



Picture News

What's going on this week?

Facebook founder, Mark Zuckerberg has announced Meta, a new company brand for Facebook apps and technologies. Meta recently declared that they're changing direction from developing social media platforms to building what it's calling the next version of the internet. They've described the metaverse as a way of using the internet through virtual reality (VR). Instead of being on a computer, the concept means the user would use a VR headset to access websites and interact with others.

Main question:

Do we need to create a virtual universe?

Listen, think, share

- Look at this week's poster and talk about what we can see. Does anyone know who is on the poster? It is Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook. He has announced a new company brand called Meta who are focusing on developing what they call the metaverse. What do we think this could be?
- Read the information found on the assembly resource about the metaverse and Meta's vision. Do you think it's a good idea? Do you see this being part of our future?
- Watch this week's useful video (link found overleaf), talk about what you think is the main purpose of the metaverse? Who do you think will benefit most? A lot of the metaverse will rely on the use of VR (virtual reality) headset technology for the experiences to seem as realistic as possible. Do you think there will be a time where everyone will have their own headset?
- What do you think are the main benefits of a possible metaverse? E.g. work meetings, family get togethers. Do you think these types of events will be the same as meeting in person? How are they different? Do you think it may be hard for people to separate their real lives from their virtual ones? Can you think of any other drawbacks of the metaverse?
- Thinking of our own experiences, can you think of any games you may have played where you are part of a virtual world? Do you enjoy these types of experiences?

Reflection

Virtual reality can provide opportunities for interactions that feel similar to real life. It's important for us to know and understand the difference between what's real and what isn't.



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KS1 Focus

Question:

What is virtual reality?

Listen, think, share

- Write the words 'virtual reality' on the board. Do you know what virtual reality (VR) is? Do you know anyone who has experienced virtual reality?
- Explain that virtual reality is created by a computer. People wear a virtual reality headset, that allows them to interact with virtual surroundings that can be very similar to real life!
- Look at resource 1, which shares more information about virtual reality. Do you think you would enjoy experiencing virtual reality?
- Discuss some of the things you enjoy doing in the real world such as playing with friends, attending a club, having a family meal, reading a book. Would you like to try these things in a virtual world? Do you think you would enjoy them as much as you would in real life? Why?
- Imagine you could put on a VR headset and experience something. Would it be something from the real world such as playing a sport, driving a car, visiting another country or would it be something from an imaginary world such as living on another planet or the Earth 40 years into the future?
- Many people who make and create VR have suggested that children should not use it if they are under the age of 13. Why do you think this might be?

Reflection

Virtual reality uses equipment to allow people to feel like they are experiencing something that can be similar or very different from the real world. It is important to remember it isn't actually real.



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KS2 Focus

Question:

What do you think it would be like to have a virtual life?

Listen, think, share

- Think about what we know about virtual reality (VR). Can you explain what it is? What equipment do you think is needed? Do you know anyone who has experienced virtual reality?
- Explain that VR is a computer-generated 3D environment that people access through the use of headsets. Some VR headsets also come with hand controllers that track hand movements, which allow users to touch, throw and move objects in the virtual world. Some VR worlds mimic real life whereas others are imaginary worlds.
- Imagine you were able to lead a virtual life. Do you think you would enjoy it? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of having a virtual life compared with real life?
- Look at resource 2, which shares some pros and cons of a virtual life. Can you sort them? Does everyone agree? Think about the comment about not having to go outdoors. Did some people see this as a pro and others as a con?
- Do you think you would prefer a virtual life or a real one? Why?
- Discuss if there is anything that you cannot do in a virtual life such as eat, wash, go to the toilet?
- Create a list of activities such as play football, fly an aeroplane, build a snowman, climb a tree. Decide which you would prefer to do in real life and which you would prefer to do virtually.

Reflection

There are both advantages and disadvantages to living a virtual life. As we get older, we can choose if virtual reality will become part of our real life or not.

KS2 Follow-up Ideas

Option 1: Ask the children to imagine they have put on a VR headset and it is taking them into a world of their choice. Discuss places they could go e.g. space, the future, underwater, a country or place they have always wanted to visit, the top of a mountain, the past.

- Where are you?
- What can you see/hear/smell?
- Who else is there?
- What can you do?
- How do you feel?

Ask the children to draw a picture and write a description of their dream VR world.

Option 2: Remind the children that it is thought an avatar will represent them in the metaverse.

- What is an avatar?

Explain that an avatar is an icon or figure that represents you in an online game or forum.

- Are there any games or computer programmes that you use where you have an avatar e.g. TT Rock Stars, Sumdog?
- Is your avatar similar to you?

Ask the children to design their own avatar. You could do this by drawing or using a computer programme. If you draw, give the children options of eyes, hair, ears, nose mouth that they could add (see below for ideas).



KS1 Follow-up Ideas

Option 1: Remind the children that it is hoped the metaverse will be able to help people do everyday activities, including being able to socialise with friends.

- Do you have a friend or family member you might be able to socialise with more if you could use virtual reality to meet?
- Who are they? Where do they live?
- How do you keep in touch with them at the moment?

Discuss some of the ways we currently use to connect with people we can't see all the time such as letter, email, telephone. Ask the children to write a letter or email to their chosen friend or family member. If possible, post or send them as it will be a lovely surprise.

Option 2: Explain that virtual reality is 3D so that it appears to be very real.

- What is 3D?

Discuss that 3D stands for 3 dimensional so something has a height, width and depth. We are living in a 3D environment everyday!

- Can you name some of the 3D objects in your classroom e.g. table, pencil.

Think about 3D shapes.

- Can you name any 3D shapes?

Show the children a number of 3D shapes. Model how to identify the number of faces, vertices and edges.

- Do you know what a 2D shape is?

Explain that the faces of the 3D shapes are 2D.

- Can you name any of the 2D faces?

This Week's Useful Websites

[This week's news story](#)

www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-59154520

This Week's Useful Videos

[What is the metaverse?](#)

<https://bit.ly/3oL4Xye>

This Week's Virtual Assembly

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss

This Week's Useful Vocabulary

Brand – a business or marketing idea that allows people to identify with a company or a product.

Mark Zuckerberg has announced Meta, a new company **brand** for Facebook apps and technologies.

Concept – a plan, idea or intention.

The **concept** means the user would use a VR headset to access websites and interact with others.

Founder – The person who started something or caused it to be built such as an organisation or a building.

It is Mark Zuckerberg, the **founder** of Facebook.

Interact – communicate or be involved directly with others.

The user would use a VR headset to access websites and **interact** with others.

Virtual reality – a computer-generated environment that seems very like reality to the person experiencing it.

Virtual reality can provide opportunities for interactions that feel similar to real life.

Vision – how someone imagines or hopes something will be like in the future.

Read the information found on the assembly resource about the metaverse and Meta's **vision**.