Name:_____ Date:_____

The Anxious Generation

Suppose that when your first child turned nine, a visionary billionaire whom you'd never met chose her to join the first permanent human settlement on Mars. Without you knowing, she had signed herself up for the mission because she loves outer space, and, besides, all of her friends have signed up. She begs you to let her go.

Around the turn of the millennium, technology companies created powerful new devices: smartphones. Before this time, young people watched television and hung out with friends in person. However, the new pocket devices were very different. They were portable, personalized, and designed to keep users looking at screens for many hours each day.

Many researchers now believe that this digital shift started harming teenagers. Social media apps used psychological tricks, like endless scrolling and notifications, to capture attention. For boys, video games and online videos took up endless hours. For girls, image-focused apps increased self-criticism and fear of social exclusion.

Jonathan Haidt, a social psychologist, argues that smartphones rewired childhood. In the past, teenagers developed social skills through physical play, outdoor exploration, and face-to-face conversations. Online, teens began spending their days looking at curated photos, where everyone appears happy, wealthy, and successful. Instead of living in the real world, young people started worrying about their online status and public image.

The loss of face-to-face interaction has had real consequences. Teenagers today spend far less time talking, playing, or even making eye contact with friends and family. Haidt calls this generation the anxious generation because levels of stress, loneliness, and depression have risen rapidly. The smartphone was not just a new tool; it became a complete replacement for real-world growing up.

Bilingual Vocabulary Guide

Use this guide to understand the underlined words from the text. / *Utilisez ce guide pour comprendre les mots soulignés du texte.*

Word / Mot	English Explanation	Explication en français
millennium	A period of 1,000 years (specifically the year 2000).	Une période de 1 000 ans (en particulier l'an 2000).

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harming	Causing damage, injury, or hurt to someone.	Faire du mal, causer des dommages ou nuire à quelqu'un.
rewired	Changed the way a brain, system, or habit works.	Reconfiguré, reprogrammé ou modifié le fonctionnement habituel.
curated	Carefully selected, edited, and organized to look perfect.	Soigneusement sélectionné, arrangé ou mis en scène pour paraître idéal.
anxious	Feeling nervous, worried, fearful, or uneasy about what might happen.	Anxieux, inquiet, angoissé ou stressé par l'avenir.
replacement	Something that takes the place of something else.	Un remplacement; quelque chose qui prend la place d'une autre chose.

Writing Support & Tools

Action Verbs for Your Answers

- **causes** (*cause, provoque*)
- **reduces** (*diminue, réduit*)
- **replaces** (*remplace*)
- **influences** (*influence*)
- **creates** (*crée, génère*)
- **demonstrates** (*démontre, montre*)

Sentence Starters for Explanations

- *According to the text, smartphones...*
- *This evidence shows that...*
- *In my opinion, teenagers feel... because...*
- *When teens spend too much time online, it causes...*
- *For example, the author explains that...*

Part 1: Find Information (Direct Facts)

1. Name **two** features of smartphones that made them different from older technology like television.

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2. What did apps and games use to keep young people looking at screens? Quote **one** phrase from paragraph 2 as evidence.

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3. According to Jonathan Haidt, how did young people develop social skills before smartphones existed?

Part 2: Infer & Analyze (Reading Between the Lines)

4. Why does looking at "**curated**" photos on social media make teenagers feel worse instead of better? Explain your reasoning using evidence from the text.

> **Tip:** Use the verb **influences** or **creates** in your response, and explain what happens when images are edited to look perfect.

5. The passage states that smartphones became a "replacement for real-world growing up." What important real-life experiences did smartphones take away from young people?

> **Sentence Starter:** *The smartphone replaces real-world experiences such as... This causes teens to...*

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Part 3: Evaluate & Personal Response (Long Answers)

6. The author calls Gen Z "the anxious generation." Do you agree with this label? Support your opinion by describing how digital habits affect a student's daily mental well-being.



Scaffolding: Write at least 3-4 complete sentences. State your claim clearly (*I agree / I disagree that...*), give a specific reason from the text, and give an example from everyday teenage life.

7. What is one practical rule or boundary that schools or families could introduce to help teens reduce screen anxiety? Explain why your idea would work.

Sentence Starters:

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