

1

The function of the operating systemA  In pairs, discuss these questions.

- 1 How many operating systems can you think of? Make a list.
- 2 What is the function of an operating system?

B Complete the text with words from the box. If necessary, look at the Glossary.

application software operating system software system software

The set of program instructions that tell the computer what to do is known as (1) _____. It can be classified into two basic categories:

- the (2) _____, which includes all the programs that control the basic functions of a computer (e.g. operating systems, programming software, device drivers and utilities).
- the (3) _____, which comprises programs that let you do

specific tasks. Typical applications include word processing, databases, educational programs, email and video games.

The (4) _____ is a set of programs that control the hardware and software resources of a computer system. Typical functions include handling input/output operations, running programs and organizing files on disks.

2

GUI operating systemsA  In pairs, discuss these questions.

- 1 What does *user-friendly* mean?
- 2 Do you think most operating systems are user-friendly? Give reasons for your answers.

B Read the text on page 64 and decide which adjectives in the box best describe a GUI.

user-friendly slow accessible text-based intuitive complex graphics-based

C Read the text again and answer these questions.

- 1 What kind of OS was used in the early 80s: text-based or graphics-based?
- 2 What is the contribution of Macintosh computers to the development of graphic environments?
- 3 What does the acronym WIMP stand for?
- 4 How do you run a program on a computer with a graphical interface?
- 5 What is *multitasking*?
- 6 Which multi-user OS is used on large, powerful computers?
- 7 What is the benefit of using open-source software, for example Linux?
- 8 Which Microsoft platform is used for pocket PCs, mobiles and portable media centres?