

Reading Work Sample Assessment

Are We Addicted to Smartphones?

Instructions:

Read the following article carefully and **make notes in the margin** as you read. Your notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the selection. (A summary or statement of the main idea of important ideas may serve this purpose.)
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read.
- Notes that show what you can tell about **main ideas, details, character interactions and beliefs**.
- Observations about the **writer's strategies** (organization, figurative language, dialogue, word choice, point of view) and how the writer's choices affect the meaning.

Your **margin notes** are part of your score for this assessment.

Student _____

SSID _____

Teacher _____

Class Period _____

School _____

School District _____

For the “digital generation,” smartphones are a fact of life. However, the rapid growth in smartphone technology is causing some experts to question its effect on our lives. The following article discusses some concerns related to the overuse of smartphones.

Are We Addicted to Smartphones?

By Quentin Fottrell

As Americans become increasingly dependent on smartphones, recovery centers specializing in addictions and emotional problems say mobile devices are making some bad habits even worse.

“The smartphone is the tool that helps exacerbate that addiction or it’s a tool they use not to deal with that addiction,” says Joel Edwards, executive director of Morningside Recovery in Newport Beach, Calif. And with good reason: Roughly 169 million Americans owned a smartphone in May — a 70% penetration rate — market research group comScore found, and nearly two-thirds of people in their late 20s live in households with no landlines, according to data released Tuesday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “We’re dealing with more and more smartphones as part of the underlying issues. These technologies are driving addictions faster and with more intensity than ever before,” Edwards says.

Mobile devices help provide the three A’s — accessibility, affordability and anonymity, says Robert Weiss, senior vice president of clinical development for Elements, a national behavioral health company. “In 1988, you had to drive to an icky place for pornography and hope that nobody saw you,” he says. “Now, you just say, ‘Siri, show me the porn.’” Drug dealers will know an online message — “I’m in Newport Beach looking for tar or 420” — refers to black tar heroin and cannabis, Edwards adds, but those code words for drugs will go over the heads of most people. “Even a drug dealer has to take a nap occasionally, but it’s easy for

Notes on my thoughts, observations, reactions and questions:

What affect does smartphones have on our lives?

Article will discuss some topics relating to the overuse of smartphones.

109 million Americans owned a smartphone in May. 70% penetration rate.

According to Edward, “the technologies are driving addictions faster.”

Three A’s Accessibility, affordability, anonymity.

Easy for people to connect with others to support addiction.

people to connect with others to support that addiction,” he says.

Smartphones are also playing a central role in behavioral addictions like gaming, social networking, pornography and sex, says Hilarie Cash, co-founder of Restart Life, a recovery retreat center in Fall City, Wash. Restart Life treats males over 18 years of age and provides a retreat away from digital media for 35 to 90 days, helping them improve their social skills. About 95% of the addictions Restart Life deals with relate to gaming, Cash says, but there are often other issues like pornography and social networking mixed in. “With a smartphone you can do that all the time,” she says. Weiss agrees. “The last cultural revolution took place on the streets,” he says, “but this one is a lot quieter.”

A growing body of research links increased use of Facebook to marital discord. Boston University emerging media professor James Katz joins the News Hub with Sara Murray.

Young people are particularly at risk, and not just those who have addictions, says Cole Rucker, co-founder and CEO of Paradigm Malibu, an adolescent mental health and drug abuse treatment center. “Years ago, the most difficult part for them here was that they couldn’t smoke cigarettes and now the biggest challenge is they can’t have their cellphones,” he says. Teenagers suffering from depression or anxiety often use smartphones as a coping skill rather than learning to sit with their emotions and developing relationships, Rucker says. “Very often, cellphone use is just like drug use, another negative coping style, and a way to avoid thoughts and feelings,” he adds.

Although smartphones can prevent people from dealing with anxiety, they may also compound it. Those who are heavy smartphone users can’t go 10 minutes without their phone before suffering from anxiety, according to one recent study co-authored by Larry Rosen, professor of psychology at California State University and author of “**iDisorder**: Understanding Our Obsession with Technology and Overcoming Its Hold on Us.” The study is due to be published in the August 2014 edition of the journal “Computers in Human Behavior.” “Most people can’t last an hour without getting highly anxious if their smartphone is taken away,” says Rosen.

His researchers split a group of 163 college students into light, moderate and heavy smartphone users. Half the students sat in silence without their phones and half with them turned off and out of sight. Regardless of where their phone was, the light users showed no increase in anxiety for the entire 75 minutes, the moderate users showed a slight increase between 10 and 20 minutes, but the heavy users showed more anxiety than the light users at the 10-minute mark, and their anxiety continued to rise until the experiment ended. “Most young people, who are among the heaviest users of their smartphones, can’t last an hour without getting highly anxious if their smartphone is taken away,” he says.

As Americans depend even more on their cellphones, recovery centers say that mobile devices are making some bad habits even worse. Joel Edwards, Morningside Recovery executive editor, joins the News Hub with Sara Murray.

Notes on my thoughts, observations, reactions and questions:

Smartphones have central role in behavioral addictions like...gaming. risk. 95% of addictions relate to gaming.

Increased use of Facebook to marital discord?

Youth are at risk.

Teens who are suffering from depression often use smartphones to cope rather than developing relationships and express emotions.

Phones: Avoid thoughts/feelings.

Rosen says: “People can’t last an hour without getting highly anxious if their smartphone is taken away.”

*163 students
Light users, no increase for 75 minutes.*

Moderate, slight increase between 10-20 minutes.

Heavy—showed more anxiety than light users at 10 minute mark.

Smart phones facilitate existing addictions or underlying emotional problems than to cause them.

Of course, smartphones typically facilitate existing addictions or underlying emotional problems rather than cause them. “They may be addicted to sexual content on their phone or gaming on their phone in the same way that people are addicted to gambling rather than casinos,” Weiss says. “There is no treatment for cellphone addiction or Internet addiction.” The basic criteria for figuring out whether you have a problem includes whether your behavior interrupts with your work, family life, beliefs or life goals, and has negative consequences. “People don’t become addicted without some underlying deficit,” Weiss says. “They have a need to find something that is not in their life in another place.”

That said, there’s also a growing body of research supporting “**nomophobia**” — the fear of being without your cellphone. Nearly half of Americans (47%) say they couldn’t go a day without their smartphone, according to a survey released last week by Bank of America and 41% of people said losing their iPhone would be “a tragedy,” according to a 2010 Stanford University poll. “I have really bad anxiety if I can’t get to my phone,” says Kevin Raposo, 30, a technology blogger in Boston. “I leave it within hands’ reach by my bedside.”

It isn’t always clear when dependence on a smartphone has become a problem. The counselors at Morningside Recovery try to find out what need smartphones are filling and find a way to replace that through group therapy, journaling, and walking in nature. “We put our clients in front of a group of people and actually have them carry on a conversation,” Edwards says. While anxiety and depression could be the main problems, the issue could also be due to loneliness or work-related stress — for example, when a father checks his office emails while sitting at the dinner table, he says. And the consequences of smartphone dependence can be just as dire as a substance dependence. “Texting while driving and drinking while driving is the same kind of crazy,” Edwards says.

Source: “Market Watch,” a website of the Wall Street Journal July 9, 2014

Demonstrate Understanding

- In the article, several experts explain the problems they see with increased smartphone use. Complete the chart below to show your understanding of the reasons given by two of these experts. One example is provided to help you get started. Be sure your responses reflect what the experts say about the **problems** with increased smartphone use.

Expert’s Name	The problem(s) this expert sees
<i>Joel Edwards at Morningside Recovery</i>	<i>Addictions are happening faster & with more intensity because of smartphone use</i>
Robert Weiss, senior vice president of Clinical Development for Elements	Smartphones became popular due to its three A’s—accessibility, affordability, and anonymity. It allows people connect with each other more easily to support their addiction.
Cole Rucker, CEO of Paradigm Malibu.	Smartphones not only affect those who have addictions but also the youth. It causes teens to ignore their emotions and ability to develop relationships. It’s a way for teens to avoid thoughts and feelings.

Notes on my thoughts, observations, reactions and questions:

To figure out if you have a problem, determine if your behavior interrupts with work, family life, beliefs or life goals.

“Nomophobia”—fear of being without your phone.

47% Americans say they couldn’t do a day without their smartphone.

Anxiety and depression could be main problems.

Issues could be due to loneliness or work-related stress.

Demonstrate Understanding

2. What is “nomophobia”? What do studies suggest about how common nomophobia may be in America?

Nomophobia is the fear of being without your phone. The studies suggest that people are becoming more dependent on their smartphones, thus the 47% of Americans who say they wouldn't go a day without their smartphones. Also, the studies also show that people are becoming more attached to their phones which whom 41% of people say that losing their phone would be a tragedy. 47% and 41% are huge chunks of the population, and with technology growing, you can say those numbers will go up as well.

Develop an Interpretation

3. The article mentions a study written by Larry Rosen (7th paragraph). The study's title includes the word “iDisorder.” What does the word “iDisorder” suggest about the results of the study? Use evidence from the text to support your explanation.

The word “iDisorder” suggests that the results are that people are developing some sort disorder or problem with their smartphones or technologies, the “i” represents the popular “Apple” brand that makes phones and other electronics. According to Larry Rosen, people are becoming more obsessed with smartphones. He said “Most people can't last an hour without getting highly anxious if their smartphones are taken away.” That tells me people are addicted to their phones thus, a disorder. Rosen concluded that people get a sense of anxiety if their phone is taken away for a certain amount of time, it varies if the person is a light or heavy phone user.

Develop an Interpretation

4. At the end of the fourth paragraph, Robert Weiss says that, “The last cultural revolution took place on the streets, but this one is a lot quieter.” What do you think he is trying to say by “...a quiet revolution”? **Include evidence from the article** to support your ideas about what Weiss may be suggesting.

Robert Weiss was trying to say that back in the past, changes of movements were loud and clear, everyone knew what it was, now in the present the changes are happening more subtle and technology based, it's “not as clear,” not all people are aware of the changes happening. Robert Weiss was talking about how in 1988 you had to drive to a shady place for porn, now you can get porn within your fingertips. He also said that drug dealing could occur on the internet with code words rather than on the streets. Weiss was trying to say that our culture is evolving to a more technology based, and less with social skills and less on the “streets” or the real world.

*Weiss was referring “quieter” to phone use.

Develop an Interpretation

5. The article's final paragraph describes an approach used at Morningside Recovery. However, the article doesn't directly say this approach is used. Based on information in the article, why would this approach be useful for someone with a smartphone addiction? **Include ideas** from the final paragraph or other parts of the article.

The approach by Morningside Recovery included group therapy, journaling, and walking in nature. This approach would be useful for someone because the group therapy would help one's social skills and one's emotions and ability to develop relationships according to Cole Rucker, CEO Paradigm Malibu. Journal use is useful as an outlet for people's emotions, stress, and feelings to "let it all out." "Smartphones typically facilitate existing addictions or underlying emotional problems rather than to cause them." (Paragraph 10). It's better to let it all out rather than coping with it with your phone. "They have a need to find something that is not in their life in another place"—Robert Weiss. That's how addiction starts, if the person is addicted to something negative, walking in nature isn't a bad idea. Walking in nature or any other hobbies can be escape from their addictions. It can make them forget about their addiction for a while and can help clear their heads. It can bring inner peace and a sense of calmness to their life.

Analyze Text

6. What is the **author's purpose** in writing this article? Is the author trying to entertain, inform, or persuade? How can you tell? **Include text evidence** from the article that helps you determine the author's purpose.

The author's purpose in writing this article is discussing some concerns related to the overuse of smartphones. The author was trying to inform us. I can tell it's not to entertain because the structure of the article was filled with stats, quotations from experts, and research studies. it's not to persuade because it wasn't telling me that the use of smartphones was bad and that you should use nor it said it was a good thing. The article was just to inform. The text evidence that helped me determine the author's purpose was at the beginning of the article, above the title. Also, another text evidence I saw was the title, "Are we addicted to smartphones?" This question allows the author to answer it and inform us with said question.

Analyze Text

7. The article provides information and quotations from five different experts and two major studies. **Why** does the author rely so heavily on the information from these experts and studies?

The author relied heavily on the information from the experts and studies because the author wanted to inform the reader and also to make the reader more aware of the topic, which in this case it is the overuse of smartphones. The reader would most likely face the author's paper/article more seriously with an article with facts, quotes from the experts, and recordings from research rather than an article filled with opinions and unbacked evidence.

Discuss **one or more** instances of expert information that you feel is especially helpful in the article.

"Very often cellphone use is just like drug use, another negative coping style, and a way to avoid thoughts and feelings"—Cole Rucker. This quote I found helpful because being a smartphone user like myself, it makes me more aware of my phone use and how it could affect me now or in the future. It kinda persuades me to limit my phone use time to focus on family, friends, and life goals rather than on a phone screen.

Analyze Text

8. In the second paragraph, the author includes information about the percentage of people who own smartphones. Although the article doesn't directly state the connection, why is this information important in the article? In what ways does it help the reader to understand the points being made?

The information about the percentage of people who own smartphones is important because it gets the author's point across that most people own smartphones and if most people own smartphones then the reader would probably own one as well, so it makes the reader more interested in what the author has to say. This is like the hook of the article.

This helps the reader understand the points being made because it makes the reader think if this was he or she was in the situation. It makes the reader relate to the article and is relatable to their current life. Everybody has a smartphone or knows a person who has a smartphone, so it's easy to have a connection with the article.