

Mobile phones in class lower test scores

12th June, 2015



There is bad news for students who like to use their mobile phones while they study. New research shows that students do not learn very well when they are

texting and checking their social media accounts. The research is called: "Mobile Phones in the Classroom: Examining the Effects of Texting, Twitter, and Message Content on Student Learning". Researchers looked at 145 American university students in the classroom. Some of the students used their mobile phones during class, while the others had their phones switched off. The head researcher, Dr Jeffrey Kuznekoff, said students who did not use their mobile phones while the teacher was talking got higher scores on tests they took at the end of the class.

Kuznekoff said that one of the biggest challenges teachers have in the classroom is the non-stop battle of keeping students working. He said many students felt they needed to be online and checking messages even when they had important work to do in class. The researchers said it is very common for students to be physically present in class, but mentally absent because they are using their mobiles. Kuznekoff said teachers were fighting a "losing battle" because students were more interested in social media than learning. The London School of Economics did a study in England and found that test scores increased by six per cent after mobile phones were banned in class.

Sources: *Huffington Post* / *BBC* / *Times Higher Education*

Writing

Mobile phones should be banned in the classroom. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

bad news / new research / texting / social media / university students / test scores / challenges / keeping students working / important work / absent / losing battles

True / False

- There is good news for students who like using mobile phones in class. T / F
- Research showed that using social media increased test scores. T / F
- Researchers looked at the tests of 1,450 American students. T / F
- Students who turned off their phones did better in tests. T / F
- One of a teacher's biggest challenges is to keep students working. T / F
- The article says it is common for students to be physically absent. T / F
- A researcher said teachers are fighting a losing battle in the classroom. T / F
- A study found test scores were 6% higher when phones were banned. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. new | a. turned |
| 2. texting | b. usual |
| 3. examining | c. fresh |
| 4. switched | d. marks |
| 5. scores | e. went up |
| 6. non-stop | f. messaging |
| 7. common | g. prohibited |
| 8. battle | h. looking at |
| 9. increased | i. fight |
| 10. banned | j. endless |

Discussion – Student A

- What challenges do teachers face in the classroom?
- What should happen if students do not listen to teachers?
- What "battles" do teachers have with students?
- How important is it for you to check your messages online?
- How "absent" are students if they are on social media in class?
- How can teachers get students to learn using mobile phones?
- Is it a good idea for schools to ban mobile phones in class?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. bad news for students who like to use | a. stop battle |
| 2. students do not learn | b. media accounts |
| 3. social | c. but mentally absent |
| 4. used their mobile phones | d. end of the class |
| 5. tests they took at the | e. challenges |
| 6. one of the biggest | f. their mobile phones |
| 7. the non- | g. by six per cent |
| 8. be physically present in class, | h. "losing battle" |
| 9. fighting a | i. very well |
| 10. test scores increased | j. during class |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- In what ways do mobile phones help you learn English?
- Is it better for students to not use mobile phones in class?
- Why do students need to be online in class?
- What can schools do to stop students using social media in class?
- What other bad things are there about mobile phones?
- Is learning in classrooms better today than it was 50 years ago?
- Would it be easy for you to be offline for 24 hours?

Spelling

- New arshecre
- when they are tgxeint
- checking their social media cancusot
- used their mobile phones gidurn class
- had their phones wtisdech off
- higher soresc on tests
- one of the biggest nhglclesae
- checking eeasgmss
- be yahlyiplcs present in class
- fighting a losing ttleba
- more etidtesern in social media
- resindeac by six per cent

Answers – Synonym Match

1. c	2. f	3. h	4. a	5. d
6. j	7. b	8. i	9. e	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Mobile phones

You think mobile phones are the biggest challenge for teachers. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so challenging. Also, tell the others which is the least challenging of these (and why): boring course books, student behaviour or weaker students.

Role B – Boring course books

You think boring course books are the biggest challenge for teachers. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so challenging. Also, tell the others which is the least challenging of these (and why): mobile phones, student behaviour or weaker students.

Role C – Student behaviour

You think student behaviour is the biggest challenge for teachers. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so challenging. Also, tell the others which is the least challenging of these (and why): boring course books, mobile phones or weaker students.

Role D – Weaker students

You think weaker students are the biggest challenge for teachers. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so challenging. Also, tell the others which is the least challenging of these (and why): boring course books, student behaviour or mobile phones.

Speaking – Challenges

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest challenges for teachers at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| • boring course books | • mobile phones |
| • exam preparation | • student behaviour |
| • timetables | • no homework from students |
| • weaker students | • technology |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.