

Texting

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you use text messaging on your cell phone?
2. Do you text while engaging in other activities, such as walking, watching TV, etc.?
3. Why do teenagers love texting?
4. Why is texting useful in business?



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. new millennium | a) to become popular |
| ___ 2. phenomenon | b) to take notice of what is happening |
| ___ 3. catch on | c) less expensive |
| ___ 4. commitment | d) an oral or written promise |
| ___ 5. cheaper | e) a point where two roads cross |
| ___ 6. developing country | f) a nation without modern services and infrastructure |
| ___ 7. pledge | g) a new thing or situation that is noticeable or interesting |
| ___ 8. illegal | h) the next 1,000 years (the years 2000+) |
| ___ 9. pay attention | i) not lawful |
| ___ 10. intersection | j) a long-term focus or plan |

Reading

TEXTING

Glued to our devices

1. Texting, also known as SMS (short message service), was first popular in Europe and Asia at the turn of the **new millennium**. It did not take long for the **phenomenon** to **catch on** in America. By 2010, Americans were sending more texts each day than making phone calls.
2. Why have we fallen in love with this form of communication? Is it because text messaging requires less **commitment** than a phone call? Is it because we want to stay connected with our loved ones at all times? People have different reasons for texting depending on their jobs and lifestyles. Many people text because it's **cheaper** than a phone call. This is why texting is popular in **developing countries**.
3. Texting while driving causes many fatal accidents. In 2009, Oprah Winfrey asked her viewers to sign a No Phone Zone **pledge**. Thousands of people promised not to use their cell phones in the car. Today, texting and driving is **illegal** in many countries. However, millions of people continue to text and drive.
4. What about texting while walking? Many people don't think twice about doing this. Some do not **pay attention** while crossing **intersections** or walking through busy parking lots. Others even text while jogging or taking their dog for a walk. Did texting keep you from stopping to smell the roses today?

“Texting is a brilliant way to miscommunicate how you feel and misinterpret what other people mean.”

—Anonymous

Comprehension

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

1. What does *SMS* stand for?
2. What statistic is provided in the introductory paragraph?
3. Why do people in developing countries use text messaging?
4. What was the No Phone Zone Pledge?
5. Why does the reading mention roses?

Vocabulary Review

Match the word on the left to the correct sentence on the right.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. cheap | a) It only costs one penny to send a text. |
| ___ 2. phenomenon | b) The accident occurred at the traffic light. |
| ___ 3. intersection | c) We signed a form to say we would not text while driving. |
| ___ 4. developing country | d) Texting has only been around since the new millennium. |
| ___ 5. pledge | e) Many villages do not have running water. |

Speaking Practice

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

Work with a partner.
Argue "for" these statements even if you disagree with them.

Partner A

1. It's okay to text when you're stopped at a red light.
2. I always text at the dinner table.
3. When I'm on a date, I spend most of my time texting.

Partner B

1. I don't need to talk to my friends anymore. We just text each other.
2. I never turn off my cell phone in movie theaters or hospitals.
3. I spend half of my work day texting. My boss thinks I'm working.

Discussion

1. What practical uses are there for text messaging?
2. What is the "art" of text messaging? Are you a "pro" at texting?
3. How do you feel when you don't get an immediate response to a text?
4. Do you make most of your plans via text?

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

TEXTING

Glued to our devices

1. Texting, also known as SMS (short message service), was first popular in Europe and Asia at the turn of the _____. It did not take long for the phenomenon to _____ in America. By 2010, Americans were sending more texts each day than making phone calls.
2. Why have we fallen in love with this form of communication? Is it because text messaging requires less _____ than a phone call? Is it because we want to stay connected with our loved ones at all times? People have different reasons for texting depending on their jobs and lifestyles. Many people text because it's _____ than a phone call. This is why texting is popular in developing countries.
3. Texting while driving causes many fatal accidents. In 2009, Oprah Winfrey asked her viewers to sign a No Phone Zone _____. Thousands of people promised not to use their cell phones in the car. Today, texting and driving is _____ in many countries. However, millions of people continue to text and drive.
4. What about texting while walking? Many people don't think twice about doing this. Some do not _____ while crossing _____ or walking through busy parking lots. Others even text while jogging or taking their dog for a walk. Did texting keep you from stopping to smell the roses today?

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about how texting has become a way of life for many people. They discuss their own texting habits and practice agreeing and disagreeing.

TEACHING TIPS:

See *Discussion Starters Teaching Guide* (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

LEVEL: Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, texting, cell phones, mobile device, communication, socializing, technology

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

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

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Discuss the quote. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 4. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

1. SMS stands for “short message service.”
2. The reading states that by 2010, more text messages were being sent than phone calls were being made.
3. People in developing countries use text messaging because it is inexpensive.
4. The No Phone Zone Pledge was a promise Oprah Winfrey asked her viewers to make. They promised not to use their cell phones while driving.
5. The reading mentions roses because cell phones distract us from paying attention to our surroundings. We can miss important things.

Vocabulary Review

1. a 2. d 3. b 4. e 5. c

Speaking Practice

Place students in pairs and have them practice agreeing and disagreeing. You may want to put some useful phrases on the board:

- I agree with you there.
- I see your point, but...
- That may be true, 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.

Discussion

Answers will vary.
Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

Listening

1. new millennium, catch on
2. commitment, cheaper
3. pledge, illegal
4. pay attention, intersections