

Mobile Magic!

¹What connects government offices in Nigeria, doctors in Malawi, and farmers in El Salvador? The answer is . . . useful mobile phone software invented by Ken Banks. In Africa, Ken noticed that people in rural areas traveled for hours to share information. Because people there are not connected to the Internet, he decided cell phones could help.

²All you need is a laptop computer and a cell phone. It doesn't have to be the newest smartphone. An old or recycled phone is fine. "After downloading the free software, you never need the Internet again," Ken explains. Attach your phone to the laptop, type your message on the computer keyboard, select the people you want to contact, and hit "Send". The message goes to cell phones as a text!

³So what do people send messages about? One good example is in Malawi. Ken sent a hundred recycled phones and

a laptop with his software downloaded. After training for two weeks, doctors in the city can communicate with rural villages to decide which medical supplies to bring on their visits. These texts save time and thousands of dollars in travel costs. Even more importantly, a group of doctors in Malawi can now help the highest number of patients ever.

⁴Ken tells us, "We need to help people recognize that you can do useful things without lots of money or expensive technology."



11 Read. Answer the questions.

1. Which continent gave Ken the idea to design mobile phone software?

2. How many times do you need to connect to the Internet to access this service?

3. Give two examples of how Ken's invention can help people in Africa.

12 Write. Choose the main idea for each paragraph from the box and write it in the chart. Then complete the chart with the details A–F. Write the letters in the spaces.

How it works Ken's message One example Introduction

- A. Type a message on the laptop.
- B. Africans travel for hours to share information.
- C. Thousands of hours and travel costs are saved, and many more patients are helped.
- D. They are not connected to the Internet, but phones might help.
- E. Click "Send" and the message goes to cell phones in a text.
- F. Doctors send messages to mobile phones in rural villages.

| | Main idea | Details |
|---------------------|-----------|---|
| Paragraph 1 | | 1. Nigeria, Malawi, El Salvador use Ken's text software. 2. _____ 3. _____ |
| Paragraph 2 | | 1. Connect phone to laptop. 2. _____ 3. _____ |
| Paragraph 3 | | 1. Malawi doctors received 100 phones, 1 laptop, and training. 2. _____ 3. _____ |
| Concluding sentence | | We don't need a lot of money or technology to be useful. |

13 Think about the information from the reading text. You've read about a useful text message service. Check (✓) the sentences that are true.

- Only two or three countries can use the text service.
- Someone needs to type a message on a laptop.
- It saves people a lot of traveling time.
- It's only useful for doctors.
- Mobile phones can receive text messages.