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Before you read the story

1 Future worlds

- a) What films, shows or books do you know about future worlds and technology?
- b) Do you enjoy science fiction? Why or why not?

2 Robots and humans

- a) Which words go with humans and which with robots?
Make two lists.

heart and blood

cogno-chip

no emotions

saved data

eyes

natural thinking

skin

feelings

artificial intelligence

camera sensors

power cell and circuits

brain/mind

shell

memory

- b) Today you can find robots in many places. Talk about what jobs robots can do and make a list.
- c) What would *you* like a robot to do? Talk about your ideas.
- d) Decide on the best idea. Draw your robot and add three sentences to explain how it works, what it can do and why you think it is a great idea.
- e) Put all your robot designs and texts up in class and do a gallery walk.
- f) Choose your favourite robot and think about why you like it best.
- g) Talk about the robots in class and vote on it.

heart [ha:t] Herz • **blood** [blʌd] Blut • **cogno-chip** [ˈkɒɡnəʊtʃɪp] Fantasiegerät, das Gedanken aufnehmen kann • **saved data** [ˈseɪvd ˈdeɪtə] gespeicherte Daten • **skin** [skɪn] Haut • **artificial intelligence** [ˌɑ:tɪˈfɪʃl ˌɪnˈtelɪdʒəns] künstliche Intelligenz • **power cell** [ˈpaʊə ˌsel] Akku • **circuit** [ˈsɜ:kɪt] Schaltkreis • **skin** [skɪn] Haut • **brain** [breɪn] Gehirn • **mind** [maɪnd] hier: Gehirn • **shell** [ʃel] Hülle, Gehäuse • **memory** [ˈmeməri] Erinnerung, Gedächtnis

1 DATA

1 “Come on, Mum, you must know.”

“Claire, how many more times must I tell you?” Mum said, a bit angry. “I don’t know what your dad is working on. You know he doesn’t like to show us a project until it’s finished and he’s happy with it. It has to be perfect before we can go into the lab.”

“But what d’you think it can be?” I asked. “I mean, why did he need all that data about me? Like how long my fingers are and how well I can see and how tall I am and all that? And why did he scan my brain to see how I think? What does that say about ...?”

“Well, Claire, I don’t know,” said Mum. She hit out at a buzzing fly and it fell dead at her feet.

I decided not to continue. I knew that Mum was now more than a bit angry. I saw it in her eyes.

“Look, Claire,” Mum said, “Your dad said he’ll show us his project later today and he will. Until then you’ll just have to wait.”

She was a bit more relaxed now. She picked up the fly and threw it into the bin by her chair.

I stood up.

“Where are you going?” Mum asked.

“To do my homework.”

“To do your homework or to play on the net?”

25 “I don’t play on the net,” I told her. “I work, I study, I collect data ...”

“But most of the time you play!” Mum said with a laugh.

I had to laugh too – because it was true!

lab [læb] Labor • **buzzing fly** [ˌbʌzɪŋ ˈflaɪ] brummende Fliege • **bin** [bɪn] Mülleimer; Papierkorb • **net** [net] Internet

1 “Well, I’m not going to play now,” I said. “I’m going to talk to my pen pal.”

“So you’ve found one at last then?” Mum asked.

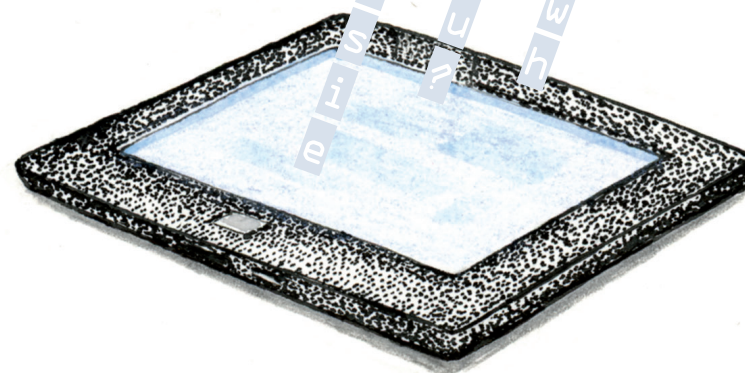
5 “Mum, where’ve you been?” I said. “I’ve had a pen pal for three weeks now. Her name is Maisie. And we have so many things in common. It’s amazing.”

“What about all the other people who have messaged you?” Mum asked.

10 “It’s all right,” I said. “I told them I’ve found a pen pal, and I only want one for now.”

“I hope you were polite,” Mum said.

“Always!” I said and smiled. “You know me!”



pen pal [ˈpen ˌpæl] Brieffreund, Brieffreundin • **in common** [ˌɪn ˈkɒmən] gemeinsam • **to smile** [smaɪl] lächeln

2 Stuck-up

1 I tried not to hear Mum's laugh behind me as I ran up to my room.

I wanted so much to talk to Maisie again. To tell the truth, I don't have many friends.

5 Most of the kids in my class think I'm a bit stuck-up. I'm not. Really, I'm not. I'm just a bit shy. So people sometimes get the idea I'm not polite. But everyone has heard of my dad. He's famous.

And so they think that I'm too good for them. That isn't true, but no one in my class has spent enough time with me to find out.

I mean, I'm proud of my dad, of course I am. It's just that he cares more about his work than he does about Mum and me. Mum says that's normal and I'll understand when I grow up. But I don't think that will happen.

Dad's away in his lab as often as he can. I've heard Mum and Dad talk about it so often. They're so polite. I wish they'd have a loud, shouting argument. That would be more real. But they say shouting like that is for children, not adults. And then they say: "You'll understand when you grow up."

To tell the truth, I'm not sure I want to. I needed to talk to someone about it all.

I needed to talk to Maisie.

stuck-up ['stʌkʌp] arrogant • **to tell the truth** [ˌtel ðə 'truːθ] um ehrlich zu sein • **to care more about something** [keə] einem etwas wichtiger sein • **to grow up** [ˌgrəʊ 'ʌp] erwachsen werden • **adult** ['ædʌlt] Erwachsene, Erwachsener

3 Sister

1 Hi Maisie,
How are you?

Dad still hasn't told us what he's working on.
The minute I know, I'll message you!

5 Dad always tells Mum and me to keep everything secret, but you're like a sister so I can tell you.
I know you won't tell anybody else.

Dad says his company are so excited about this new project.

10 I'm not surprised you've heard of my dad.
He's a technology genius - well, that's what they call him on the news.

Dad says this thing he's working on will make the kit we use now seem like "stone-age tools" - his words, not mine.

15 I hope your dad spends more time with you than mine does with me.

Get texting. I'm waiting.

20 Your friend,
Claire

And then the message was gone. I hoped Maisie would be online so that I'd get a message back very fast. I was lucky. I didn't have long to wait.

genius [dʒiːniəs] Genie • **kit** [kɪt] hier: Technologie • **to seem** [siːm] scheinen • **stone-age** ['stəʊneɪdʒ] steinzeitlich