Facebook, Google and Amazon

New Internationalist Easier English
Ready Intermediate Lesson
Today’s lesson:

- QUIZ
- Speaking
- Jigsaw reading
- Writing tweets to summarise texts
Try this quiz (then check answers on the infographic on the next slide):

1) How many emails are sent in the world on a typical day?:
   a) 2 billion b) 20 billion c) 200 billion

2) What percentage of internet searches are with Google?:
   a) 51% b) 71% c) 91%

3) What is the value of Google, Facebook and Amazon together?:
   a) Over $1,000 billion b) about $100 billion c) less than $10 billion

4) How many active members does Facebook have?:
   a) 1.65 thousand b) 1.65 million c) 1.65 billion

5) How many companies has Facebook bought since 2005?:
   a) 5 b) 50 c) 500

6) How much money does Amazon owner Jeff Bezos have?:
   a) about $50 million b) about $50 billion c) about $50 trillion
THE INTERNET
- The number of internet users rose from 1 billion in 2005 to an estimated 3.2 billion in 2015.
- A typical day in the life of the internet involves:
  - 207 billion emails sent
  - 8.8 billion YouTube videos watched
  - 4.2 billion Google searches
  - 803 million tweets
- It took Google 2 days to collect 5 exabytes of data = total amount of data produced by humankind since 2003.
- YouTube users post 100 hours of video for every minute that goes by.
- Traditional companies employ 10 more people per dollar earned than digital companies.

THE SEARCH PIE
Google dominates the world search engine market.

MEDIA TAKEOVER
The idea that digital advertising revenue would support online news media has proved to be an illusion:
- 85% of every new dollar spent on online advertising goes to Google or Facebook – not the media companies generating news content.
- Nearly 25% of people who view online video ads are actually robots used by fraudsters.
- Facebook has three million active advertisers, mostly small businesses.

BILLIONAIRES and TAX AFFAIRS
Bill Gates ($75 billion) is still the world’s richest man, but in 2016 two more digital giants joined the Forbes list of the world’s top 10 billionaires.

| No 5 | Jeff Bezos (Amazon) | $48.9 billion |
| No 6 | Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook) | $46.7 billion |

Google founders Larry Page, worth $35.2 billion, came 12th; and Sergey Brin, with $33 billion, came 13th.

TAX
- $6,300 - the amount Facebook’s UK subsidiary paid in corporation tax in 2014, despite handing out $51 million in staff bonuses.
- $1.4 billion - the amount of UK tax avoided by Apple, Facebook, Google, Amazon and eBay in 2014, using loopholes that allowed them to pay corporation tax at a rate of just 0.25%.

What do you know about these 2 companies?

In pairs, make a list of what could be good and what could be bad about them:
Now compare your points to this article:

The sharing economy: Uber and AirBnB

Uber and Airbnb are two of the new ‘person-to-person’ businesses. They use the internet to match people who want a service with someone who can give that service. It seems informal, more like a ‘social movement’ than a business. You don’t use a professional taxi service, Uber connects you with a person with a car in your area now – instead of a professional taxi service. Airbnb lets you stay in someone’s home – instead of a hotel.

But it’s not all good. The owners of Uber and Airbnb are now billionaires; the people who provide the services don't earn much. It’s not really sharing.

The market value of Uber is now $69.5 billion. The National Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia recently invested $3.5 billion in Uber. And Travis Kalanick (Uber CEO) said that they look forward to working with Saudi Arabia to support their economic and social reforms.

Uber does not follow local laws strictly. It says it is a ‘platform’ to connect drivers with passengers, but the regulations are not clear so it does not have to be responsible. It can change prices when there is more or less demand. In 2015 there were more than 50 lawsuits against Uber in the US and many countries (Belgium, Germany, Canada, Australia, New Zealand / Aotearoa and Brazil) have said it broke rules. Spain, Thailand and France have banned Uber – they say it is ‘illegal’ and ‘dangerous’.

Airbnb grew mainly by people telling others about how the company has helped people who do not have much money but have a spare room. In 2011 it had 50,000 beds; by mid-2015 it had 1.2 million (more beds than the world’s largest hotel company). Its value is $24 billion.

Airbnb makes small, regulated, tax-paying guest houses go out of business, not big, rich hotels. It says that many of its hosts are ‘artistic’ – and not rich. But we know from research that a lot of the rentals are complete houses. And more Airbnb hosts are now rich people who rent with more than one property.
Now make another list of things that could be good and bad about Facebook, Google and Amazon
Jigsaw reading:

1/ Predict: What do you think these two articles will be about?:

‘How Google, Facebook and Amazon won the world’

‘No, Mr Zuckerberg’

2/ Read:

A half of group read:
https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/How_Google,_Facebook_and_Amazon_won_the_world

B half of group read:
https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/No_Mr_Zuckerberg:_India%27s_fight_against_Facebook

3/ Share:

Pairs (A & B) share what they found out from their text
Writing Challenge!: Pairs summarise both articles in one tweet each (140 characters maximum)
Homework:

1/ Read this Easier English article:
https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Helping_in_two_clicks:_technology_and_charity

2/ Read the original version of all 4 New Internationalist articles from this lesson:
https://newint.org/issues/2016/07/01/

(after reading the Easier English articles, these will now be far easier to understand)