

UNIT 7D

SKILLS: WRITING AN OPINION ESSAY

2 A Read the title of the essay. What does the verb *ban* mean?

- a make something illegal b make something easier

B Read the essay. Does Kai agree or disagree with the question?

Is it time to ban smartphones in public?

Kai Meng

Smartphones are amazing inventions and help us in lots of different ways, but I'm worried that we use them too much. Every day, I see hundreds of people using their phones in the city, and it's causing some serious problems.

First, I believe smartphones can be dangerous. When people are sending messages or listening to music with headphones while walking down the street, they don't concentrate on the traffic, and it's much easier for them to have an accident.

The second reason is that I think talking on phones in public is annoying. If you're on public transportation or in a restaurant, you don't want to hear someone else's conversation. In my opinion, people should wait to call their friends and colleagues in private, unless it's a real emergency.

Finally, banning smartphones in public is a good idea because it would make people more sociable and encourage them to talk more. Even when some people get together with their friends, they spend half the time checking their phones and going on social media. If they didn't have their phones, they'd talk to each other more, and they'd have a much better time.

In conclusion, although there are lots of advantages to smartphones, I think we should ban them in public. Personally, I think this would be safer for pedestrians, nicer for passengers on public transportation, and would help us communicate with each other more.



3 Answer the questions about the essay. Then read the Skill box.

- 1 How many reasons for banning smartphones does Kai give?
What are they? Which paragraphs are they in?
- 2 What is the purpose of paragraph 1? *to introduce the topic / to summarize all his reasons*
- 3 What is the purpose of the final paragraph? *to introduce the topic / to summarize all his reasons*

Skill writing an essay

In essays, we discuss a topic and give our point of view.

- Organize your ideas into paragraphs (introduction, reasons, and conclusion).
- Explain the reasons for your opinions in separate paragraphs. Give examples or evidence to support them.
- Use sequencers, like *first*, *the second reason*, *finally*, and *in conclusion* to help readers.

5 A Match the two columns to make sentences. Did you have similar ideas?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 We can check e-mails, read documents, | a the way we communicate. |
| 2 I believe this is very important | b have made our lives better in three different ways. |
| 3 Personally, I love being able to watch | c stay in touch with each other. |
| 4 In my opinion, smartphones | d for our safety. |
| 5 They make our lives safer, more | e us work more efficiently. |
| 6 Second, smartphones make | f and organize meetings outside the office. |
| 7 In conclusion, I don't think we should | g lots of fun and keep us entertained. |
| 8 The first reason is that phones help us | h movies or play games when I'm on the subway or a bus. |
| 9 The last reason is that they are | i ban smartphones in public. |
| 10 Modern technology has changed | j efficient, and even more fun. |

B Which sentences can be found in:

- 1 We can check e-mails, read documents, and organize meetings outside the office.
- 2 I believe this is very important for our safety.
- 3 Personally, I love being able to watch movies or play games when I'm on the subway or a bus.
- 4 In my opinion, smartphones have made our lives better in three different ways.
- 5 They make our lives safer, more efficient, and even more fun.
- 6 Second, smartphones make us work more efficiently.
- 7 In conclusion, I don't think we should ban smartphones in public.
- 8 The first reason is that phones help us stay in touch with each other.
- 9 The last reason is that they are lots of fun and keep us entertained.
- 10 Modern technology has changed the way we communicate.

the introduction? _____ paragraph 3? _____ the conclusion? _____
paragraph 2? _____ paragraph 4? _____

7 Read the essay in exercise 2 again. Underline any phrases Kai uses to give his opinion.

Text builder giving opinions

We use a variety of phrases to give our opinions:

I (don't) think/believe (that) ... I'm worried/delighted (that) is a good/bad idea.

In my opinion/view, ... Personally, ... I would(n't) say (that) ...

8 Read the Text builder. In pairs, give your opinions about ideas 1–5. Explain your ideas.

- 1 I *think / don't think* public transportation should be free for everyone because ...
- 2 Children playing computer games is a *good / bad* idea because ...
- 3 In my opinion, learning English *is / isn't* very difficult because ...
- 4 Personally, I *watch / don't watch* too much TV because ...
- 5 I *would / wouldn't* say that we eat less healthily than our parents because ...