



# THE FUTURE

***“The future influences the present just as much as the past.”***

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900), German philosopher

## 1. The Future Discussion

1. What would you like to happen in your future? Would you want to know what will happen in your future if that were possible?
2. What would you like to happen in your country's future? What do you actually think will happen in your country's future?
3. What kind of technology will we have in the future that doesn't exist today? How will transport, homes, education, fashion or food (and food production) be different in the future?
4. Will people still need to work in the future? If not, why? If so, what jobs will we be doing in the future?
5. Will we be able to time travel in the future? If you could travel into the future, what would you like to see?
6. Will English be the only language left at some point in the future?
7. How do people predict the future?
8. What are your favourite movies, TV shows or books that are set in the future? What happens in these stories?

## 2. The Future Vocabulary

- **the foreseeable future** (noun) – *the future as far as can be predicted or expected.*
- **the near/not-too-distant future** (noun) – *soon, within our lifetime or just beyond.*
- **on the horizon / just around the corner** (adverb phrases) – *about to happen in the near future.*
- **the far/distant future** (noun) – *a long time into the future, well beyond our lifetime.*
- **immortal** (adjective) – *something that will live or last forever; something that will be remembered forever or for a very long time.*
- **to prophesise** (verb), **prophecy** (noun) – *a prediction about the future based on a belief, rather than on evidence.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun):

1. *Blade Runner* is set in a dystopian society in **the near future** where killer androids are on the loose.
2. Humans could become **immortal** either through advancements in genetic engineering or by uploading their consciousness into a computer.
3. In **the distant future**, the Universe will have expanded so much that scientists on Earth will not be able to see traces of the Big Bang.
4. Some people think Nostradamus **prophesised** the 9/11 attacks and the coronavirus pandemic, but then again, some people also like Cold Play, so what do people know?
5. The automation of the production of small electronic devices is **on the horizon/just around the corner**.
6. The Bank of England said it would keep interest rates at 2.25% for **the foreseeable future**.

### The Future vocabulary comprehension questions

1. What is the economy of your country predicted to be like for the foreseeable future?
2. Do you think there could be another world war in the near future? If not, why not? If so, what will cause it?
3. Which technological advancements are on the horizon?
4. What will humans look like in the distant future if they keep evolving?
5. Will there be a point in the future when humans become immortal? How might that happen? Would you like to be immortal?
6. Do you know any prophecies about the future? Do you believe them?

### 3. Video: The Last Human

You are going to watch a video by Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell called “The Last Human – A Glimpse Into The Far Future.”

*Watch the video here: <https://youenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-future/>*

While you watch the video, answer the following questions:

#### Multiple choice

- How do people tend to feel about the future?  
a) *optimistic*      **b) pessimistic**      c) *sceptical*
- When did modern humans emerge?  
a) *20,000 years ago*      **b) 200,000 years ago**      c) *2,000,000 years ago*
- Advancements in which area resulted in the greatest population growth?  
a) *farming*      b) *science*      **c) manufacturing**
- What happens to the birth rate as living standards increase?  
**a) It decreases**      b) *It remains constant*      c) *It increases*

#### Sentence completion

- A typical mammalian species will exist for around **1 million years**.
- 1.2 quadrillion people could be born in the future if the human race matches the survival lifespan of the **most successful mammals**.
- As the Sun gets hotter, Earth will be able to support life for another **500 million years**.
- In the future, humans may live on other planets or in **artificial worlds**.

#### Short answer

- What often depicts a bleak and gloomy picture of the future? **Science fiction**
- More humans may result in increased levels of what? **Progress**
- How many solar systems are there in the Milky Way? **Billions**
- What do people yet to be born rely on people in the present for? **Their existence**

## 4. The Future Conversation Questions

1. What do you think the environment will be like in the future? Where will we get our energy from?
2. What threats will humans face in the future? Will humanity destroy itself? Why or why not?
3. Will humans be replaced by robots or artificial intelligences in the future? Do you think we'll ever make contact with alien civilisations in the future?
4. Which countries or regional blocs will be the most powerful in the future?
5. Which cultures are planning for the future today? Which cultures care more about the past or the present than the future?
6. How will society be different in the future? What will the economy look like? Do you think the future will be utopian or dystopian?
7. At some point in the future, Earth will stop supporting life. Will humans still be around by then? If so, what could they do in this situation? Will we colonise space?
8. Is the future already determined?

## 5. The Future Writing Task

Write about some of your predictions for the future. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- Transport in the future.
- Homes in the future.
- Jobs in the future.

### **Alternative exam practice question:**

Some scientists have warned that the human race faces extinction, potentially within 100 years. What threats will humans face in the future? What can we do today to protect future generations from these threats?