High tech, high yields? The Kenyan farmers deploying AI to increase productivity

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

Article summary: This article describes how farmers in Kenya are using artificial intelligence to get advice to help them improve their crops.

Time: 45–60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking

Language focus: Vocabulary

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the theme of farming and crops.

Key:
1. c
2. d
3. f
4. a
5. b
6. e

2. Key words

a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Point out that the word *tool* is used for any computer program that helps people to do a job, whereas in its other sense it refers to items such as hammers, saws, and screwdrivers.

Key:
1. tool
2. Fertiliser
3. crop
4. pest
5. Knowhow
6. optimistic
7. plot
8. Humidity
9. Moisture

3. Comprehension check

a. Ask students to work individually to answer the questions and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. The answers given are just examples. Students may say something different that is also correct. For example, in #8 they may say 'It's free.' Note that in #4, *hectares* is plural – the 's' is not used when measurements come before a noun, e.g. 'a five-kilometre race'.

Key:
1. artificial intelligence
2. three
3. because of pests, diseases, and a lack of technical knowhow
4. 0.4 hectares
5. 7.3 tonnes
6. It diagnoses pests and diseases.
7. on their own farms and on neighbouring farms
8. nothing
9. It checks temperature, humidity and soil moisture.
10. the correct water supply

4. Key language

a. Ask students to compare their answers in pairs. Then ask them to check their answers in the text.

Key:
1. d
2. f
3. a
4. b
5. c
6. e

b. Students use the correct form of two of the phrases from task a to fill the gaps in the sentences.

Key:
1. water supply
2. game changer

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5. Discussion

a. Allow students time to note down their ideas and encourage them to give reasons for their answer.

6. In your own words

a-b. This task can be assigned as homework individually or in pairs. Ask students to do some online research, gather information about the uses of AI in farming, and prepare a report, including as much information as possible.