

Student A

Fluency Writing 4

Vocabulary expression: “GPA” stands for “grade-point average.” It is the average of a student’s grades in school. A high GPA is better than a low one.

Before Step 1:

1. Silently read the article below.
2. Write answers to the Comprehension Questions below.

Research about Electronic Devices and Students’ Grades (part 1)

Parents and teachers often express concern that young people are spending too much time using electronic devices like smartphones. They are worried that this habit will have a negative effect on their grades in school. This would result in a lower GPA—in other words, a lower grade-point average. **Did you understand what I just read?** As a result, some instructors have made rules against using these phones during class. However, some students have complained about this rule because they say that they want to use these devices to get information online. They claim that they can actually improve their grades by using them. Researchers recently conducted a study to find out how devices like smartphones affect students’ grades. **OK?**

Before this recent research, researchers had already done some studies about the effects that smartphones had on young people. One study found a connection between smartphone use and decreased physical activity. **Got it?** Another study reported that these phones may cause a decrease in a students’ ability to focus during class. For example, one student said that if he is feeling bored in class, he will start looking at his phone and also go to web sites for social media. Another student said that while she is doing her homework, she often takes a break and sends text messages. **Understand?**

Step 1:

1. Read your article to your partners. If they don’t understand something, explain in different words.
2. Ask your partners these comprehension questions.

Comprehension Questions

1. Who is worried that smartphones will cause students to have lower GPAs?
2. Why are some students unhappy with the “no smartphones” rule in class?
3. What is the purpose of the research?
4. What effect do smartphones have on physical activity?
5. What did research tell us about smartphones and the ability to focus during class?

Steps 2 & 3:

1. Listen to your partners read the next parts of the article. If you don’t understand something, ask them to explain in different words.
2. Answer their comprehension questions.

Step 4: Do the exercise on the other side.

Fluency Writing 4

Students

A, B, & C

Step 4: Fluency Writing Exercise

1. Write the information from the article “Research about Electronic Devices and Students’ Grades” with as many details as you can. You can use the “Key words and Phrases” in the box below to write your paper.
2. Write about the information from **all three parts of the article** (Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3), not just your part.

Key Words and Phrases

- electronic devices ¹
- GPA ³
- conducted a study to find out ⁵
- physical activity ⁷
- bored ⁹
- video games ¹¹
- females and males ¹³
- high school GPAs ¹⁵
- fun activities ¹⁷
- focusing on academic work ¹⁹
- negative effect ²
- instructor’s rules ⁴
- affect students’ grades ⁶
- ability to focus during class ⁸
- takes a break ¹⁰
- multi-tasking ¹²
- non-smokers ¹⁴
- 80 to 90% of ¹⁶
- in class, in the library and on their desks ¹⁸
- the results of the study found that ²⁰

Student B

Fluency Writing 4

Vocabulary expression: “GPA” stands for “grade-point average.” It is the average of a student’s grades in school. A high GPA is better than a low one.

Before Step 1:

1. Silently read the article below.
2. Write answers to the Comprehension Questions below.

Step 1:

Listen to Student A read the first part of the article. If you don’t understand something, ask them to explain in different words. Answer their comprehension questions.

Research about Electronic Devices and Students’ Grades (part 2)

This is the second part of the article.

In Part 1, the article explained that the purpose of this research was to find out what effect smartphones had on students’ GPAs. In an earlier study, researchers found that students who played a lot of video games had lower GPAs. **OK?** According to a study, students in Europe, Asia and America who used web sites for social media had lower GPAs than students who didn’t. A common expression nowadays is “multi-tasking.” This means doing two or more things at the same time. **Understand?** And, in fact, using a smartphone during a class is a type of multi-tasking. Researchers have, in general, found a negative relationship between multi-tasking and grades. In other words, students who multi-tasked with emails, text messages, and social media had lower scores on tests than students who did not multi-task.

Did you understand what I read?

As mentioned in the first part of the article, researchers wanted to find out what effect general smartphone use had on grades. However, this is not easy to do. For example, we know from research that, generally speaking, females have higher GPAs than males. So if we find that smartphone users had lower GPAs than non-users, perhaps it was because most of the people in our study were men rather than women. We wouldn’t know if the lower GPAs were really connected to smartphones. **Got it?** Similarly, we know that smokers tend to have lower GPAs than non-smokers. Also, students who got high GPAs in high school tended to get higher ones in college. Thus, the researchers had to consider all of these factors. **Did you want me to explain that again?**

Step 2:

1. Read your article to your partners. If they don’t understand something, explain in different words.
2. Ask your partners these comprehension questions.

Comprehension Questions

1. Did students who played a lot of video games have higher or lower GPAs?
2. What does “multi-tasking” mean?
3. How do students multi-task?
4. What effect does multi-tasking have on GPAs?
5. Why does the article talk about men, women, smokers, non-smokers and high school GPAs?

Step 3:

Listen to Student C read the last part of the article. If you don’t understand something, ask them to explain in different words. Answer their comprehension questions.

Step 4: Do the exercise on the other side.

Fluency Writing 4

Students

A, B, & C

Step 4: Fluency Writing Exercise

1. Write the information from the article “Research about Electronic Devices and Students’ Grades” with as many details as you can. You can use the “Key words and Phrases” in the box below to write your paper.
2. Write about the information from **all three parts of the article** (Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3), not just your part.

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- negative effect ²
- instructor’s rules ⁴
- affect students’ grades ⁶
- ability to focus during class ⁸
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- the results of the study found that ²⁰

Student C

Fluency Writing 4

Vocabulary expression: “GPA” stands for “grade-point average.” It is the average of a student’s grades in school. A high GPA is better than a low one.

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1. Silently read the article below.
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Research about Electronic Devices and Students’ Grades (part 3)

This is the third part of the article.

In Parts 1 and 2, we learned about the types of students who got higher and lower GPAs. In this part, I will explain the results of this recent research. This is what researchers found: If we look at two college students who go to the same university, who are the same sex, who had the same GPAs in high school and who had the same smoking habits, we will find that the students who spent more time using smartphones would have a lower GPA than the students who spent less time on phones. In sum, smartphone use seems to have a negative effect on students’ GPAs. **Did you understand that?**

Some students will say that they use their electronic devices for academic purposes, for example, to do research. In fact, studies have found that students who do this get better grades than student who don’t. So this is a good use of these devices. **OK?** However, in a study, researchers found that between 80 and 90% of college students reported that they generally use their phones for fun activities, rather than educational ones. **Got it?** And because students almost always have their devices with them in class, in the library and on their desks when they are studying, they are more likely to stop focusing on academic work and start to multi-task by surfing the internet, sending and receiving messages, checking social media and playing video games. **Understand?**

Steps 1 & 2:

1. Listen to your partners read the first parts of the article. If you don’t understand something, ask them to explain in different words.
2. Answer their comprehension questions.

Step 3:

1. Read your article to your partners. If they don’t understand something, explain in different words.
2. Ask your partners these comprehension questions.

Comprehension Questions

1. Researchers looked at students who used their phones more, and less, than others. If we look at the use of smartphones of two women university students, which one will probably have a higher GPA?
2. Let’s imagine that there are two college students. One of them uses a smartphone a lot. And the other one uses a smartphone only a little. Which one will probably have a higher college GPA?
3. What percent of college students said that they use their smartphones generally for fun?
4. How do students multi-task with their phones? Explain some examples.
5. This is a discussion question. All of us should answer. Do you think that your smartphone has a negative effect on your ability to study? Explain.

Step 4: Do the exercise on the other side.

Fluency Writing 4

Students

A, B, & C

Step 4: Fluency Writing Exercise

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