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Vocabulary: machines 词汇: 机器

Robots make me nervous - especially the ones which seem to think for themselves. I was embarrassed to admit this till I heard that Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, felt the same way.

Gates said in an interview with the social networking and news website Reddit: "I am in the **camp** that is concerned about super intelligence. First the machines will do a lot of jobs for us and not be super intelligent. That should be positive if we manage well. A few decades after that though the intelligence is strong enough to be a concern."



Robots: Not evil, just too efficient?

Well, maybe I don't have to worry about my **laptop** and **kitchen appliances** yet. After I use them I can always **pull the plug**. But in the future, machines might find a way to prevent us from **switching them off**. There's a scary thought!

Professor Stephen Hawking **warned** a few months ago about the possibility that **artificial intelligence** could **evolve** and end up beyond human control. He suggested that machines could "spell the end of the human race".

Maybe the problem with computers too clever for us is not that they are evil or rebellious like some we've seen in **sci-fi** movies. What could put us in danger is that they might be too **efficient**. That's what philosopher Nick Bostrom from the Future of Humanity Institute at Oxford University believes. He says that machines are indifferent to humans and in pursuit of their own goals, the destruction of people might be just **collateral damage**.

Bostrom gives us an example: A machine which might have as its only goal to produce as many paperclips as possible might look at human bodies as extra material for paperclips and go after you. Because it is, well, a machine, it would not take pity on you.

It's a good thing that American writer Isaac Asimov thought about how far robots can go and left us his three rules of **robotics**. They state that a robot may not hurt a human being or allow the human being to **come to harm**.

I'm glad my machines at home are "dumb". All my **vacuum cleaner** wants to take over is the carpet in my living room. Let's hope they don't create an appliance which wants to take over the world!

词汇表请参看答案与词汇部分

Quiz 测验

阅读短文并回答问题。

1. Why is Bill Gates concerned about machines?
2. Who thinks machines could end the human race?
3. Why would an intelligent paperclip machine harm us?
4. Who created rules for robots to follow?
5. Which word means stupid?

Exercise 练习

请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。从每个表格中选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. It's cold and dark in this woods. Stop talking about ghosts. You're making me _____.

embarrassed	take pity	nervous	dumb
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2. This is a bad neighbourhood. If you hang around for too long you may _____.

pull the plug	come to harm	switch off	be warned
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3. Mary is a very _____ secretary. Her boss wants to give her a pay rise.

efficient	indifferent	embarrassed	scary
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4. Computers can be dangerous because they can _____ and become too intelligent.

warn	evolve	pull the plug	switch off
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5. I have to clean the house. Where is my _____?

laptop	kitchen appliance	vacuum cleaner	artificial intelligence
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Answers and Glossary 答案与词汇

Quiz 小测验

1. Why is Bill Gates concerned about machines? **Because he thinks they might become too intelligent for us.**
2. Who thinks machines could end the human race? **Professor Stephen Hawking.**
3. Why would an intelligent paperclip machine harm us? **Because it would see us just as material to turn into paperclips.**
4. Who created rules for robots to follow? **American writer Isaac Asimov.**
5. Which word means stupid? **Dumb.**

Exercise 练习

1. It's cold and dark in this woods. Stop talking about ghosts. You're making me **nervous**.
2. This is a bad neighbourhood. If you hang around for too long you may **come to harm**.
3. Mary is a very **efficient** secretary. Her boss wants to give her a pay rise.
4. Computers can be dangerous because they can **evolve** and become too intelligent.
5. I have to clean the house. Where is my **vacuum cleaner**?

Glossary 词汇表

camp (noun)	阵营（观点对立的集团）
laptop	手提电脑
kitchen appliance	厨房用具
to pull the plug (literal meaning)	拔掉插头（本意）
to switch (them) off	关机
to warn	警告
artificial intelligence	人工智能
to evolve	进化
sci-fi movie	科幻片
efficient	高效率的
collateral damage	附带损害
robotics	机器人技术
to come to harm	受到伤害，产生威胁
vacuum cleaner	吸尘器