



Digital Life and Technology

Essay: mobile phones in classrooms

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you write.

1. When can phones help students learn?
2. What problems can phones cause in lessons?
3. Should phone rules be strict or flexible?

Exercise 6 at a glance

Write an essay, often for a teacher.
Present an argument or point of view.
Support ideas with reasons and examples.
Use a formal or neutral register.

2. Exam-style task

Your class has recently discussed whether mobile phones should be allowed in classrooms. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay giving your opinion about this topic.

In your essay, you should discuss both sides of the argument and give your own view.

Here are some comments from students to help you:

'Phones can be useful for quick research.'

'Some learning apps are really helpful.'

'They distract students from the lesson.'

'Not everyone uses phones responsibly.'

Now write an essay for your teacher.

The comments may give you some ideas, and you should also use some ideas of your own.

Write about 120 to 160 words.

3. Model essay

Mobile phones are now part of daily life, so it is understandable that students want to use them in school. The question is whether they should be allowed in classrooms. There are strong arguments on both sides.

One argument in favour of phones is that they can support learning when used carefully. For example, students can check vocabulary, complete quick research or use educational apps. This may make lessons more interactive and help learners work more independently.

On the other hand, phones can easily become a distraction. If students receive messages or open social media, they may stop focusing on the lesson. There is also a fairness issue because not every student has the same device or internet access.

In my view, phones should be allowed only when the teacher gives a clear learning purpose. At other times, they should stay away. Overall, controlled use is better than either a complete ban or complete freedom.

4. Explore the model: structure, argument and register

Work with the model essay. Underline, label or make short notes.

Focus	What to find	Done?
Essay structure	Find the introduction, argument for, argument against and conclusion.	
Content point 1	Where does the writer explain why phones can help?	
Content point 2	Where does the writer explain problems with phones?	
Own view	Where does the writer give a clear personal view in a formal or neutral way?	
Audience and register	Find two places where the essay sounds formal or neutral rather than chatty.	
Development	Find one reason, example or effect that improves the argument.	

5. Language from the task prompts

The task prompts can guide your grammar and content choices. Notice which language each prompt naturally needs.

Prompt	Useful language	Why it fits	Example from the model
why phones can help	conditionals + controlled use	You are showing that the benefit depends on clear rules.	One argument in favour of phones is that they can support learning when used carefully / For example,...
problems with phones	cause/effect language	You are explaining how phones can affect attention and fairness.	If students receive messages or open social media, they may stop focusing on t... / As a result,...
your own view	recommendation + limitation language	You are giving a practical view rather than an extreme answer.	In my view, phones should be allowed only when the teacher gives a clear learning purpose / Overall,...

6. Build a clear essay

Notice how essay phrases help you organise arguments and make your viewpoint clear.

Job	Useful essay phrases
introduce the issue	This question is not simple. / Many people believe that... / It is important to consider both sides.
present one side	One argument in favour of... is that... / For example,... / This can help...
present the other side	On the other hand,... / However,... / This may cause...
show result	As a result,... / Therefore,... / This means that...
state your view	In my view,... / I believe that... / Overall,...
conclude clearly	The best solution is... / A balanced approach would... / ...without creating unnecessary problems

7. Vocabulary and useful essay phrases

Use chunks that sound natural for this task. You can also upgrade your writing with precise, formal or neutral phrases.

Purpose	Useful chunks / language	Add your own
describe technology	mobile phones / devices / learning apps / internet access	
describe benefits	quick research / check vocabulary / interactive lessons / independent learning	
describe problems	become a distraction / social media / fairness issue / responsible use	
sound essay-like	There are strong arguments... / On the other hand... / Overall...	
upgrade ideas	controlled use / clear learning purpose / complete ban / complete freedom	

8. Plan your own essay

Use the same task, or change the details to another school-life issue.

Section	My idea	Useful language
introduction / issue		This question is not simple. / Many people believe...
argument for		One argument in favour of... / For example...
argument against		On the other hand... / This can lead to...
my view		In my view... / I believe that...
conclusion		Overall... / The best solution is...

9. Write your own essay

Write a formal or neutral essay for the task. Discuss both sides, develop your ideas and make your view clear.

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10. Self-check and peer-check

Success criteria	What to check	Self	Peer
Content	The essay discusses both sides of the issue and gives a clear view.		
Essay structure	The answer has an introduction, organised argument paragraphs and a conclusion.		
Audience and register	It sounds formal or neutral and suitable for a teacher.		
Prompt-led language	The writing uses opinion language, contrast linkers and cause/effect language accurately.		
Cohesion	Ideas connect naturally with formal linking phrases such as <i>One argument in favour of...</i> , <i>On the other hand...</i> , <i>As a result...</i> and <i>Overall...</i>		
Vocabulary	Topic words and precise phrases, such as controlled use and become a distraction, improve the essay.		
Accuracy	Spelling, punctuation and sentence control are clear enough for the reader.		
WWW:			
EBI:			