



Would You Upload Your Brain?

Lesson at a Glance

Item	Detail
Level	B2 (Upper-Intermediate)
Focus	Functional Language — debating a speculative idea
Length	45–60 minutes (≈ 55 as planned below)
Topic	Virtual worlds, AI, and digital consciousness
Goal	Give and soften opinions, disagree diplomatically, speculate about likelihood, and defend a position in a debate.

Materials & Audio

Students use the printed worksheet; play the dialogue audio from the published lesson page. All activities are completed on the worksheet — no devices required.



Lesson page — scan or visit:
startuplesl.com/would-you-upload-your-brain

Timing

Section	Focus	Time
1 · Warm-Up	Opinion spectrum + short discussion	7 min
2 · Vocabulary	Context → matching → expressions → gap-fill	11 min
3 · Dialogue	Listen (script hidden) → reveal → comprehension	8 min
4 · Functional Language	Toolkits → contrast → sort → soften	13 min
5 · Role-Play	Structured debate, two motions (swap)	12 min
6 · Wrap-Up	Reflection + sentence frames + speaking	4 min

1 Warm-Up

≈ 7 min · no right answers — this activates opinions and previews the stance work

In class

Have students check a box for each statement, then explain their positions to a partner who chose differently. Elicit reasons; don't correct opinions.

Self-study

Students mark each statement and say one sentence aloud explaining the choice.

2 Vocabulary





≈ 11 min · context first — keep definitions covered during Part A

In class	Part A: students read the example and explain each word before seeing Part B. Then matching, then the gap-fill (check together).
Self-study	Same order; encourage a spoken or written guess for each word before matching.

ANSWER KEY

Part B matching: 1–f · 2–b · 3–d · 4–h · 5–g · 6–e · 7–a · 8–c

Quick Practice: 1. immersive · 2. hype · 3. simulate · 4. far-fetched · 5. footage · 6. NPCs · 7. cutting-edge · 8. groundbreaking

3 Dialogue

≈ 8 min · listening first — the transcript is hidden on the student copy

In class	Play the audio twice. Students attempt the Main Idea questions with the script closed, then reveal the transcript to self-check before the comprehension questions.
Self-study	Replay at a comfortable speed; use the reveal to compare answers.

ANSWER KEY

Listening (Main Idea): 1–b (uploading human minds) · 2–b (a video-game character) · 3–b (the real world)

Comprehension (suggested):

1. The technology is bound to improve; what was far-fetched ten years ago is real now.
2. They copied the brain rather than uploading the real one, so it behaves like an NPC; she doubts it is truly aware.
3. No — she ends with "ask me again in fifty years."

Audio Transcript

Maya	Did you see that article about the company that copied a fly's brain into a computer?
Theo	I did! Honestly, I think it's groundbreaking. If you ask me, this is the first real step toward uploading human minds one day.
Maya	Come on, Theo. That's a bit of a stretch, isn't it? A fly has a few thousand brain cells. We have billions.
Theo	Sure, but the technology is bound to improve. Ten years ago, this would've sounded completely far-fetched, and now look.
Maya	I see your point, but I'd take the whole thing with a grain of salt. The footage they released looks impressive, but it's basically a video-game character — an NPC that happens to be a fly.
Theo	That's a little harsh. They're saying it's a copy of a real brain, not just an animation.
Maya	A copy, maybe. But is it actually aware of anything? I doubt a simulation can ever really feel alive, no matter how lifelike it looks.
Theo	Fair enough, though. Nobody's claiming the fly is conscious. Still, imagine an immersive world where your mind could live on.
Maya	See, that's where I get off the train. There's so much hype around this stuff, and I'm not convinced the real world isn't better than any cutting-edge simulation.
Theo	Maybe. But you'd at least try it, right?
Maya	Ask me again in fifty years.





4 Functional Language

≈ 13 min · the contrast table is the core teaching point

In class

Walk through the three toolkits and the too-blunt/diplomatic table. Students sort the phrase bank into the grid, then rewrite the blunt lines.

Self-study

Read the tables aloud; do the sort and rewrites, then say each answer.

ANSWER KEY

Sort — Opinion: If you ask me · It seems to me · I'm not convinced

Sort — Agree / disagree: I see your point, but · Fair enough, though · That's a fair point

Sort — Likelihood: It's bound to · There's a good chance · I doubt we'll ever

Soften (samples; accept any well-formed version):

"You're wrong" → "I see your point, but I think the real world is better."

"That will never happen" → "I doubt that will ever happen."

"This is just hype" → "If you ask me, I'd take that with a grain of salt."

"Uploading brains is a stupid idea" → "I'm not convinced uploading brains is a good idea."

5 Role-Play

≈ 12 min · signature task — insist on diplomatic disagreement

In class

Assign roles (A Optimist / B Skeptic). Require a softener in every disagreement. A third student can host. Swap sides for Round 2.

Self-study

Record a 60-second argument for one side, or write the full exchange, using ≥3 phrases from the Useful Language box.

No fixed answers — assess use of the functional language, not the position taken. Scale up: remove the Useful Language box. Scale down: let pairs script two exchanges first.

6 Wrap-Up

≈ 4 min

In class

Students complete the sentence frames and give the 60-second 'Would you upload your brain?' answer.

Self-study

Write the frames and record the speaking answer.

Anticipated problems: disagreement turns blunt → return to the contrast table; likelihood phrases get muddled → reteach the scale (bound to > good chance > I doubt). A fuller lesson plan with differentiation is available as a separate document.

