

Culture notes

Unit 1 Lives people live

1.1 Vocabulary

As of 2019, **Queen Elizabeth II** is the longest-reigning British monarch, having succeeded to the throne in 1952.

1.2 Grammar

Michelle Obama (b. 1964) is an American lawyer and a former First Lady of the United States. She graduated from Princeton University and Harvard Law School. She has supported numerous charitable causes for education, physical activity, healthy eating and poverty awareness. She's married to Barack Obama who was the 44th President of the United States (2009–2017). They were the first African American presidential couple in US history. They have two daughters.

Barack Obama (b. 1961) is an American lawyer and politician. He was the 44th President of the United States and the first African American to hold the office. He's a Democrat. He graduated from Columbia University and Harvard Law School. In 2008, he won the presidential election and served two terms in office (2009–2017). In 2009, he received a Nobel Peace Prize and donated the prize money to charity. He's married to Michelle Obama. They have two daughters.

Leonardo DiCaprio (b. 1974) is an American actor, a film director and producer, and also a writer. He has starred in movies such as *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, *Romeo + Juliet*, *Titanic*, *Inception* and *The Revenant*. He has received three Golden Globe awards and accepted his first Oscar for best actor in *The Revenant* in 2016. His Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation helps to protect the environment by supporting solutions to pollution and climate change issues, as well as protecting endangered species.

Unit 2 Science and technology

2.1 Vocabulary

Web browsers are software programmes which allow users to find, access and view web pages. The most common browsers are: Edge and Internet Explorer from Microsoft, Google Chrome, Firefox from Mozilla, Safari from Apple and Opera.

Social media include websites and applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. They allow users to create their profiles and then share posts, photos and videos. Social media are also used for instant messaging to communicate with other people.

Search engines, such as Google, Yahoo, Baidu and Bing, allow users to look for information on the Internet. After typing in key words, the relevant sites come up as a list.

2.2 Grammar

Joseph Jacobson (b. 1965) is an American physicist who works as a researcher at MIT. He was named as one of the 100 most influential innovators under thirty-five in *Technology Review* for the work that led to the development of e-ink and technologies for e-books. The first e-reader came out in 2004. Popular e-readers include Kindle and Kobo.

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) was an English writer and social critic. He created some of the most memorable characters in fiction and his books are still popular today. *David Copperfield* was his eighth novel.

Abraham 'Bram' Stoker (1847–1912) was an Irish novelist and short story writer, best known for his novel *Dracula* (1897), the story of the vampire Count Dracula.

2.4 Reading

Antarctica is one of the Earth's seven continents, the one located southernmost, at the South Pole. Almost all the continent is covered with ice. Antarctica is a desert – it doesn't rain or snow much there. It's also the coldest and windiest continent. The conditions are very rough, although grass, algae and bacteria can survive there. Some animals live there too: there are penguins, seals and whales in the Southern Ocean which surrounds Antarctica. It's too cold in Antarctica for humans to live there permanently, but there are a few thousand scientists from all over the globe who stay in the science and research stations and do research on the continent and its environment. Antarctica is a place where space research is done, because that is where you can find a lot of well-preserved meteorites. About 4,000 scientists work in the permanent stations during the summer season and around 1,000 during the harsh and dark winters. In 1959, all countries whose scientists work in Antarctica signed the Antarctic Treaty – an agreement stating that the continent is a protected zone which cannot be used for military actions, but only for scientific purposes.

2.5 Grammar

The earliest form of the **record player**, the phonograph, was invented in 1877 by Thomas Edison. It could record and reproduce sound using a thin metal sheet. In 1887, Emile Berliner invented the gramophone record and the gramophone player. Records were discs with music on both sides. The record was the most common form of listening to music until 1982, when CDs were invented.

Although there were **cars** with steam engines as early as 1769, the modern car with a petrol engine was invented in 1885 by Karl Benz. In the early days, only the rich had cars. Henry Ford changed this – he developed and manufactured the first car that middle-class people could afford to buy. His famous 'Model T' car went on sale in 1908.