

technology

What does technology do for us?

Lesson at a glance

Open by holding up a spoon, torch and calculator and asking what job each does, including whether a spoon counts as technology. Teach the wide meaning of technology, then model with a bicycle bell before groups handle a shared tray. Pupils sort objects into digital and non-digital using the chip-or-screen test, record jobs on the Investigation Journal page, then pair-share one good thing and one not-so-good thing about a chosen technology.

Learning objectives

- Explain that a technology is something people make to do a job
- Sort everyday examples into digital and non-digital
- Name one good thing and one not-so-good thing about a chosen technology

Before the bell – prep

Build one tray per group the day before: spoon, bicycle or hand bell, manual pencil sharpener, plain torch, and a classroom calculator or digital watch. Print Digital / Non-digital labels (one pair per group). Point to the interactive board if any group lacks a digital object.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
group tray of everyday technologies (spoon, bicycle bell or small hand bell, manual / hand-crank pencil sharpener, torch, classroom calculator or digital watch)	1	group	classroom	name the interactive board as the shared class digital example if calculators are short; a metal fork can stand in for the spoon; a small hand bell for the bicycle bell; an old phone switched off only if one is already available
sorting labels (Digital, Non-digital)	1	group	provided printable	two sticky notes labelled by hand
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	provided printable	a simple two-column table on plain paper headed Digital and Non-digital

**Safety watch-point**

Torch beams stay off faces; no taking devices apart; pencil sharpeners are for looking unless you allow supervised use.

**Teaching moves**

- **Getting Started:** Hold up the spoon, torch and calculator one at a time from the tray — do not hand trays out yet. Ask only what job each does and what life was like before it. If pupils say technology means screens only, note it lightly and park it for the next beat.
- **What counts as technology?:** Project only the short key point: technology is something people make to do a job. Model aloud with the bell — people made it, it warns or gets attention, so it counts even with no screen. Keep digital labels off the board until the sort.
- **Handle the tray:** Hand out trays. Circulate while groups name the job and who might use each object. Prompt with 'Could you do the job without it?' and 'What did people use before?' Watch that torch beams stay off faces and nothing is taken apart.
- **Sort digital and non-digital:** Give each group the two labels. Model once with the chip-or-screen test, then protect the minutes for hands-on sorting. If the torch sparks debate, praise the thinking and restate: a plain battery torch has no chip or screen, so it is non-digital here. Fold the class in on one or two shared objects only if time is tight.
- **Record on your Investigation Journal page:** Pupils record on paper only: object name, digital or non-digital, and a short job phrase. Put the sentence starter on the board — The ____ is digital/non-digital because _____. Its job is _____.
- **One good thing, one not-so-good thing:** Run think-pair-share on one chosen technology. Prompt power needs, rain, ease for a child, and what happens if it breaks. Draw out trade-offs such as calculator speed versus needing batteries and still understanding the sum.
- **What we learnt:** Hear three quick check-ins: a pupil definition of technology, one digital and one non-digital example, and a pair's good / not-so-good pair. Close with the quill-pencil-keyboard thread: the writing job stayed; the tool changed. Return objects to trays.

**What it should show**

Core sort: calculator or digital watch (or the interactive board) under digital; spoon, bell, manual sharpener and plain torch under non-digital. Every object should have a named job. A group that parks a plain torch as digital usually equates batteries with digital — re-run the chip-or-screen test. Good / not-so-good answers should name a real trade-off, not 'new is always better'.



Misconceptions & interventions

- **Pupils think technology only means phones, computers or things with screens.** — Hold up the spoon or bell and walk the three checks: Did people make it? Does it do a job? Then it counts. Revisit the key point before the sort.
- **Pupils sort a plain battery torch as digital because it needs power.** — Ask: Does it need a chip or a screen to do its main job? A battery and bulb alone keep it non-digital in this lesson. Praise the debate, then apply the same test.
- **Pupils say newer technology is always better, with no drawbacks.** — Use the sample pairs: calculator is fast but needs power and still needs understanding; spoon is simple and lasting but does only a small job. Push for one genuine not-so-good thing.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Sit at the teacher table with the sentence starter and sort two objects first (spoon and calculator) before tackling the full tray. • Offer oral job phrases to a partner who scribes onto the Investigation Journal page.	• Add one extra classroom technology not on the tray (clock, scissors, interactive board) and place it on the page with a job phrase.	• Critique another group's sort: Do you agree? Which job did they miss? • Compare an older and newer writing tool (pencil vs keyboard) and name one good thing about each.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to English oral language: pupils justify sorts and good / not-so-good points in short spoken sentences.