

5 The impact of computing – Part 1

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Recall

Computing has changed almost everything:

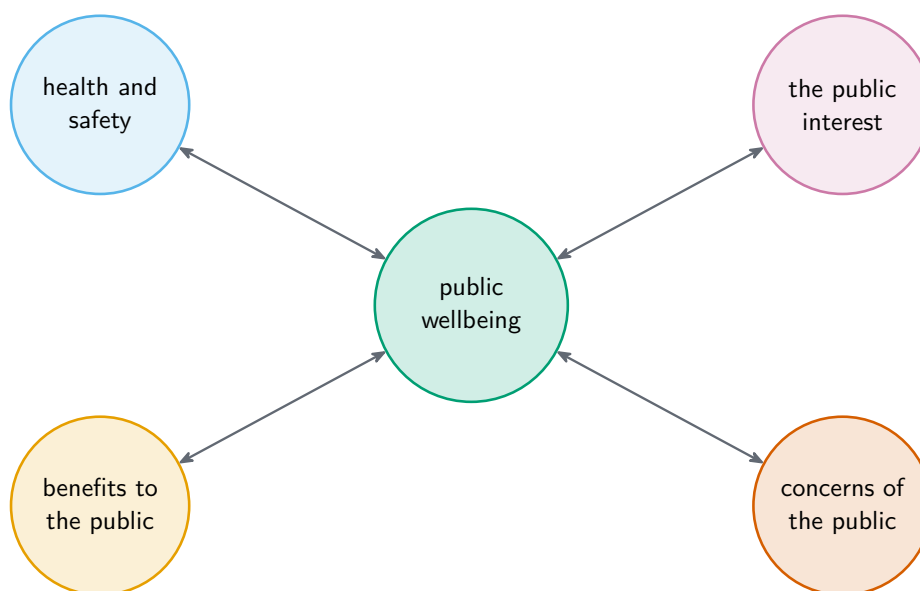
- Phones and the internet connect people across the world.
- But not everyone has the same access to technology.
- Computing brings both benefits and problems.

This sheet lines up the effects of computing on society. Each idea has a worked example.

New ideas

■ 1 Benefits and harms

Computing brings big **benefits** (fast communication, medical advances, access to knowledge) but also **harms** (loss of privacy, misinformation, job changes).



Most computing innovations have **both** – the same tool can help and harm.

■ 2 The digital divide

The **digital divide** is the gap between those who have good access to computers and the internet and those who do not. It can come from income, location, or age, and it can widen other inequalities.

■ 3 Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing gathers help or ideas from a large group of people online – for example, mapping disaster areas or funding a project. It puts computing’s connectivity to good use.

■ 4 Thinking about impact

When judging a new technology, ask **who benefits**, **who is harmed**, and **who is left out** – not just whether it works.

Watch out: almost every computing innovation has **both** good and bad effects. The same social media that connects friends can also spread misinformation – so impact is rarely all positive or all negative.

Practice

Try these in order. The methods are all above.

2.1 Give one benefit and one harm of computing. [2]

2.2 State what the “digital divide” is. [2]

2.3 State one cause of the digital divide. [1]

2.4 State what crowdsourcing is, with an example. [2]

2.5 Explain why most technologies have both good and bad effects. [2]
