

3G: the future of mobile phones?

- 1 Look at the list of features of mobile phones. Can you add any others to the list? Work with a partner and decide which you think are the three most important features.

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| text messaging | voice messaging | multi-media messaging (MMS) |
| games | video linking | sending e-mail |
| retrieving e-mail | listening to music | Internet access |
| digital camera | electronic diary | address book |
| colour screen | | |

- 2 Have you got a 3G mobile? What does 3G stand for?
- 3 Read the article on 3G telephony. Complete it using *five* of the features listed in 1. You may need to change the form of the verb.

3G finally goes live

The UK's first mainland 3G (third generation) mobile network officially opened for business earlier this year. 3G has been much-hyped, promising to take mobile phones to a new level with (1) _____, enabling callers to see each other. But with an average price of £400 for a handset, the technology is not cheap.

Technology firm Siemens has been running tests on the viability of using 3G mobile technology on flights. It seems that 3G could improve safety, security and air traffic management. As well as offering passengers (2) _____ to surf while they fly and the chance to send and (3) _____, 3G on planes could provide a valuable new channel for communications between pilot and air traffic control staff.

Japan became the first country to roll out 3G, in October 2001. This came after a five-month delay due to technical problems. NTT DoCoMo, Japan's top mobile phone firm, is back into profit. It predicts that demand for 3G services, which allow faster downloads of multimedia services such as (4) _____, will take off this year.

Italy, where many people own two mobile phones, are among the first consumers, and tens of thousands of video phones have been sold there in recent months by 3G network provider Hutchison. The company hopes to have a million subscribers in Italy within a year. The new handsets can handle huge quantities of data, like TV news broadcasts, share price information and city maps. Although many people object to phones incorporating a (5) _____ in order to send photographs, it is quite possible that 3G will indeed become the future of mobile phones.

- 4 With a partner, work out the meaning of the following words from the text.
- much-hyped (paragraph 1) viability (paragraph 2) roll out (paragraph 3) take off (paragraph 3)
- 5 Discuss the following.
- Do you think the mobile phone market is saturated in your country?
 - Would you consider buying a video phone?
 - Do you think video phones will be successful?
 - Can you predict further uses of mobile phones in the future?