

Battle of the software giants

Level

Intermediate and above

Tasks

Expressing an opinion on whether it is good for companies to dominate a market

Completing a Fact box on Microsoft

Reading an article on Microsoft and software rivals

Using words from the article to describe the students' own company

Discussing points arising from the article

How to use the lesson

- 1 Find out which Microsoft products are used by students in the class. Typically, many students will be familiar with Word, Excel, Power Point, MSN messenger etc. Tell the students that the lesson will be about Microsoft and the computer software industry. Hand out the worksheet and get students to mark their cross on the line and discuss their answers in pairs or small groups. Elicit feedback.
- 2 Ask students to complete the missing information in the Fact box without looking at the article if possible. They can then check their answers by quickly scanning the article.

Answers

(a) *Founded: 1975*

(b) *Chairman: Bill Gates*

(c) *CEO: Steve Ballmer*

(d) *HQ: Redmond, Washington*

- 3 Ask students to read the whole article. Ask follow-up questions. For example, write a list of companies which appear in the article on the board and get students to summarise what is said about each one. Check vocabulary such as: *hailed / budget / takeover bid / auction / converge / innovation*.
- 4 Ask students to look at the Microsoft Fact box again. Get them to note down similar data about their own company or a company they know well, using the words in exercise 4. They then have one minute to present the information to their partner or the class.
- 5 Ask students to work in small groups to discuss the questions. Monitor the discussion. Ask the groups to report their ideas to the class. Provide language feedback.

Related websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

www.microsoft.com

<http://www.mozilla.org/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google>

http://www.skype.com/company/news/2005/skype_ebay.html

<http://www.yahoo.com/>