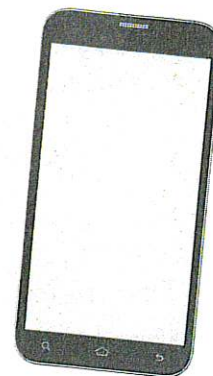


# The mobile phone debate



These questions will help you practise:

- ★ giving the meaning of words in context
- ★ retrieving and recording information
- ★ summarising main ideas
- ★ making inferences
- ★ explaining inferences.

Children should be allowed to use their mobile phones in class because they can serve as 'learning aids', a study claims today.

Academics are calling on schools to rethink bans on phone handsets after trials suggested that functions such as calculators, stopwatches and email can be 'educational'.

However, the call is certain to infuriate many teachers and parents, who will be concerned that pupils will be unable to resist the temptation to put the devices to less productive uses, such as cyber-bullying or cheating in tests.

During a nine-month experiment involving classes aged 14 to 16, pupils either used their own mobiles in lessons or the new generation of 'smartphones' which allow internet connection.

They were used to create short films, set homework reminders, record a teacher reading a poem and time experiments with the phones' stopwatches.

The smartphones also allowed pupils to access revision websites, log into the school email system, or transfer electronic files between school and home.

The study, by researchers at Nottingham University, involved 331 pupils in schools in Cambridgeshire, West Berkshire and Nottingham.

'At the start of the study, even pupils were often surprised at the thought that mobile phones could be used for learning,' Dr Elizabeth Hartnell-Young will tell the annual conference of the British Educational Research Association in Edinburgh later today.

'After their hands-on experience, almost all pupils said they had enjoyed the project and felt more motivated.'

One teacher told researchers that students like mobiles and they know how to use them.

'Using this technology gives them more freedom to express themselves without needing to be constantly supervised,' the teacher said.

However, the report admits that some teachers think greater use of mobile phones in schools could prove problematic.

Increased temptation to steal phones belonging to the school was one worry. 'I thought, well, four of these smartphones are going to end up on eBay tomorrow,' one teacher said.

Other concerns related to cheating and taking inappropriate images or recordings of teachers.

Allowing pupils to access school emails via mobiles would also pose data security risks if passwords were shared, they said.

More than 90 per cent of secondary school pupils have their own mobile phones but their use is often forbidden on school premises.

Some schools ban them outright while others insist they must be kept switched off except in emergencies or outside lesson time.

However, the study found that despite the bans, some pupils were using their phones in class, including as cameras and to make calls to friends.

Dr Hartnell-Young said: 'While the eventual aim should be to lift blanket bans on phones, we do not recommend immediate, whole-school change. Instead, we believe that teachers, students and the wider community should work together to develop policies that will enable this powerful new learning tool to be used safely.'

*Children should be allowed to use mobiles in class by Laura Clark*

1 *Academics are calling on schools to rethink bans....*

What does the word *academics* mean in this sentence?

1

(1 mark)

2 From where are the academics who carried out the research?

2

(1 mark)

3 **Find** and **copy two** tasks that, according to the report, the children used their smartphones for during the study.

3

(2 marks)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

4 Write a headline for this text.

4

(1 mark)

5 **Find** and **copy two** words or phrases that suggest that the ideas are opinions rather than facts.

5

(2 marks)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

6 Using mobile phones in school has both positive and negative outcomes.

Give **one** positive outcome and **one** negative outcome, referring to the text in your answer.

6

(3 marks)

Positive outcome:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Negative outcome:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

 / 10

Total for  
this text