

SCRIPT

You will hear an interview with two trainee teachers, called Amy and John, about students using smartphones in school. For questions 1-6 choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which fits best according to what you will hear. You have 1 minute to look at the task. You will hear the interview twice.

Interviewer: I'd like to hear your views on students using smartphones at school, a topic that's been in the press a great deal recently. Amy, what's your opinion?

Amy: Yes, there's a really interesting debate going on about it. In one school where I worked as a trainee teacher, teachers were concerned that students weren't paying enough attention to the lessons, as they were thinking about when they could next take a look at their phones. In my view, the role of education should be to enable students to assess a situation and then decide if using a smartphone is appropriate – polite – and how long to use it for. In another school, I saw a lesson where students had to actually look for pop-up messages selling products aimed at young people on their phones and then there was a class discussion about the ethics of that.

Interviewer: And John, what do you think?

John: But what about the role of parents in this? Don't you think most parents talk about how, where and when to use phones a lot with their children before they allow them to have one, especially if the child's still young?

Amy: You mean they say, you can only use it to talk to friends for one hour a day and not after 7 p.m, that sort of thing?

John: Exactly, or

Amy: But how do they monitor that? And anyway, a lot of parents say things like 'Don't use your phone during dinner' and then they actually do that themselves!

John: Or they're always doing internet shopping. They can't expect their child not to do what they themselves are doing, I guess. But in my experience, parents do monitor their kids' use of smartphones

Interviewer: Coming back to smartphone use at school, John, do you think students should be able to use phones in class time?

John: For some things yes, but with limits. I think using the camera should be a no-no, even if students say they want to show a painting they've done or something to their parents. That'd lead to inappropriate use of phones, I'm sure. Like the record function – as a teacher I wouldn't like students recording me in class. But if they wanted to check a spelling or find out what the capital of Norway is, for instance, that's fine in my book. Some teachers let students use phones in maths lessons for difficult calculations and things, but I'd rather students understood how to work it out for themselves.

Interviewer: And Amy, didn't you work in a school where smartphones were banned?

Amy: Yes, when I was doing teaching practice last term as part of my course to become a teacher, the school had just introduced the ban. It didn't go down well with some mums and dads who wanted their child to have a phone in case there was an emergency. There'd just been a police report in the local newspaper about crime near the school, and parents felt young people might need to contact them or the police at any time.

John: I bet the students weren't very happy about the ban either.

Amy: Strangely enough, after the first week, they seemed almost to forget about it! And some even said they enjoyed their teachers' lesson more.

John: Interesting. And actually, in most workplace you can only use your smartphone during your official breaks; it's part of your terms and conditions when you accept the job. So perhaps it'd be a good idea if more schools looked again at their policy regarding smartphones, so that children get used to the fact that restriction is the norm and not a rule that they think can be easily broken. Of course, there are offices where smart phones are totally forbidden, like where they deal with confidential information, or they're banned when a worker/s operating machinery because being distracted by their phone might result in an accident.

Interviewer: So, Amy, any final words on this topic?

Amy: Well, there'll always be heated discussions about this sort of thing in education. And sometimes the debate may seem trivial, but schools have to always make sure they're doing the best for students. With new gadgets coming out at such a rate, schools are just keeping pace with what's going on in the wider community. And, let's face it, new technology has a huge effect on our lives.

John: And soon, we'll all have forgotten about smartphones because some other piece of technology will be all the rage!

Interviewer: Thank you both.