

*Digital Divide in the UK?*

**Lesson Plan**

**Lesson2: The global digital divide (approx. 40 minutes)**

<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learn how "global networks" have grown over time that rely on the use of submarine fibre optic cables</li> <li>• learn about the scale of the global digital divide and appreciate the macroscale geographical variability that exists in access to the internet and mobile phone networks</li> <li>• think critically about the importance of communications technologies for enabling different types of global interaction (and more generally for the acceleration of globalisation)</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>NB Guidance notes for each section of the lesson can be found in the fact sheet</i></b></p>	
<b>Starter</b>	<p><b><i>Shark attack!</i></b> Why are sharks relevant to this topic..... Sharks have been known to attack underwater internet cables. Is it an aggressive response to electric signals that they can detect? Whatever the reason, these shark attacks draw our attention to the underwater geography of the internet, a key factor explaining the global pattern of internet inclusion and exclusion.</p>
<b>Main activity</b>	<p><i>Using the <b>Lesson 2 PowerPoint presentation: The global digital divide explains.</b></i></p> <p><b><i>(1) What is the global geography of (i) the internet and (ii) mobile phones? How are patterns changing?</i></b></p> <p>Some amazing facts include: nearly 30% of Africans and 50% of rural Bangladeshis now own a mobile phone. Rates of market growth are extremely high in many low-income nations. Students study current trends and uses of technology in developing nations and ask: have reports of a "two-speed world" been over-stated?</p> <p><b><i>(2) How important is communications technology as a factor promoting globalisation?</i></b></p> <p>The internet is just one of several factors that have accelerated globalisation in recent decades. Other key factors include the role of transnational corporations (TNCs), trade bloc growth and liberalisation of money markets, as the supporting <i>PowerPoint presentation: The global digital divide</i> explains.</p>
<b>Plenary</b>	<p><b><i>Africa: still the least connected continent?</i></b></p> <p>Students discover that a major landmark event took place in 2009: the establishment of the high-speed Seacom fibre optic cable linking east Africa with the rest of the world. Students can discuss the implications of this.</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<p><b><i>This lesson is fully supported with the following resources:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>PowerPoint presentation The global digital divide</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i><a href="#">A Shrinking world</a>, Geography in the News article. Mobile phones extra reading</i></b></li> </ul>

### External links

- [Guardian image: The internet's undersea world](#)
- [FT: Networks: Sharks and the threat to communications 02/11/09](#)
- [Guardian: Nice talking to you ... mobile phone use passes milestone 03/03/09](#)
- [FT: Bangladeshis rush to learn English by mobile 13/11/09](#)
- [Guardian: East Africa finally joins broadband revolution 23/07/09](#)

### Extra reading:

- [BBC SuperPower: Visualising the internet](#) The BBC provides an interactive guide to the growth of the internet and how it works
- [Guardian: A people's history of the internet](#) The Guardian's interactive historical guide to internet growth