# Example Argumentative Essay

**Exercise: Analyze an Essay**

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it match the style of the essay?
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
10. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?

## Does Technology Make Us More Alone?

Technology is integrated into almost every field. From little children to aged adults, technology has changed at least some aspects of our lives if not many aspects of our lives. We can do our work online, we can shop online, and we can even order our pizza online without ever needing to actually interact with another human face-to-face. Technology has contributed a great number of good things to our society in fields like education and business, making it easier to complete tasks in a very short amount of time (Hewko, 2016). These technological advances make us more efficient and productive. Technology has also contributed bad things to our society. Many people feel our society is now more fast-paced, more wasteful, and more self-centered. Perhaps the biggest criticism that has come to light lately is that technology makes us more lonely. Many personal applications like Facebook and Twitter, have revolutionized human interaction (Hernandez, 2016). Some say that these new online interactions degrade face-to-face interactions and prevent people from spending quality time with friends and family (Molloy, 2017; Hernandez, 2016). These results have very serious effects on many different groups of people, but perhaps more drastically in younger generations that are being born into a world where technology was never not known. Technology is increasing loneliness in children, teenagers, and college students in our society today.

Technology makes children alone. Now we can see how children are having direct contact with technology from a very early age. Hernandez (2016) states that 9 out of 10 children in primary school spend more than 10 hours a day in contact with videogames and electronic devices. This number is alarming if it represents isolated screen time. Neighmond (2014) completed a field observation of 55 families in public restaurants and found that in 40 of the families she observed, the parents used their phones during the meal, many of them only intermittently putting it down to eat. The children

observed were largely ignored, and in many of the children, behaviors were observed that seemed to exhibit a desire for parental attention. Ignoring children obviously leads to many other problems, like slowing their development and creating strong family ties, but it will also certainly increase loneliness. As children are ignored, they may turn more towards using smartphones to fill in the gap with entertainment, which will only continue to increase the problem as they become more and more disconnected from the people around them. Because giving greater attention to technology can lead to greater loneliness in children, we need to become more aware of how much attention we give children when we are with them.

Technology also makes teenagers more lonely. This loneliness can be largely attributed to the way they turn to technology to meet various emotional needs. Many teenagers today are extremely worried about being accepted by others, even before being accepted by themselves. Feelings of insecurity, inadequacy, and uncertainty are quite normal as well as widespread. To combat these feelings and help them feel accepted, some teenagers turn to technology to help them feel validated. They look for the most exciting things to do or places to go so they can take pictures to share with friends online, hoping that these pictures will encourage a positive response from others. Another strategy many teenagers employ is creating modified profiles online to get virtual friends (Hernandez, 2016; Molloy, 2017). An alarming 86.4% of teenagers modify their identity or even pretend to be another person through social media (Molloy, 2017). This is possibly one of the most problematic situations among young people. Rather than finding authentic things to value about their lives, they find validation in things that are not only temporary, but also false. This kind of falsification in combination with social pressure can be the perfect weapon for those who use social networks to deceive and hurt others (Gonchar, 2016). As teenagers do more online, they are increasingly withdrawn towards other people in person but more and more open to people through social networks.

Finally, college students face loneliness due to technology. Bruni (2017) highlights this issue by illustrating the difference between current and past generations of college students. In the past, students needed to be more physically present. You couldn't take classes online, shop online, or catch up with friends online. However, what perhaps causes more loneliness today is illustrated by the fact that you also couldn't compare your life to your friends' lives online. Bruni (2017) makes the point that if college students are alone in their dorm room scrolling through Facebook, their friends' exciting lives (as evidenced in their pictures and posts), create in lonely college students feelings of being disadvantaged because their friends are supposedly having so much more fun than they are. Previous generations were perhaps less likely to experience these feelings because they were less likely to be ex- posed to everyone else's exciting weekends. If you wanted to know what your friends did last weekend, you had to ask them about it, which required a social interaction. In this way, technology is making college students more lonely today.

While these three groups of people can clearly be negatively affected by technology, it is important to note that many people do not view technology as completely isolating. There are numerous ways that people can use technology to share experiences with people and encourage more communication and forge stronger relationships. Technology can lead to a shared experience for children, for example, by parents using an educational app with a child to practice the alphabet or numbers. Teenagers can stay more connected to their parents, using technology, and parents can use that communication to express love and validation to their teenagers that are battling feelings of insecurity and inadequacy. College students who are far from friends and family can use technology to video call with people at home to remind themselves of the social support networks they have there. They can also use technology to meet more people, or to establish a more genuine connection

by learning about others through the stories they tell. These uses clearly establish that technology doesn't have to isolate us.

These connecting benefits notwithstanding, it must be noted that technology is frequently misused and does not serve to connect us as much as it isolates us. Many parents don't supervise their children on technology (Gonchar, 2016) or ignore their children while they are looking at their phones (Neighmond, 2014). Teenagers are frequently left on their own and parents are too busy to connect with them. College students forego draining social interaction in favor of sitting alone in their dorm while they look at their phone (Bruni, 2017). The real issue is that technology use to connect us requires more effort than technology use that isolates us, and people frequently don't put the effort required to maintain connection into their use of technology.

In sum, we can see that technology use can isolate young people from the time they are born until they are ready to start their careers. Technology can cause us to become more withdrawn and isolated, in spite of the constant ability to be seconds away from contact with hundreds of friends and family who can help us feel connected and loved. The key to avoiding these negative consequences is being aware of how technology is able to isolate us so that we can avoid the negative consequences. We need to educate parents about how to use technology as a connecting tool, rather than an isolating tool. We also need to teach future generations from the time they are young how to properly use technology so that it does not isolate them from the relationships that are crucial to their success. We should not teach people to fear technology, but to be aware of how to use it properly. If we fail to do so, our society will eventually break apart into individual islands of human existence.

References

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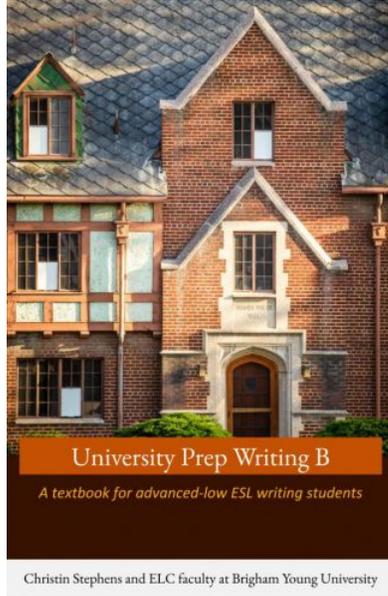
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