

Unit 1.

Supplementary materials for developing students' critical thinking & creativity

Meaningful hobbies in the 21st century

1. Lexical challenge

- Can you explain the meanings of these expressions:

digital hobbies, traditional hobbies, meaningful hobby, niche hobby, shallow engagement, aspirational hobby, accessible hobby, hands-on leisure?

- Group the hobbies under the appropriate categories:

<i>technology-based leisure</i>	<i>offline, hands-on leisure</i>

blogging or vlogging

coding for fun

digital art creation

quilting

online communities (Reddit discussions, Discord groups)

bricolage

topiary

enology

streaming media (watch parties, content creation)

video gaming

keeping a formicarium

origami

- Task: In groups, brainstorm and categorize 5-8 words or phrases related to hobbies under these headings:

- Skill-based hobbies
- Mindfulness hobbies
- Adventure hobbies

- Create 3 idiomatic expressions or neologisms (new words) for hobbies of the future and explain their meaning.

2. Critical Discussion

Task: In 2 groups, debate whether digital hobbies, such as *gaming, streaming, online communities*, are as valuable for personal development as traditional ones – *sports, crafts, music, etc.*

- **One group** argues that modern hobbies foster creativity and connection.
- **The other group** argues that they lead to isolation and shallow engagement.
- Conclude with a joint “manifesto” about what counts as a *meaningful* hobby in the 21st century.

3. Mini TED Talk

Task: Prepare a 2–3 minute talk on a *new* or *niche* hobby (*AI-generated art, urban gardening, geocaching*) explaining:

- why it emerged now.
- what skills it develops.
- its cultural or economic impact.

Deliver with persuasive language and examples.



 **Writing**

4. Opinion Editorial

Task: Write a 200-word *op-ed* for an online magazine titled “*The Future of Hobbies in a Post-Digital World*”.

- Argue whether future generations will have more meaningful leisure or will lose touch with offline hobbies.
- Use at least two counterarguments and refute them persuasively.

5. Comparative Essay / Talk

Task: Compare a traditional hobby and a modern hobby (e.g. *letter-writing vs. blogging, painting vs. digital illustration*). Focus on:

- Cognitive skills involved
- Social interaction
- Accessibility and inclusivity
- Psychological benefits

Listening / Watching

6. Media Analysis

Task: Find and watch a YouTube video or podcast episode where a hobby influencer explains their passion.

- Summarize their key points
- Analyze the rhetorical strategies (appeals to ethos, pathos, logos)
- Discuss how they position the hobby as aspirational or accessible.

https://www.ted.com/talks/ryan_mcfadden_the_value_of_keeping_your_passions_as_hobbies

Interactive / Creative

7. Problem-Solving Scenario / Role-play

Task: Imagine you are tasked with designing a new hobby for people living on Mars in 2050.

- It must be sustainable, psychologically beneficial, and require minimal resources.
- Present your hobby idea as a short pitch to a “*Martian Leisure Council*” (role-play).