Text A

Smartphones in the classroom: Technological tool or total distraction

TORONTO – Pretty River Academy in Collingwood has banned cellphone use in the classroom.

"It's a distraction for both staff and students," said Julie Kerr, head of administration at Pretty River. "As long as texting is going on, it takes away from what they're supposed to be doing in class."

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It was a surprising start to the school year for students. Smartphones are kept in students' lockers or in a basket until the end of class.

"I miss it. I like texting, Facebook and all that jazz," said Kenzi Savill, a Grade 12 student at Pretty River. "It's a big change not to have it. It was shocking. I didn't realize how much I did check it until they banned it."

Staff also have to hand in their smartphones which are kept in a basket in the administration office.

"If you don't lead by example, then it's not going to work," said Kerr.

Educators appear to have mixed opinions on whether or not smartphones belong in the classroom.

The Toronto District School Board banned cellphones in classrooms in 2007 but years later reversed the decision.

"They are just part of today's education system and we need to adapt to it," said Velisa Anusic, the head of the math department at Castlebrooke Secondary School in Brampton. Anusic believes using technology and social media can help improve the quality of students' work.

"When they're submitting work, they're submitting to a site where everybody has access. Then they're going to put in more work because they're not just impressing me, they've got to impress 29 other peers," Anusic said. "I feel like it's not a crutch; it's something they use to further their understanding."

Karanvir Sidhu, a Grade 12 student at Castlebrooke agrees. "If they're saying 'prepare for the real world', why aren't they letting us use the devices the real world is using?"

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Officials at Pretty River Academy say they are not worried about students lagging behind technologically. "Our children are still using laptops when needed," said Kerr. "In the classroom, the cellphone was used for distraction purposes only. I think it's more hands-on learning now."

Elias Andersen is a Grade 9 student who says that, while he sometimes misses being able to check his phone during class, "Being able to check texts after school and at recess is okay because you don't always need to have your phone on you and be checking texts."

Adapted from www.globalnews.ca (2014)

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1. From statements A to J, select the **four** that are true according to text A. Write the appropriate letters in the boxes provided. [4 marks]

Example: [A]

- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

A. **Julie Kerr believes students must concentrate more on lessons.**
B. Pretty River students were expecting the ban on smartphones.
C. The new rule has had almost no impact on students at Pretty River.
D. Pretty River teachers also comply with the ban.
E. Most teachers in the province agree with the ban.
F. The Toronto District School Board also prohibits smartphones in the classroom.
G. Velisa Anusic is not a great supporter of social media in class.
H. Karanvir Sidhu thinks the ban is illogical.
I. Administrators at Pretty River are confident of success of their policy.
J. Elias Andersen and Kenzi Savill reacted differently to the ban.

Answer the following questions.

2. Which phrase between **lines 13 and 17** indicates that teachers are expected to be role models?

. . . . . .

3. Give **one** reason why Velisa Anusic believes technology and social media can help to motivate students.

. . . . . .

4. Which short phrase between **lines 30 and 33** indicates Pretty River Academy's current educational approach?

. . . . . .

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Choose the correct answer from A, B, C, or D. Write the letter in the box provided.

5. In **line 5** the phrase "takes away from" is closest in meaning to…

A. separates.
B. postpones.
C. distracts.
D. misleads.

6. In **line 10**, the phrase "all that jazz" means "all that…"

A. type of nonsense.
B. information.
C. kind of thing.
D. music.

7. The purpose of this text is to…

A. report on the banning of smartphones in class.
B. defend the use of smartphones in class.
C. promote the use of smartphones in class.
D. criticise the banning of smartphones in class.

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