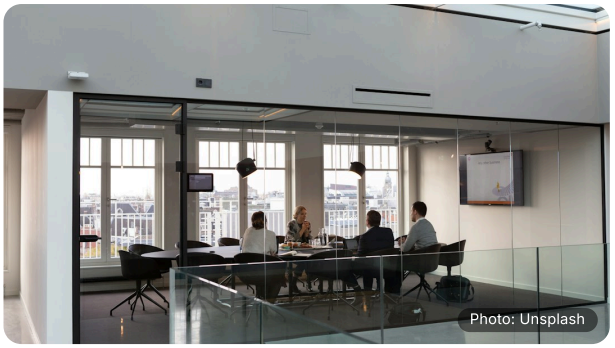
Europe weighs AI dependence and self-sufficiency

LEVEL C1


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I. WARM-UP

1. How do you use AI tools in your daily life?
2. Should countries build their own tech or buy it? Why?
3. What AI risks seem most serious to you, if any?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

dilemma
A difficult choice between options that both have problems.

shun
To avoid or refuse something on purpose.

dependent
Needing support or supply from someone or something else.

datacentre
A large building full of computers that store and process data.

self-sufficiency
The ability to meet needs without outside help.

resilience
The ability to keep working or recover quickly after shocks.

existential
Relating to the basic survival or continued existence of people.

supranational
Existing above individual nations, with wider shared authority.

III. READING

Europe's AI dilemma was set out starkly this week. Christine Lagarde warned that Europeans can shun the technology and lose growth, or embrace it and become dependent on tools from the US and China. She fears being cut off unless Europe builds its own models and more datacentres, aiming for self-sufficiency.

Europe's absence from top-level safety talks reflects its lack of AI giants like Apple, Google or OpenAI, even though the EU is powerful in regulation.

Ursula von der Leyen said she will invite frontier labs to discuss pacing development, but her call drew less attention than Donald Trump's and China's rejection of a slowdown.

Margrethe Vestager co-authored A Transformative AI Strategy for Europe, urging investment in datacentres and resilience against "AI crises", while pointing to the EU AI Act's rules for "high-risk" systems.

She argues that an existential threat would need a global, supranational response, and cites the UN general assembly as a venue.

Adviser Frederike Kaltheuner adds that Europe already relies on US search, chips and infrastructure — dependence that will be hard to undo; and it is this dependence that limits Europe's voice on AI safety.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "Why Europe has been absent from the great...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What two choices did Christine Lagarde set out for Europe?
2. Why has Europe's voice been weak in the AI safety debate?
3. What did Ursula von der Leyen say she would do with frontier labs?
4. What two solutions does Vestager's strategy highlight?
5. Which forum does Vestager cite for addressing existential risks?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Should Europe prioritise self-sufficiency or global cooperation on AI?
2. How much risk is acceptable when deploying powerful AI systems?
3. Does strong regulation help innovation, or slow it down? Why?
4. What would make Europe less dependent on US and Chinese tech?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Adding emphasis - cleft sentences

Use a cleft to emphasise one part of a sentence: It + be + X + that/who. The cleft puts strong focus on X (person, place or idea).

"It is **the EU AI Act that** *sets rules for high-risk systems."*

"It was **von der Leyen who** *said she would invite frontier labs."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

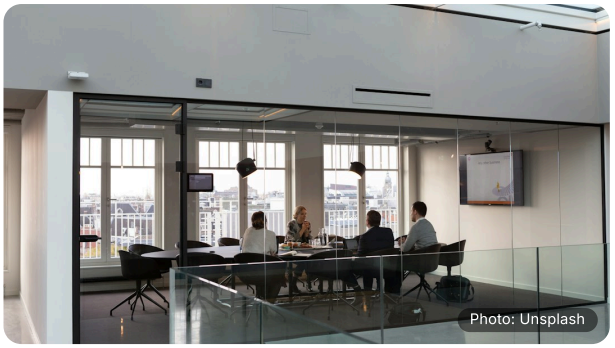
Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. It (was Lagarde who / was Lagarde what) warned Europeans. _____
2. It (Europe what / is Europe that) aims for self-sufficiency. _____
3. It (was Vestager who / Vestager what) urged investment in datacentres. _____
4. It (is dependence that / dependence what) limits Europe's voice on safety. _____
5. It (was Kaltheuner who / was Kaltheuner what) pointed to chips and search. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading, 10 minutes comprehension, 10 minutes grammar, 12–15 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach names and roles (Lagarde, von der Leyen, Vestager, Kaltheuner) and clarify terms: datacentre, self-sufficiency, supranational, existential, resilience.
- Run a first read for gist (Europe's choices), then a second for details (who proposes what). Pair-check answers before open-class feedback; keep the focus on policy options rather than party politics.
- Differentiate by task: stronger students match each person (Lagarde, von der Leyen, Vestager, Kaltheuner) to their warning or proposal; others highlight lines on dependence and fixes, then summarise in 2–3 sentences.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Take a quick show of hands, then pair students from different camps to exchange reasons.
2. Elicit concrete examples of risks from the text first, then ask students to rank them.
3. Set up a mini-debate: one side argues regulation helps, the other that it slows.
4. Brainstorm specific steps (datacentres, talent, funding) on the board before discussion.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Debate: In teams, prepare 2-minute statements for or against EU investment in datacentres, then rebut.

Writing: Write a 120-word briefing note summarising Europe's AI choices for a non-expert minister.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

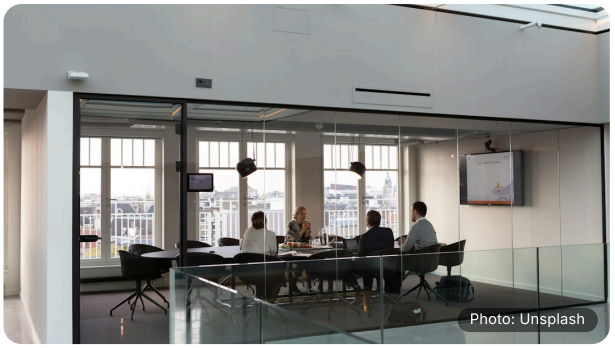
Grammar exercise: Adding emphasis - cleft sentences

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

TEACHERS ONLY

These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What two choices did Christine Lagarde set out for Europe?
   Shun AI and lose growth, or embrace it and risk dependence on US and Chinese tools.
2. Why has Europe's voice been weak in the AI safety debate?
   Because Europe lacks AI giants and depends on US search, chips and infrastructure.
3. What did Ursula von der Leyen say she would do with frontier labs?
   Invite them to discuss pacing AI development.
4. What two solutions does Vestager's strategy highlight?
   Invest in datacentres and build resilience against AI crises.
5. Which forum does Vestager cite for addressing existential risks?
   The UN general assembly.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use a cleft to emphasise one part of a sentence: It + be + X + that/who. The cleft puts strong focus on X (person, place or idea). (Examples constructed.)

> *"It is* **the EU AI Act that** *sets rules for high-risk systems."*
>
> *"It was* **von der Leyen who** *said she would invite frontier labs."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. It (was Lagarde who / was Lagarde what) warned Europeans. **was Lagarde who**
2. It (Europe what / is Europe that) aims for self-sufficiency. **is Europe that**
3. It (was Vestager who / Vestager what) urged investment in datacentres. **was Vestager who**
4. It (is dependence that / dependence what) limits Europe's voice on safety. **is dependence that**
5. It (was Kaltheuner who / was Kaltheuner what) pointed to chips and search. **was Kaltheuner who**