

Getting Digital on Testing

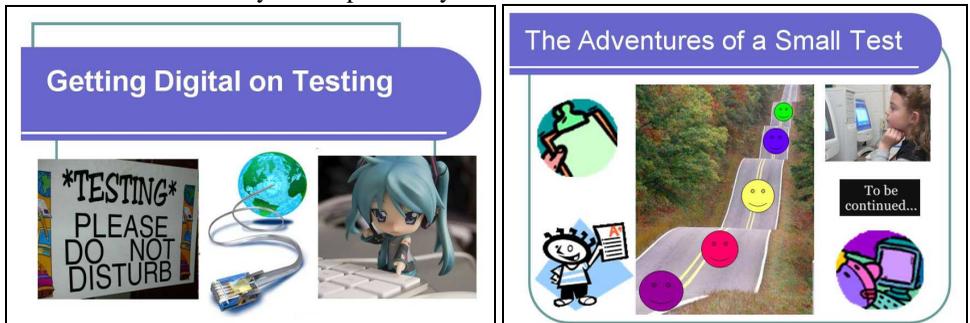
1. Warming-up.

We live in the age of great changes, high speed and new technologies. Our pupils were born in this age and sometimes they feel the demands of the day much better than we do. It is much easier for them to get used to this new reality and except the rules of our changing world. In the methodological literature we sometimes meet such terms as *digital natives* and *digital immigrants*. Digital native is "someone who grows up using technology and who thus feels comfortable and confident with it – typically today's children. Their parents, on the other hand, tend to be digital immigrants, who have come late to the world of technology, if at all. In many cases, teachers are the digital immigrants and our younger students are the digital natives" [1: 8-9].

So, comment on the meaning of these terms. Think about yourselves and say if you are digital natives or digital immigrants and how confident you feel about using information and communication technologies (ICTs) in your professional activity.

2. Presenting the Material.

Testing is an essential part of foreign language teaching, and ICTs can help us in this sphere as well. With the help of technology testing can be modern, interactive and exciting. To illustrate the different ways of making tests with the help of ICTs let me tell you a short story "The Adventures of a Small Test". So, listen to the story and tell what types of tests were mentioned in the story, what programs were used for producing them and what kinds of tests you can produce yourselves.



Once upon a time there lived an English teacher. She worked at school and liked her work very much. One day she was preparing for her lesson in the 9th form. The lesson was devoted to Christmas. In one of the newspapers she found a wonderful letter of a girl teenager who was writing to Santa Claus about her emotions caused by listening to Christmas music. Though she was 15 years old she felt this mysterious spirit of Christmas as if she were a small child [2: 14]. The letter was really amazing, and the teacher wanted to discuss it with her pupils during the lesson. As there were no tasks to this letter in the newspaper, she decided to create some tasks herself. But her handwriting was not so good.

Besides she was in a hurry. So, she wrote the tasks with her pen, made some photocopies and they looked in the following way:

A Letter to Santa

Dear Santa,
My name is Amy. I am 15 years old and I love Christmas.
I just thought I'd write you a letter and tell you how we celebrate Christmas in our house and the absolute joy and togetherness you bring into our lives every December. Even though I have long outgrown the innocence and excitement that I once possessed, I still feel a great happiness at Christmas time.
I am a teenager. I play volleyball for my high school, have tons of friends who I go out with every weekend, I live as any normal teenager does. Perhaps the one quality that separates me from the rest of them is the fact that almost everyday I listen to Christmas music. There's something about it that makes me feel like home. With all the pressures I am faced with everyday, it's the sound of that heavenly music that makes me remember what it was like not so many years ago.
We lived in an old house that was built in 1928. I lived there until I was 9. An old Victorian house, the ones you see in Connecticut and Virginia.
Every Christmas, my mom, dad, two sisters and brother would be home for Christmas. We all went together and picked out a tree. My mother always wanted the biggest one, but my father was more sensible. We spent hours preparing the house for all our family members.
The weather was never so cold you couldn't stand it, but cold enough to make it feel like a traditional Christmas.
The old house sure sparkled when my daddy would put up those Christmas lights. I always tried to help, but the only thing I could do was help keep the lights in order.
My parents would play Johnny Mathis while I kept playing a Disney Family Christmas on my little Sony tape player. I must have worn that tape out by the time I was 8.
Presents of all kinds were wrapped under the tree but I knew the good stuff would come on Christmas Eve. When Santa came, I had my list ready for weeks. I had my mom

A Letter to Santa

I. Choose the correct variant:

- How old is Amy?
a) fifteen, b) seventeen, c) thirteen.
- What does she do almost every day?
a) She plays volleyball, b) She listens to music, c) She visits her friends.
- Where did she live in her childhood?
a) in an old Victorian house, b) in a block of flats, c) in a hostel.
- Who wanted the biggest tree on Christmas?
a) Amy, b) her mother, c) her father.

II. Write whether the statements are true or false (T or F).

- Amy would play Johnny Mathis while her parents were playing a Disney Family Christmas.

- On Christmas Eve Amy was waiting for the presents from Santa.
- Amy made her mother check for grammatical errors in the list of presents in fear that Santa may not understand.

III. Match the parts of the sentences:

1. Santa always knew what Amy wanted	a) that burned all Christmas Eve.
2. It was a tradition in Amy's house	b) to make peanut butter cookies.
3. Our stockings were hung over a fireplace	c) and never disappointed her.

1. _____; 2. _____; 3. _____.

IV. Fill in the gaps:

We'd go _____ church. I'd sing _____ (great, greater, the greatest) songs in the world and I'd feel like an angel _____ (come, my body, I) so full of love and joy. I felt _____ (taken, be taken, take) from us

Certainly, she saw that the way she presented the tasks was far from perfection. So, next time she decided to use a computer and print them.

A Letter to Santa

I. Choose the correct variant:

- How old is Amy?
a) fifteen;
b) seventeen;
c) thirteen.
- What does she do almost every day?
a) She plays volleyball;
b) She listens to music;
c) She visits her friends.
- Where did she live in her childhood?
a) in an old Victorian house;
b) in a block of flats;
c) in a hostel.

- On Christmas Eve Amy was waiting for the presents from Santa.
- Amy made her mother check for grammatical errors in the list of presents in fear that Santa may not understand.

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3. Our stockings were hung over a fireplace	c) and never disappointed her.

1. _____; 2. _____; 3. _____.

IV. Fill in the gaps:

We'd go _____ church. I'd sing _____ (great, greater, the greatest) songs in the world and I'd feel like an angel _____ (come, my body, I) so full of love and joy. I felt _____ (taken, be taken, take) from us

They looked much better than the previous ones but were too traditional. So, the teacher decided to use additional options of the program MS Word and improve the tasks in such a way that they could be done not in a printed variant but in an electronic one.

A LETTER TO SANTA

I. Choose the correct variant:

- How old is Amy? **fifteen**
- What does she do almost every day? **listens to music**
- Where did she live in her childhood?
 a) in an old Victorian house;
 b) in a block of flats;
 c) in a hostel.
- Who wanted the biggest tree on Christmas? **her mother**

II. Say whether the statements are true or false (tick the true ones):

Amy would play Johnny Mathis while her parents were playing a Disney Family Christmas.

On Christmas Eve Amy was waiting for the presents from Santa.

Amy made her mother check for grammatical errors in the list of presents in fear that Santa may not understand.

III. Match the parts of the sentences:

1. Santa always knew what Amy wanted	a) that burned all Christmas Eve.
2. It was a tradition in Amy's house	b) ... to make peanut butter cookies.
3. Our stockings were hung over a fireplace	c) ... and never disappointed her.

1. _____; 2. _____; 3. _____.

IV. Fill in the gaps:

We'd go _____ church. I'd sing **greater** songs in the world and I'd feel like an angel **and I** so full of love and joy. I felt **like** from us

But the program Microsoft Word did not allow checking the results automatically. This could be done by another Office program Microsoft Excel.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1										
2	WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SANTA?									
3		ANSWER								
4	Santa Claus comes through	chimney	2							
5	He puts the presents into	stocking	0							
6	What animals are there in Santa's harness?	deer	2							
7	What tree is the symbol of Christmas?	fir-tree	2							
8	What colour is Santa's hat?	red	2							
9										
10										
11	YOUR MARK		8							
12										
13										

Then she found special authoring programs which could make different types of interactive exercises and add our own feedback. Especially she liked the program "Hot Potatoes" and created the following tests based on "A Letter to Santa".

Matching exercise

Match the items on the right to the items on the left.

I play volleyball for my high ...

We lived in an odd ...

We all went together and picked out ...





| Your score is 18%
 Sorry! Try again. Incorrect matches have been removed.

C. fifteen

D. seventeen

2. What does she do almost every day?

A. She plays volleyball.

B. She listens to music.

C. She visits her friends.

D. She fights with boys.

Oh no, she is a well-bred girl.

In order to use such electronic materials at your English lesson you should install the corresponding program to your computer, create the tasks, save them and upload these files to all the computers in the computer lab. So, such lessons need special preparation beforehand. But one day there appeared a problem in the computer lab of our teacher (maybe, it was a virus), and some necessary files were deleted from the computers. The teacher was rather upset because she had to change the plan of the lesson. She thought that it would be very nice if she had some place where she could store her materials and the pupils could also find and make the exercises from any place: school, their homes, even from the street. The only way to do it was to save them in the Internet. So, the teacher created one more Christmas test with the help of an online program on the web-site <http://www.tolearnenglish.com>.

☆☆ Intermediate
 English exercise "Funny Christmas Quiz" created by [zimolena](#) (01-10-2009) with [The test builder](#)
[Click here to see the current stats of this English test](#)

- In England and America Santa Claus comes through the .
- He puts the presents into the .
- There are in Santa's harness.
- Santa's hat is .
- The name of Santa's reindeer is .
- On Christmas Eve people decorate .
- At Christmas dinner British people traditionally eat for dessert.
- They also exchange kisses beneath a sprig of .
- The traditional Christmas song is .
- In the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" on the fifth day "my true love sent to me" five .

CLICK HERE TO CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

RESULTS

- In England and America Santa Claus comes through the **CHIMNEY** ✓.
- He puts the presents into the **WARDROBE** × **SOCK**.
- There are **HORSES** × **DEERS** in Santa's harness.
- Santa's hat is **RED** ✓.
- The name of Santa's reindeer is **ROBINIANTE** × **RUDOLF**.
- On Christmas Eve people decorate **A FIR-TREE** ✓.
- At Christmas dinner British people traditionally eat **PUDDING** ✓ for dessert.
- They also exchange kisses beneath a sprig of **MISTLETOE** ✓.
- The traditional Christmas song is **JINGLE BELLS** ✓.
- In the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" on the fifth day "my true love sent to me" five **KISSES** × **RINGS**.

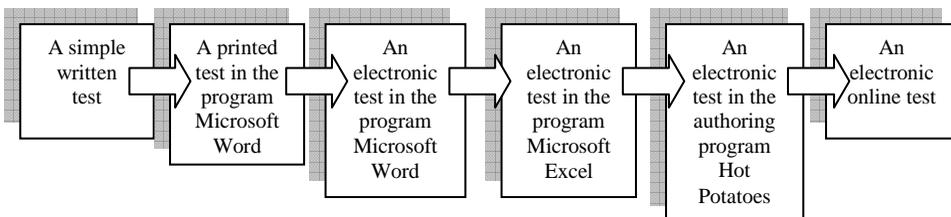
> ATTENTION: CE TEST EST EN ATTENTE DE VALIDATION. IL PEUT DONC CONTENIR DES ERREURS AU NIVEAU DES QUESTIONS, DES REPONSES OU DE SA CONCEPTION.
 Les notes de ces tests ne sont pas prises en compte sur le livret scolaire. [Ask a question](#) [Report an error](#)

😊
Your mark: 60 / 100 [Publish on Facebook](#)
[Twitter](#)

Results of the 2 people who have taken this test:
 Average mark: 81.5 / 100

<25/100:	0%
25 - 49,99/100:	0%
[You] 50 - 74,99/100:	50%
75 - 99,99/100:	0%
Perfect:	50%

So, our small Christmas test had an exciting adventure along the road of perfection and it passed the following "checkpoints":



To sum it up, let's recollect the main ways of producing tests using ICTs.

<h3>Software for Producing Tests:</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <u>Office Programs</u>➤ <u>Authoring Tools</u>➤ <u>Online Resources</u> 	<h3>Office Programs</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <u>Microsoft Word</u>● <u>Microsoft Excel</u>  
<h3>Authoring Tools</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <u>Hot Potatoes</u>● <u>Quandary</u> <p>http://www.halfbakedsoftware.com/</p> 	<h3>Online Resources</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● http://www.tolearnenglish.com● http://www.easytestmaker.com/default.aspx● http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/   

This story is to be continued because modern technologies are being developed with a very high speed and maybe tomorrow we'll be able to learn about an entirely new way of creating such materials.

3. Laboratory Work.

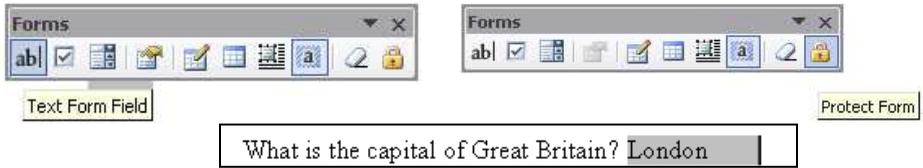
Now let's try to create some tests with the help of the software mentioned above. We'll be using the materials of the book "Your English Self" [3]. While making a test we should mind that there are different types of exercises which can be included into the test: *multiple choice exercises, matching exercises, true/false/no information exercises, sequencing exercises, gap-filling exercises, open-cloze exercises, sentence transformation exercises, word formation exercises*, etc [4: 73-133]. A test may include the exercises of one type or it may be mixed. Anyway, we should analyze the software we're working with from the point of its possibilities to create different types of exercises.

1) Creating Tests with the Help of Office Programs.

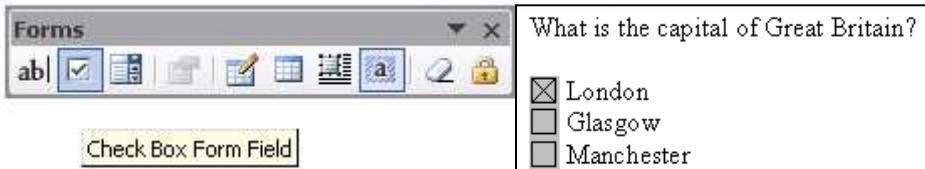
a) The program Microsoft Word allows you to create all types of exercises which can be presented in a printed or electronic form. To create an electronic test with help of this program we should use the toolbar "Forms".

- Click on "View", then "Toolbars" and finally "Forms". You will see a new toolbar.
- Write an easy question, for example "What's the capital of Great Britain?"

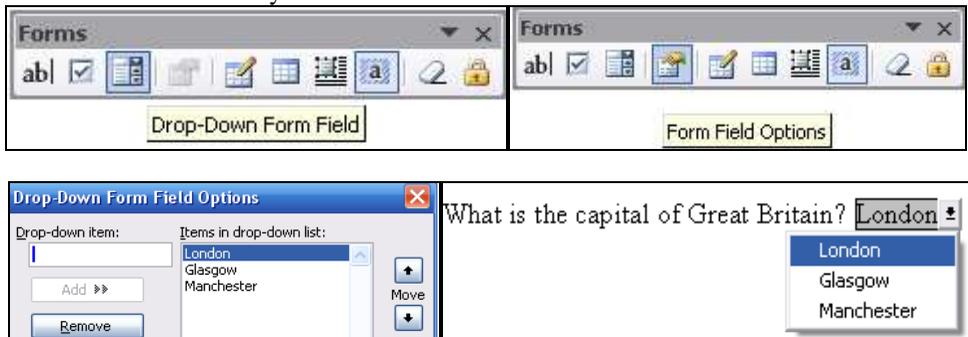
- Click on "Text Form Field" and a grey space will appear. Then click on "Protect Form" and you'll be able to write in this space.



- Click on "Check box Form Field" and you'll get a "tick" sign. Then click on "Protect Form" and you'll be able to put the cross in it.



- Click on "Drop-Down Form Field" and you'll see a grey space again. Then click on "Form Field Options Field", insert the possible variants of answering your question and click "OK". Then press the "Protect Form" button and you'll be able to choose the correct variant.



The advantage of creating tests using this program is that it is simple. The disadvantage is that the answers cannot be checked automatically.

To get more information about creating tests using forms see the references [1:15-19], [5:28-31] (Module 7).

b) Creating tests in the program Microsoft Excel is more difficult and time-consuming. You should have some skills of working with the table redactors and inputting formulae into the cells. To learn how to create tests using this program see the references [5:36-48] (Module 8).

Here is the sample of a gap-filling test created with the help of the Office program MS Word and based on the extract from the text "Time Capsule" [3:105-106].

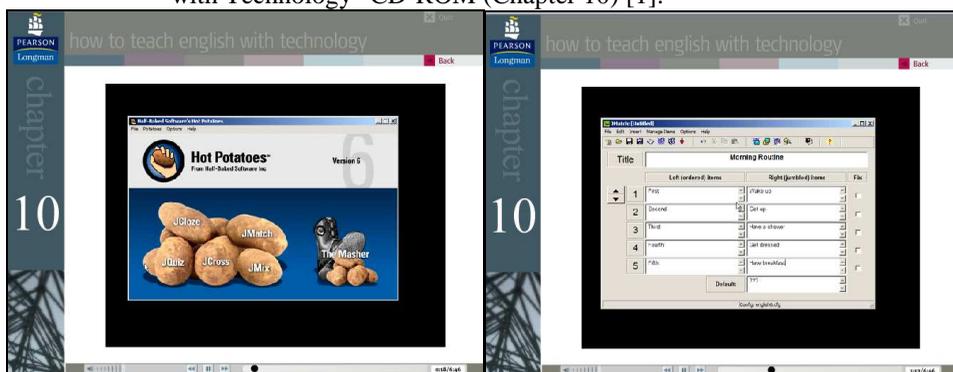
Fill in the blanks.

Buzz-buzz. The telephone **is ringing**. Pick up the receiver, please. You are on the phone now. You can to a relative or friend who is far away. It was Alexander Bell who **made** it possible for you by inventing an apparatus **↓** sending or receiving sound in 1876. The telephone was big and immobile of time, but today there cell-phones, that is small gadgets which you can carry in anywhere. But **don't** take it for a children's game "Telephone" which is popular in many countries.

2) Creating Tests with the Help of Authoring Tools.

Authoring tool is "an installable program that allows you to create materials in electronic format which can then be distributed on a CD-ROM, DVD, USB pen drive, floppy disk or via a web page to your learners" [1: 129]. One of the most popular authoring programs is "Hot Potatoes" which can be downloaded freely from <http://hotpot.uvic.ca/>, installed on your computer and used for educational purposes free of charge. It allows you to create *multiple-choice* exercises, *short-answer* exercises, *hybrid* questions (short-answer questions that turn into multiple-choice questions after several attempts), *gap-fill* exercises; *jumbled-sentence* exercises, *matching exercises* etc. To get started you should use the Help Contents and the tutorials of the program. Let's create a simple matching exercise.

- Load the program Hot Potatoes from your computer.
- Watch the video tutorial to the program from the "How to Teach English with Technology" CD-ROM (Chapter 10) [1].



- Follow the instructions in the tutorial and create a short matching exercise (instead of the video tutorial you may use a text tutorial in the "Help" menu of the program).

The advantage of creating tests using the programs "Hot Potatoes" is that we can create interactive tests with our own feedback, add multimedia to the tests and make different types of exercises, which can be put into one unit with the help of the additional program Masher. The disadvantage is that it is a little bit time-consuming.

To get more information about creating tests using authoring tools see the references [1:129-135], [6:59-61].

Here is the sample of a matching exercise created with the help of "Hot Potatoes" and based on the text "Talking about TV Programmes" [3:115-116].

Talking about TV Programmes

Matching exercise

Match the parts of the dialogue on the right to the corresponding items on the left.

Sorry! Try again. Incorrect matches have been removed.
Your score is 75%.
OK

Hooray! It's Friday. We can enjoy ourselves to our hearts' content. What are your plans?	
I've got a lot of to do about the house first: cleaning my room, ironing my clothes, and food shopping. Importantly, I'll have to cope with all that by 5 o'clock.	Why? Are you expecting guests?
What kind of quiz-show is it?	It's a general knowledge quiz show "Mastermind".
If I'm not mistaken, there will be a humorous TV show called "Mr. Bean" around 7 p.m.	Oh? You mean that funny guy who almost never speaks and fails at everything he tries to do?

I am going to a football match at 4.30 p.m., and then I am going to listen to my favourite FM radio station.

2) Creating Tests with the Help of Online Resources.

Online resources can help us to create tests online. Some resources suggest only printable tests, for example <http://www.easytestmaker.com>, some of them – interactive tests, for example <http://www.tolearnenglish.com/>. To make an interactive test you need more time than we have at this lesson. So, let's create a simple printable test with the help of an online program at <http://www.easytestmaker.com>. This test builder allows us to create different types of tests such as *multiple choice* tests, *true/false* tests, *short answer* tests, *matching* tests and *fill in the blank* tests. You can also create a mixed test which includes different types of exercises.

- Visit the website <http://www.easytestmaker.com> and login (now you may use the presenter's login and password but later register yourselves).
- Press the "Click here" button to read the text tutorial to the test builder.

Get Started – easy as 123!

- 1) [Click here](#) to learn how to manage your tests with EasyTestMaker.
- 2) [Click here](#) to learn how to add questions to your tests.
- 3) [Click here](#) to learn how to print your test.

Adding and editing questions on your test.

On each test you create you can add as many or as few questions of each type all on the test could be all multiple choice or half multiple choice and the rest fill in the blank. You can add any number of test questions or how you mix the test with different question types.

Click the question type below to see its features:

- Multiple Choice
- True and False
- Matching
- Fill-in-the-blank
- Short Answer

Easy TestMaker
- The easy way to make your tests

Home Get Started Support Contact Us

Krause's [<< Back to test]

True and False

Alaska is one of the 50 states in the US?

a) True
 b) False

Start question on a new page.

Check to continue adding questions.

Easy TestMaker
- The easy way to make your tests

Home Getting Started and How To's My Account Contact Us Logout

Scott's Test [<< Back to test]

Matching

Instructions (leave blank if no special instructions are required.)

Match up the colors with the type of object they generally belong to.

	Reset Order	Randomize Order		Reset Order	Randomize Order
Option			Answer		
X sun		1	yellow		1
X grass		2	green		2
X sky		3	blue		3
X sun		4	yellow		4
X tree trunk		5	brown		5

- Click on "Create a new test" and choose the type of the test.

- Follow the instructions step by step, create a short test and print it.

The advantage of creating tests using online test builders is that we can save all our tests in our personal "box" at the web site and we can work with them in any room which has at least one computer connected to the Internet. The disadvantage is that you should have the access to the Internet and be careful with copyrights especially if your test is published for everybody's usage.

To get more information about creating tests using online resources see the references [1:126-129], [6:57-59].

Here is the sample of a multiple choice test (in an electronic variant) based on the text "Save Rare Animals" [3:87-88].

Test Preview		Insert New>>	True/False	Multiple Choice	Short Answer	Matching	Fill in the blank
Edit	Save Rare Animals!	Edit	1) What is the most famous rare animal?	a) Cheetah	b) Panda	c) Elephant	
Up	Perhaps the most famous rare animals is the panda. Twenty years ago it was nearly extinct. It's even become a symbol for wildlife conservation.	Down					
Down	There is a serious habitat problem because of number of reasons.	Delete					
Delete	1. After pollution or destruction (the natural home of plant or animals) habitats takes it many years (sometimes hundreds or even thousands) to grow again.	Insert New>>	2) What is a habitat?	a) A set of individual habits of a person	b) A resident of some area	c) The natural home of plants or animals	
	2. Pollution and destruction change the balance of nature. Each species in a habitat (for example, wood, jungle, marsh or forest needs and helps the rest). If one animal, bird or insect disappears, all the others suffer too.	Edit					
	Habitats and animals are disappearing in Africa, Asia and Europe. Since 1947 in Britain, for example:	Up					
	50% of the woods have disappeared;	Down					
	50% of the marshes have disappeared;	Delete					
	95% of meadows have disappeared.	Insert New>>	3) What happens with many species of rare animals?	a) They are disappearing	b) They are propagating	c) They are killing each other	
	And what has taken the place of these green, natural places? Houses, farms, cities, streets, roads and factories. Because of this rare species are dying.	Edit					
	There's only one way to save wild animals and wild habitats – conservation, that means protecting animals in danger by law, creating necessary conditions for their life. If this doesn't happen, many rare wild animals will soon have just one habitat – the zoo.	Up					
		Down					
		Delete					
Insert New>>	True/False	Multiple Choice	Short Answer	Matching	Fill in the blank	Section Heading	Copy questions from another test...

In conclusion it's worth saying that testing is not an easy process both for the teachers of foreign languages and the pupils. But integrating ICTs into this process can really help us to make it interesting, less difficult and more successful.



Create your tests and have fun!

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