PASSAGE II

INSTRUCTIONS:

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions that follow. **ALL** questions must be answered in complete sentences and in your own words unless otherwise indicated.

All answers must be based on information in the passage. Special attention should be given to the directions for each question.

ARE YOU A MEANIE IF LITTLE JOHNNY DOESN'T HAVE A CELL PHONE?

Remember when the status symbol for children was a costly pair of high-top sneakers? Today, our children want cell phones. Many of them are getting them, too, and at surprisingly young ages. The New York Times not long ago published a story about parents using their iPhones to soothe their toddlers and keep them amused. No more singing lullabies or chanting "This little piggy went to market" for them!

In the USA, about one in five children in primary school has a cell phone. It goes up to 60 percent of junior high students and more than 80 percent of senior high schoolers. According to a study by Pew Research, more students have phones than ever before – almost twice as many as in 2004.

At best, cell phones are a mixed blessing. On the positive side, they help us to watch over our children, even when we're not there. But as a safety device, cell phones carry a lot of risks. Think about it this way: car booster seats are practically impossible to lose. Seat belts don't get tempted to send inappropriate pictures and text messages – nor can they receive them. They don't tempt your children to cheat on examinations. They also don't **distract** them in class or during homework time.

It gets more **complicated**. At present, our children are using cell phones for a lot more than making calls. They're taking pictures, text messaging, using the Internet, playing games, listening to music, and more. Additionally, they're also spending much time doing this. One in three teens sends more than 3,000 text messages a month. That's time that could be spent on other things: interacting with family and friends in person, studying and exercising.

To spend so much time texting could also **stunt** a young child's social development, says Margit Crane, a parenting counselor. According to Crane, young children who use cell phones often do not learn enough about how to read appropriate body language and facial cues or signals, and also how to generate them. Moreover, the cell phone makes the world much, much larger. And, in reality, this larger world is not as safe for children, and even adults, as the world without cell phones.

So what are we parents to do? First, we must decide when our children need a phone. Chances are, most children will want one before they need one or are ready for one. Here are some things for each parent to think about:

- Is your child good at managing stuff? Or do you regularly search his or her bedroom for that missing flash drive or expensive dental retainer?
- Does he or she think ahead? Taking care of a phone is more than a matter of just not losing it or accidentally running it through the wash. Your child has to keep it charged, or it won't work when needed.
- Is there a practical reason to have one? If your child is not responsible for travelling to places on his or her own, a cell phone is probably more of a *want-to-have* than a *need-to-have* item.
- Does your child have good social skills, or is he or she likely to get into trouble with text messages?

Margit Crane, who gives school presentations on cell phones and children, says eighth grade is a reasonable time to give a child a phone, preferably one without text messaging on it because of the high risk of abuse. (Almost two-thirds of teens confessed to texting during class – and 25 percent confessed to making or receiving calls in class.)

Second, we parents must be aware of the pitfalls and make our expectations clear. It is advisable to talk to our children about how much cell phones cost, and about bullying and other terrible things that can happen when they use their phones thoughtlessly. After the ground rules are established, we must enforce them and monitor our children's use of the phone. Be ready to take the phone away if it's being abused. Wise parents also **keep a tight rein on** texting. Some parents require their teenagers to pay their own cell phone bills as a way to teach responsibility. However, research shows that children who pay their cell phone bill are almost six times as likely to use the cell inappropriately, probably because they feel more ownership over the device.

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Third, we parents must be courageous and avoid the status trap. For our children, the pressure to ha
50 the "right" kind of cell phone is intense. Children decide how popular, up to date or high-class their peers are by the type of phones they carry. Yet the message we want our children to get is that positive achievement is a better thing to aim for. We want them to learn that by putting their energy into school, into sports, into music, into community service, they will get a lot more out of it – including the ability to buy whatever phone they want when they're grown up and are less likely to do something with it that they will **regret**.

55 Yes, dealing with our children's ownership and use of cell phones is a complicated matter that requires a lot of common sense thinking and hard work, but doing anything less would be selling our children short.

adapted from an article by Martha Brockenbrough, @Mom's Homeroom MSN.com, 2010

28. According to the passage, what was the status symbol for children in days gone by?
Shade the box next to the letter that indicates the best answer.

A.		expensive sports footwear
B.		high quality cell phones
C.		designer jeans
D.		autographed CDs

[1]

29. The writer, Martha Brockenbrough, expresses her astonishment about something in paragraph **1** of the passage. What is it that astonishes her?

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_____

_____ [1]

30. Provide **ONE** detail from between lines 1–8 of the passage which suggests a traditional way rather than a modern way in which some parents comfort and entertain their young children.

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_____

_____ [1]

31. Using information from paragraph **5** of the passage, quote **ONE** three-word phrase which shows that Martha Brockenbrough has used someone else's opinions in addition to hers in writing the article.

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_____ [1]

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32. When discussing its risky nature, the writer compares the cell phone to two other items.

(a) Identify these **TWO** other items.

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_____ [2]

(b) State how the cell phone is similar to these two other items.

_____

_____ [1]

33. Using ideas from the passage, suggest **THREE** ways in which some teenagers behave irresponsibly in physically taking care of a cell phone.

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_____ [3]

34. Using the lines provided, explain the meaning of **FOUR** of the following words or phrases as they are used in the passage:

(a) distract (paragraph 3)

_____

(b) complicated (paragraph 4)

_____

(c) stunt (paragraph 5)

_____

(d) keep a tight rein on (paragraph 7)

_____

(e) regret (paragraph 8)

_____ [4]

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