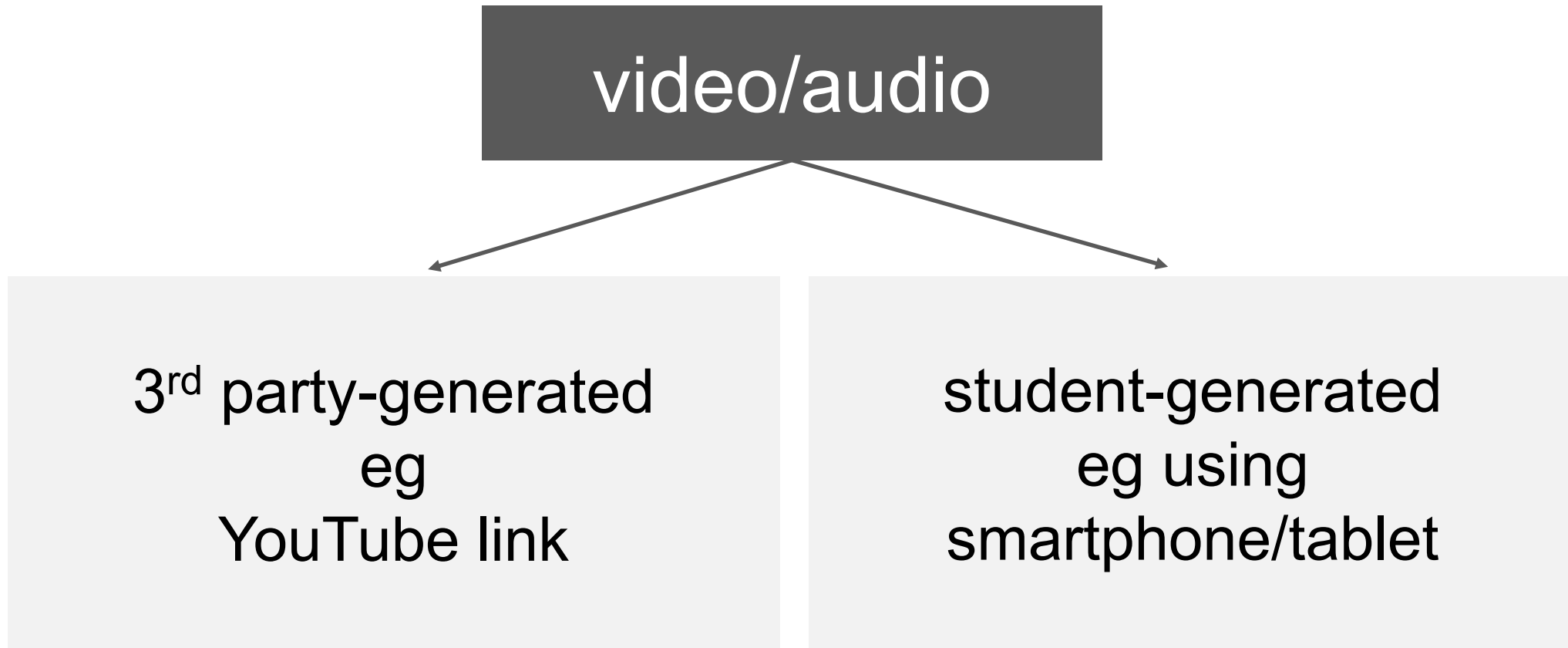
Exam:

no video

Real world:

- Video is everywhere!

PERSONALISED CONTENT



PERSONALISED CONTENT

video/audio



3rd party-generated
eg
YouTube link

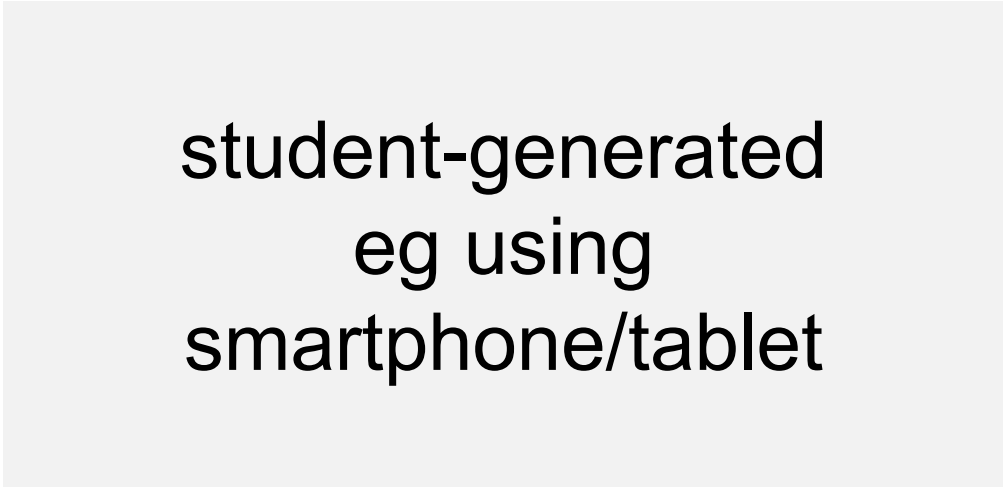
- eg
- quiz/game show in English
(*The Chase, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire / etc*)
- karaoke version of song
- clip providing example of vocab
/ grammar /pronunciation /etc

PERSONALISED CONTENT

video/audio



student-generated
eg using
smartphone/tablet



- eg
- interview with family member / friend who speaks English
- short play or documentary
- video blog/diary
- instructional video (hobby/sport/etc)
- simple self-recording: pronunciation, grammar, song, etc

Exams:

paper world
(with a few exceptions such as ‘write an email’)

Real world:

- major digital/online aspect

PERSONALISED CONTENT

- social media (posts and comments)
- messaging
- links
- jpgs / gifs / emoticons / emojis
- screenshots
- video/audio files
- apps / websites

PERSONALISED CONTENT

Focus:

grammar (comparatives and superlatives)

Students do a comparison of prices/products on amazon.co.uk versus online stores in their own country



PERSONALISED CONTENT: ONLINE JIGSAW

Teacher-produced:

- Homework instructions
- list of vocab to learn
- a supplementary grammar/vocab task
- a model composition
- a short reading text
- exam info/tips
- etc etc etc

PERSONALISED CONTENT: ONLINE JIGSAW

Student-produced:

- 'traditional' composition
- text (+ image)
- recipe
- song lyrics
- screenshot of online text
- set of instructions
- etc etc etc

PERSONALISED CONTENT

Malcolm's example online jigsaw

<http://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=26af8b0c485b>

FINAL QUESTIONS

- How important do you think personalization is in ELT exam-prep classes?
- How easy/difficult do you think it is to incorporate it into lessons/homework?
- Do you think you'll try to incorporate more personalization into your lessons?



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