

Unit 3 Comparing mp3 players

Teacher's notes

Preparation

Before you use this lesson plan:

- Make one copy of each worksheet per student.
- Visit the proposed website to check it is operational and familiarise yourself with the research procedure.

Warmers

Short (5 minutes)

Ask the students whether they have an mp3 music player. What brands and models do they have? Did they receive it as a present or did they buy it themselves? If the latter, how did they go about choosing which MP3 player to buy? Do they use it for anything other than listening to music, e.g. storing data, storing pictures, watching videos? Were any of these uses a deciding factor in choosing their mp3 player? Go to the second warmer.

Long (10 minutes)

Distribute the worksheet. Divide the group into pairs or smaller groups. Ask them to discuss the 10 characteristics in the first table and rank them from 1 to 10 in terms of how important they are to them when choosing an mp3 player.

Set the scene

(5 minutes)

Ask the students to read the *situation*. Explain they are going to research two mp3 players and then combine their findings with another student in order to choose the best player from the four.

Present the tasks

(5 minutes)

Explain the procedure:

- 1 Divide into small groups or pairs. Allocate two brands of player to each small group or pair – Apple, Creative, Sony, Samsung
- 2 Use the website to research and collect information; fill in the tables.
- 3 Combine the findings to find out which is the best mp3 player.

Do the tasks

Research (20 minutes)

- If computers are available, allocate one to each small group or pair and let the students do their research.
- If computers are not available, set the research as homework to be performed at home or during free time at work. Emphasise to the students that they do not need to spend more than about 20 – 30 minutes collecting information.

Calculations (10 minutes)

After the research, break up the research groups and form pairs so that between them the two students in each pair have information about four mp3 players. They follow the instructions in order to combine their ranking from the second warmer with the 1 to 4 ranking they give for each player for each characteristic. They then add up the figures in each column. The mp3 player with the lowest total score is the best for them based on this decision method. The whole group then re-convenes. List the four brands on the board and find out how many people have chosen each one.

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Aims

- talking about portable mp3 players
- comparing features

Discuss these characteristics of mp3 players. Rank them in order of their importance to you. 1 is the most important and 10 is the least.

Characteristic	Ranking: 1 – 10
Price	
Storage capacity	
Physical size and weight	
Battery life	
Extra features	
Appearance	
Type of display	
File format compatibility	
OS compatibility	
Reviews by other users	

Situation

You have £100 to buy a portable mp3 player so you can listen to music wherever you are. There are so many different brands and models on the market you are not sure where to start. You have decided to establish your criteria for choosing an mp3 player and then find out which one best satisfies those criteria.

Tasks

- 1 You are going to research four different mp3 players on the Web.
- 2 You are going to use a ranking system to select the best mp3 player for you.

Task 1 – the research

This website will give you information about mp3 players. Your teacher will tell you which brands to research.

Brand 1:	Brand 2:
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Amazon UK

<http://www.amazon.co.uk>

- 1 Enter 'MP3 players' into the search box and click Go.
- 2 Click on the MP3 players that match your criteria.
- 3 Scroll down the page for product descriptions and reviews.

When you have selected two mp3 players, record the technical data in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2

MP3 make and model:		
Price:		Any price reduction:
Storage capacity:	No. of songs:	No. of pictures:
Dimensions:		Weight:
Battery life:		Colours:
Extra features:		
Display size:		Colour: yes/no
File formats – audio:		File formats – video:
OS supported:		
No. of customer review stars:		No. of 5 star reviews

Table 3

MP3 make and model:		
Price:		Any price reduction:
Storage capacity:	No. of songs:	No. of pictures:
Dimensions:		Weight:
Battery life:		Colours:
Extra features:		
Display size:		Colour: yes/no
File formats – audio:		File formats – video:
OS supported:		
No. of customer review stars:		No. of 5 star reviews

Task 2 – comparing the features

Work with a partner. Transfer the ranking from Table 1 into the second column of Table 4 below. Decide which of the mp3 players is the best in terms of each characteristic. Allocate 1 for the best, 2 for the next, etc. Multiply this score by the ranking. For example:

Characteristic	Ranking	Creative	iPod	Sony	Samsung
Storage capacity	2	1 (1x 2 = 2)	3 (3x 2 = 6)	2 (2x 2 = 4)	4 (4 x 2 = 8)

When you have discussed each characteristic, add up the scores for each mp3 player. The one with the lowest score is the best for you. Share your results with the rest of the class.

Table 4

Characteristic	Ranking				
Price					
Storage capacity					
Physical size and weight					
Battery life					
Extra features					
Appearance					
Type of display					
File format compatibility					
Reviews by other users					
OS compatibility					
Totals					