Jobs for robots

Do you think we could beat AlphaGo?

Even if we cannot there might be a robot that can help us practise!

BOBO and Coco are learning to play the game go (圍棋). One reason is that the game rhymes with their names! They were quite surprised to discover that a computer program (機械人) named AlphaGo recently defeated the South Korean (韓國的) go master Lee Sedol (李世乭) 4 to 1. So they wonder what other surprising and interesting things machines like computers and robots can do.

Editor's Note

Readers, are you excited about the coming summer holiday? Soon you will get a chance to relax and take some time off from school. While you may dread returning to class afterwards, remember that it is a matter of having a positive attitude. On G08-09, there is a story of a 12-year-old boy who is preparing to go to university! That sounds tough, but he must really want to learn new things! If you have troubles in your life, do not forget that Rose is here to listen. On G06-07, Rose takes the time to respond to some of the readers who wrote to her this year.

Kevin
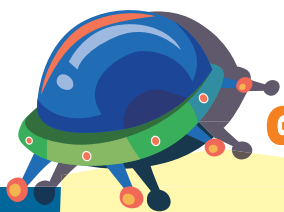
Cover Feature

• Photos: AFP, AP, Reuters, Xinhua, Bloomberg

Goodies

Siu fung

A go program

SOMETIMES it is not easy to define what a robot is. AlphaGo is a computer program, but since it uses the advanced technology of **artificial intelligence**, calling it a robot is not wrong. Lee Sedol also uses the word 'robot' to describe AlphaGo when he said "robots will never understand the beauty of the game the same way that we humans do".
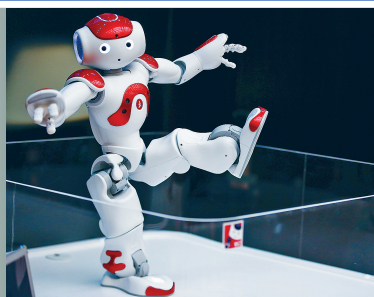
Walking Asimo
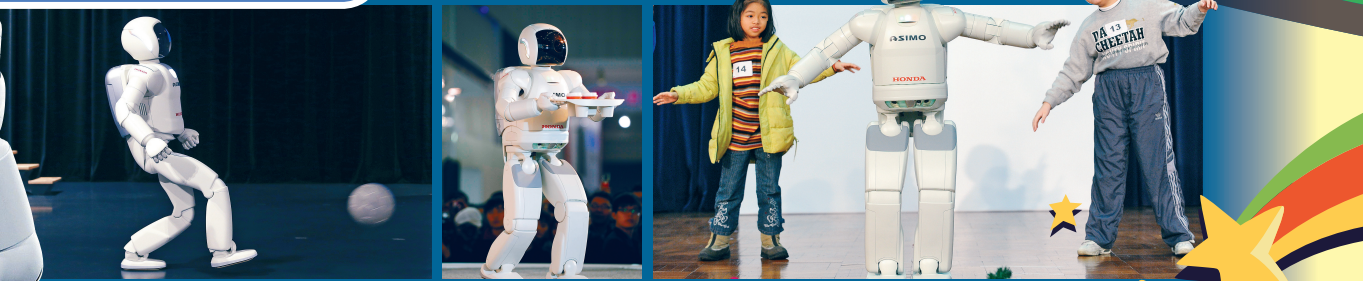
ASIMO stands for 'Advanced Step in Innovative **Mobility**'. It is a human-like robot designed and developed by Honda (本田) to help people who have trouble moving properly. It is 1.3 metres tall and weighs 54 kilograms. Not only can Asimo act as a guide, it can also dance and play football.

A little man

NAO, manufactured by a French (法國的) company, is another small, human-like robot. The 2014 model is only 58 centimetres tall and weighs 4.3 kilograms. Nao has been used widely to do things like work in banks and teach autistic children. At the end of 2014, there were 5,000 Nao robots working in 70 countries.
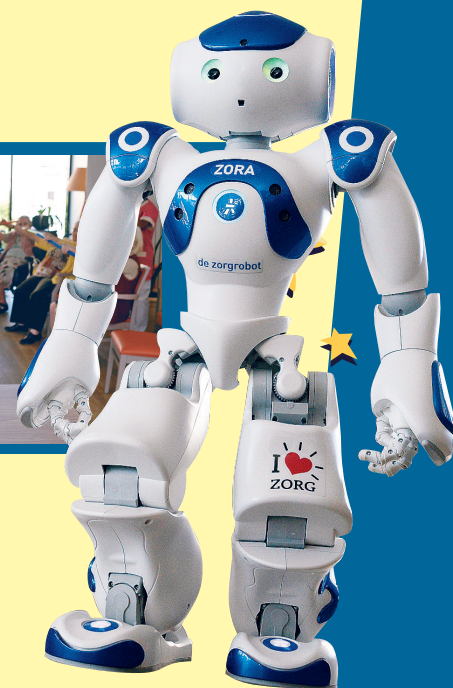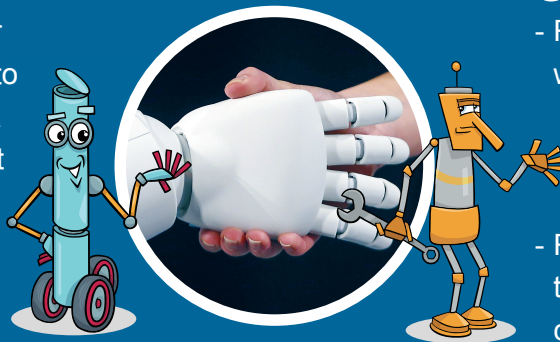
Humans vs robots

What are the advantages and disadvantages of using robots?

Pros

- Their shape and abilities are more **diversified**. For example, you cannot put your hand into hot water to lift out an object weighing one ton, or be small as a little cell or as large as a building. They can be built to handle any job.
- The costs of inventing a robot may be high, but building more after is quite cheap.
- Robots do not get tired or sick, which ensures their **productivity**.

Cons

- Robots can take jobs from people, leaving many with no way to make money.
  - Robots are good at well-defined jobs. But when it comes to **flexibility**, they may be weaker than humans.
- Robots are machines and so lack emotions. This makes them unsuitable for jobs that require **empathy**, like counselling or perhaps even teaching.

Questions to think about

1. If you had to design a special kind of robot, what would it be like?
2. Do you think it is a good thing to let robots do our work?

Vocabulary

artificial intelligence (n phr) 人工智能
mobility (n) 移動能力

diversified (adj) 多種多樣的
productivity (n) 生產力

flexibility (n) 靈活
empathy (n) 同理心