THE STORY OF THE MOBILE PHONE NOVEL

A few years ago, a 19-year-old Japanese girl started writing a novel about her life in a small town. She finished it in just three weeks and gave it the title *Dreams Come True*. Akiko wasn't an experienced writer and didn't expect anyone to be interested in her tale. Yet when it came out a few months later, the romantic novel was a great success. It sold over 200,000 copies.

It's an incredible story. The most amazing thing about it, though, is the fact that Akiko wrote the novel on her mobile phone! As she wrote, she posted it, chapter by chapter, on a website where readers could download it immediately. She worked on it whenever she could – mostly while she was relaxing at home. She didn't think too much about the story and she didn't rewrite anything!

Akiko was one of the first of a new generation of novelists in Japan who write novels as if they are writing a text message. They write in a simple, chatty style and use lots of abbreviations and 'emoticons'. They know how to tell a good story, but they don't worry too much about grammar and spelling.

Some people were critical of mobile phone novels at first. They thought they were a bad influence on teenage girls, who preferred them to 'proper' literature. However, they are now popular with people of all ages. Many of the best-selling paperback books in Japan were originally mobile phone novels!

DID YOU KNOW?
20% of teenage girls in Japan own two mobile phones!

Word check
post download chatty abbreviation emoticon influence paperback

Reading

A magazine article

1 **Look at the picture. What is the girl doing? How much time do you spend doing this activity per day?**

2 1.23 **Read and listen to the article. Answer the questions with *yes* or *no*.**

1. Was *Dreams Come True* about true experiences?
2. Did readers like *Dreams Come True*?
3. Did the author write the novel on her computer?
4. Is the language in a mobile phone novel always correct?
5. Do mobile phone novels sometimes become paper books?

3 **Read the article again and choose the correct answers.**

1. Akiko wrote her novel very ...
   a) slowly. **b)** quickly.
2. Akiko ... experience of writing books.
   a) had **b)** didn't have
3. People were first able to read *Dreams Come True* on ...
   a) the internet.
   b) their mobile phones.
4. Mobile phone novelists write ...
   a) the way people speak.
   b) in long sentences.
5. In Japan, mobile phone novels are ...
   a) very successful.
   b) only read by teenage girls.

FINISHED?

Would you like to read a mobile phone novel? Why (not)?

I would like / wouldn't like to read a mobile phone novel because ...

LIVEWORKSHEETS