



Developing | Exemplar Essay

Letter to Your Principal: Cell Phones

A Useful Problem



Claim and Focus

A claim is evident, but it is unclear and tries to appeal to both sides of the argument ("Cell phones can be a problem in class but they can also be useful"). While a general focus on the topic is maintained, some discussion begins to stray away from a clear focus ("Our generation is more comfortable with technology so most kids will find it easier to use phones and more comforting").



Support and Evidence

Some general evidence is included but none is directly quoted from the sources. There is evidence of a superficial understanding of the topic and task, but overall the author includes a very general use of evidence to try to support the claim ("Students are able to study quicker and easier on their phones"). A clear counterclaim is not presented in a way that is useful to the discussion ("While teachers and schools agree that having cell phones in the classroom is a bad thing...").



Organization

While the essay is appropriately formatted as a letter, the writer follows a relatively formulaic approach to the structure of the text. Basic transitions ("First," "Second") are included but could be improved to more precisely demonstrate relationships between ideas.



Language and Style

The writer employs an informal tone that is inappropriate for the audience and task. The writer's word choice is simplistic throughout ("some different reasons," "24/7," "aren't that bad"). Errors in conventions are present (there/their/they're) and sentence structure is often inappropriate ("For a calculator, a cell phone can be used, a dictionary, google, research, and can also be used for projects and essays").



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait 'looks like' in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see "25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays" by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

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Notes

To the principal:

Cell phones can be a problem in class but they can also be useful. Some schools have banned their students from bringing their cell phones to class, but they don't see that they have more benefits for students. For a calculator, a cell phone can be used, a dictionary, google, research, and can also be used for projects and essays. Students are allowed to use their phones for some different reasons. Our generation is more comfortable with technology so most kids will find it easier to use phones and more comforting. Teachers think a telephone is a cheating tool and a distraction but it really helps a student a lot more. Test scores for students improved by 6.4% and unmotivated students increased by 14%.

First, students can take online quizzes and turn in with their teachers. The teachers believe that if phones were allowed in class, students would be there 24/7 But students think it's going to be a harder way to finish the test and the quiz. Students are able to study quicker and easier on there phones.

Second, cell phones are also useful because students can call their parents for an emergency. If something goes wrong in school , the student should call their parent to let them know that their safe. If a student forgot something like an assignment at home, or the p.e. Clothes that parents can call to bring. For any reason such as a school shooting, lockdown, and emergencies, it is important for students to contact their parent.

While teachers and schools agree that having cell phones in the classroom is a bad thing, we know that there are some reasons why having them is fine. In the end, phones aren't that bad. They can be both good and bad.