ICT and Society

Assignment 1
The impact of ICT on the way I do things at home and at school

Introduction

I use ICT a lot in my life. It makes things a lot easier and more convenient. I am going to describe the many different ways in which I use ICT and what I use it for. I am going to evaluate how much it affects my life and how I would manage without ICT. I am going to split this up into four main categories: Home Personal, Home Social, School Personal, and School Social. I think these categories cover all the ways I use ICT in my life. At the end of my assignment, I am going to make a conclusion of all the points raised.

My Uses of ICT

I use ICT in many ways. I use my mobile phone to text or phone my friends, or the Internet to email them. I also use MSN messenger to chat to my friends, and SMS to text them from the Internet. This is good because it does not cost as much to text from SMS as it does to use my phone. I watch TV, and listen to my Hi-Fi, which is good because it helps me to relax. I use the microwave to make myself hot drinks, when I have just walked home from school in winter and I am really cold. I watch DVD's and burn CD's of music. This is also cheaper, because it would cost a lot more to buy the CD than to download it from the Internet. I use all the Microsoft Office tools in doing my homework, which is good because it looks neater, and it is easier to correct any mistakes I make. I use the Internet to search for information to help me with my homework, and Encarta as a computerised encyclopaedia. I then type up the information I have found in Microsoft Word. At Christmas, we have a singing Santa, that senses noise and sings. This does not have that much of an impact on my life, except that it gets really irritating. I use a camera sometimes, on my holidays. We have a burglar alarm at home, which again doesn't have much of an impact on me, unless it goes off for no reason, which is really annoying. Sometimes, my mum uses Tesco online.

My uses of ICT	
Home Personal	Microsoft Word, Encarta, Internet, Games, Microwave, Camera,
Home Social	Mobile phone, MSN messenger, email
School Personal	Microsoft Word, Microsoft Paint, Microsoft Excel, Internet,
School Social	Email, Win Popup

Home personal

I have chosen to describe a computer as the technology I use at home for personal reasons. I use it to play games that I download from the Internet. A non-ICT alternative is a pack of cards, or a game of Monopoly. The advantages of a computer are that you never lose the dice or a card or anything, and computer games don't take as long as a game of Monopoly would. You don't argue with a computer in the way that you end up arguing with your over-competitive brother either. The disadvantages of a computer are that you can't play them in a power cut, or if your computer crashes, and it's antisocial sitting on your own at a computer for ages. Using a computer to play games on is not that valuable to me because I could live without playing games, or I could always play monopoly or cards if I didn't have a computer. However it does meet my need to relax.
I also use the Internet to search for information to do my homework. I use Google to do research for projects and things. A non-ICT alternative would be to use an encyclopaedia. The Internet is more convenient than an encyclopaedia, and you nearly always find what you want on the Internet, but if you can't find what you want in whatever books you have at home, you have to go to the Library or something, and it takes a lot longer to find you information that way. Disadvantages of using the Internet are that if you type up your assignment, teachers think you just copied it from the Internet, when in fact it's all your own work. I need the Internet to search for information for my homework, so the Internet meets my needs because I use it to search for information for my homework (for example my RE project on Christmas last year, which would have been impossible to do without the Internet). The Internet is very valuable to me for this use because it makes things a lot quicker and easier, and more convenient. If I didn't have the Internet, it would take me a lot longer to do my homework, so I consider the Internet a necessity to do my homework.

Home Social

I have chosen to describe my mobile phone for an ICT technology that I use at home for social reasons. I use it to text or phone my friends. Another alternative is an ordinary landline telephone, or the Royal Mail. The advantages of a mobile phone are that it is a lot quicker and more

convenient than the postal service, and can be taken out with you, as opposed to a normal telephone, which you cannot move. Disadvantages are that it costs more to text someone than to send them a letter, and that you can have your phone stolen, unlike the Royal Mail. Well, somebody could steal your stamp or your pen, but it wouldn't cost you as much to buy another stamp as it would to buy a new phone. You don't get attached to a stamp in the way you get attached to your phone either, so you wouldn't be as upset if somebody stole your stamp as if somebody stole your mobile. Limitations of a mobile phone are that if you are on pay as you go when you run out of credit you can't use your phone. For teenagers, you spend most of your life at school, where you're not with your friends and might want to text them, and you're not allowed a phone in school. So if you go somewhere after school, and your parents don't know where you are, they can't ring you and find out because you're not allowed your phone. A mobile phone meets my needs because if I'm out and I want a lift home, I can ring my dad and he'll come and pick me up, and I can talk to my friends whenever I want. It would be really hard without a mobile, because it enables people to contact you wherever you are so you can meet up with your friends or make sure your parents know where you are all the time. It is very valuable to me, and I couldn't live without my phone. I sometimes text people about silly things, whereas I wouldn't ring them if I didn't have a mobile. This can be a help sometimes, because I know who else is going to places, or what time we have to be somewhere, or how much it costs. These are things which I think I know, and am just checking by texting someone, and would not ring someone about.

Another home social ICT technology I use is MSN messenger. This is sort of like a chat room, but it is just you and your friend or friends. You are both online, and you type a message which comes up on the screen straight away. An alternative to this would be to ring someone up. The advantages of MSN are that you end up talking about silly things and finding out more about the person you are chatting to, and you sometimes chat to people who you wouldn't ring up because you're not that good friends with them, so you end up making more friends. Disadvantages of MSN are that you can spend hours chatting to people, and you should have been doing your homework, but you spent your time on the Internet instead. MSN is quite valuable to me because it is a good way to communicate with people, especially people who you never actually see face to face (i.e. People you met on holiday etc), but it is not a life changing technology that I could not live without, because I could just email or text people instead.

School Personal

I have chosen the Internet for my use of ICT at school for personal reasons. I use it to search for song lyrics on the World Wide Web. A

non-ICT alternative is to listen to the song countless times until you know the lyrics off by heart, or write them down whilst you are listening to it. The advantages of using the Internet are that you could get the lyrics wrong by trying to listen to them, and it takes a lot longer than just searching on the Internet. Disadvantages are when you can't find the lyrics you want, or when the person who wrote them got them completely wrong. This isn't all that valuable to me because I could live without searching for song lyrics, but it is nice to know what you are listening to.

I also use Microsoft Word at school for a personal use. I use it in most ICT lessons to word process my work. You open Microsoft Word and use the keyboard to type in your work and it is displayed on the monitor. A non-ICT alternative would be to handwrite all my work. Advantages of using a word processor are that it makes your work neater, with less mistakes in it, and you can print it off more than once, so that you can hand it in, your teacher can mark it, then they can give it back to you so you can change it and make improvements. Disadvantages are that your computer could crash, and you would lose all your work, or other such problems like not having any ink for the printer, or the printer being broken. I suppose the argument to that is that you if you had handwritten your work, your pen might run out or break, or you could have a fire, so you would lose your work then, too. The argument to that being that a computer would probably not survive a fire, so you would lose your work anyway, whether or not it was on a computer. Another disadvantage is that unless you have a floppy disk or a CD-R and a CD writer, you cant really move your work, so if you start it at school and you don't have a floppy disk, you can hardly fold up the computer, put it in your exercise book, in your bag, and take it home with you in the same way that you can with a piece of paper. Also, other people could use your work, by changing the font so that it looks different, and printing off another copy, claiming it to be their own work. Then, you could get told off for copying them, even though it was them. I use Word a lot (well, for example I am using it right now) and consider it really important to doing my homework. I use it for most major projects (despite the fact that people could easily copy my work then) and it makes a big impact on my life as regards to work, because it often saves me a lot of time.

School Social

I have chosen e-mails as my technology that I use at school for social reasons. I use it to email my friends, some of whom I never see face-to-face. Non-ICT alternatives are the phone, or post. Advantages of email over post are that post is too slow and formal. Advantages of email over the phone are that it is cheaper, because school pays for the Internet connection. Also, I can email people at any time of day and know that I'm not disturbing them, because they can read it

whenever they want, unlike the phone which they have to answer when you ring them. If someone emails you when you aren't in, it doesn't matter because you just read it next time you check your emails, but if you ring someone and they aren't at home, you have to keep ringing them until they're in when you ring. Disadvantages of email over the phone are that it means I never make the effort to ring or meet up with friends who I have kept in contact with using email. Disadvantages of email over the post are that you can't send material possessions via the Internet. Email is very important to me because I have friends who don't live anywhere near me who I've kept in touch with using emails, and who it's not convenient to meet up with all the time. I need email to communicate with my friends, so it meets my needs because it enables me to communicate with my friends.

I would be giving another example of how I use ICT at school for social reasons, if I had one. Since we're not allowed to use mobiles, or chat rooms, and I can't think of anything else, I'm not going to give another example.

Conclusion

All these ICT technologies have made an impact on my life. ICT means I can relax by playing computer games, or watching TV or DVD's, or listening to MP3's and my Hi-Fi. It makes things cheaper- i.e. burning CD's instead of buying them, and downloading computer games instead of buying them. It makes things quicker- by emailing somebody instead of sending them a letter through the post. It makes things more convenient, and affects my life in a big way by making everything so much easier.