

# Mobile Phones in Class

## Pre-Reading

### A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you have a YouTube channel?  
If not, do your friends have one?
2. Are mobile phones allowed in classrooms in public schools in your city?
3. Do you post photos or videos of your friends that you took on your phone?
4. Have any of your friends posted pictures or videos of you in an embarrassing situation?
5. Do you worry about finding embarrassing pictures of yourself on the Internet?



### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| ___ 1. device      | a) greatly surprised with difficulty understanding        |
| ___ 2. incident    | b) a statement of dissatisfaction                         |
| ___ 3. embarrassed | c) to try to make lawmakers pass certain laws             |
| ___ 4. ban         | d) a piece of equipment for a special purpose             |
| ___ 5. distort     | e) a question for discussion, a concern                   |
| ___ 6. lobby       | f) to order that something must not be done, to not allow |
| ___ 7. dismayed    | g) to give a good reason, to show something is right      |
| ___ 8. complaint   | h) feeling mentally or socially uncomfortable             |
| ___ 9. justify     | i) to give a false or untrue picture of something         |
| ___ 10. issue      | j) a situation, happening, or event                       |

## Reading

1. Whether pupils should be allowed to have personal electronic **devices** in the classroom became an issue in Gatineau, Quebec, after an October 2006 **incident** in a high school.
2. Two 13-year-old girls provoked their teacher into yelling at one of them while the other used her mobile phone camera to secretly film him. The girls then posted their video on YouTube.
3. The teacher was so upset and **embarrassed** by the video that he took stress leave. The school suspended the two pupils and **banned** all pupils from bringing any type of personal electronic device into the classroom.
4. Their teacher's reaction to the YouTube posting and his absence from school left all his pupils feeling badly about what had happened and they asked that the video be removed from YouTube. The pupils would not be searched but the ban on taking devices like mobile phones into class would be strictly enforced.
5. Teachers were concerned about how easily a person's image could be **distorted**. The Gatineau teacher had taught for 32 years and had spent many years working with pupils with discipline problems. Shouting at students was not a true picture of his work as a teacher. The teachers' union was **lobbying** for personal electronic devices to be banned from all schools in Western Quebec.
6. The teachers also believed that they must be able to discipline pupils without fear of being publicly exposed. In other words, what happens in the classroom should stay within the classroom. Some parents, however, were **dismayed** by the teachers' view on privacy. Parents worried that pupils with serious **complaints** about a teacher's behaviour would not be believed. They expected teachers to act responsibly and be able to **justify** their actions in their classroom.
7. Posting secretly obtained videos of people on the Internet is an ongoing privacy **issue**.

*'It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation and only one bad one to lose it.'*

—Benjamin Franklin

### Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs and write the answers in your notebook.

1. What became an important issue in Quebec high schools in 2006?
2. What situation led to this becoming an important issue?
3. How did the teacher involved react to this incident?
4. What did the school do in response to this incident?
5. Why do some teachers want personal electronic devices banned from all classrooms?

### Vocabulary Practice

Find the words or expressions in the reading that have the following meanings.

#	Meaning	Word/Expression
1	made angry, caused something to happen	
2	time off work because of mental or emotional difficulties	
3	didn't allow pupils to attend school for a period of time, as a means of punishment	
4	being away from	
5	an organisation of workers	
6	to give a set of rules, bring under control, or punish	

## Discuss

Work with a partner or in small groups. Discuss the following questions.

1. Do you think there is any reason that pupils should NOT be allowed to take mobile phones into classrooms?
2. What problems may occur if mobile phones are allowed in classrooms?
3. If you were a teacher, would you be upset if pupils were filming you in the classroom?
4. How have YouTube and other social media networks been used by some pupils to bully or intimidate other pupils?
5. Do you think that the punishment given to the two pupils discussed in the article was fair? Explain your answer.
6. The teachers discussed in the article felt that what happens in the classroom should stay in the classroom. Do you agree with their views on privacy in the classroom?

## Debate

Below are two topics to debate in small groups or pairs.

Your teacher will tell you if you will be debating for or against the idea.

You will have ten minutes to prepare your arguments.

### Topic #1

There are too many problems associated with having mobile phones in a classroom and, therefore, they should be banned.

### Topic #2

Posting secretly obtained videos of people on the Internet should be a criminal offense.

## Write

Choose one of the questions from the Discussion section above.

Then write a paragraph in your notebook stating your own opinion.

## Useful Expressions & Transitions for Debating

### Agreeing and Disagreeing

- That doesn't take away from the fact that...
- That's beside the point.
- With all due respect...
- I agree with you there.
- I agree with ---- (name).
- I see your point, but...
- That may be true, but...
- We're going to have to agree to disagree.
- I get/see where you're coming from, but...
- I'm afraid I disagree entirely.
- I'm afraid I'd have to disagree.
- I agree to some extent, but...
- I disagree with you there.
- Pardon me for disagreeing, but...

### Interrupting / Asking to Contribute

- I hate to interrupt, but...
- If I may come in here...
- I'd like to add something.
- Would you like to contribute something?
- I'd like to raise a point.
- If I could speak for a moment...
- I'd like to cut in here.
- You haven't answered my question.

### Persuading

- Can you see where I'm coming from?
- I challenge you to give this a try/chance.
- I want you to see it my way.
- Put yourself in my shoes.
- Am I getting through to you?

### Expressing an Opinion

- In my honest opinion...
- It is my belief that...
- From my experience...
- From where I look at it...
- From my point of view...

### Clarifying / Rephrasing

- Let's be clear here...
- I think you misunderstood what I said.
- What I said was... (repeat a point that was misunderstood or confused)
- What I meant to say was... (rephrase something in a way that is clearer)
- In other words...
- What I was trying to say before I was interrupted is that...

### Summarising / Concluding

- So let me get this straight. You think...
- To conclude...
- I'd just like to summarise by saying...
- Finally, I'd like to reiterate that...
- It's time to take stock of what we've heard today.
- Both sides have some valid points.
- The stronger argument/team today is...

## Answer Key

### LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students read about an incident that occurred in a Canadian classroom when pupils set up and filmed a teacher. They learn and review new vocabulary and have a debate about mobile phones in the classroom.

**LEVEL:** Int –Adv

**TIME:** 1.5–2 hours

**TAGS:** mobile phones in the classroom, mobile phones, YouTube, privacy, videos, social media, reputation, debate

### Pre-Reading

#### A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Discuss in small groups or as a class. Answers will vary.

#### B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. d | 3. h | 5. i | 7. a | 9. g  |
| 2. j | 4. f | 6. c | 8. b | 10. e |

### Reading

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

### Comprehension

- Having personal electronic devices in the classroom became an important issue.
- Two 13-year-old girls provoked their teacher into yelling at one of them while the other used her mobile phone camera to secretly film him.
- The teacher was so upset and embarrassed by the video that he took stress leave.
- The school suspended the two pupils and banned all pupils from bringing any type of personal electronic device into the classroom.
- Teachers were concerned about how easily a person's image can be distorted. The teachers also believed that they must be able to discipline pupils without fear of being publicly exposed.

### Vocabulary Practice

- |             |                 |               |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. provoked | 3. stress leave | 5. suspended  |
| 2. absence  | 4. union        | 6. discipline |

### Discuss

Have students discuss in small groups or pairs. Answers will vary.

### Debate

Review language used in debates (see page 5). Then divide students into pairs or groups, with some arguing for and others arguing against one or both of the topics. Alternatively, allow students to choose one topic to debate as a class. If all students want to argue the same side, assign some students to be on the other side of the debate. Give students time to practise making statements about their opinions.

Remind students to defend their opinions with real-life examples and details. They may also need to be reminded to respect the opinions of others. You could also practise interrupting politely. (See our Functional English lesson plan on Interrupting: <https://esllibrary.com/courses/92/lessons/1747>) Consult our Teachers' Notes for more ideas on using ESL Library's Mini-Debates in the classroom: <https://esllibrary.com/courses/73/lessons/1311>

### Write

Answers will vary.