

# Smart phones: classroom friends or foes

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Smart Phones: Classroom Friends or Foes? It's no surprise that these days all across the United States in any high school and in any classroom, one can find teenagers avidly texting under their desks or behind their text books.

While texting may seem innocent enough to the students committing the act, it also proposes the danger and risk that the student could be getting answers for the quiz that they are taking from a friend that's outside the classroom. The introduction of smart phones, such as the iPhone and the Blackberry seem to have made matters of this phenomenon even worse. Now, instead of just having access to other students via texting, kids have the ability to surf the internet or upload audio clips on their cell phones that could be helpful to them while they're in class. While some would argue that the access to all this information could, in fact, be beneficial to students in the classroom, others would argue the exact opposite. The increased use of these smart phones decreases a student's attention p, expands the amount of cheating done, exposes students to information that might not be correct, and also increases the amount of disturbances in a classroom. Students of this century rely heavily on the internet to get them through their studies and now that the access to the internet is available on their phones, that reliance will grow to be even greater. With that constant growing reliance on these smart phones, the quality of this generation's education will begin rapidly decreasing.

The ability to concentrate in class and on the lecture the teacher is giving is already a difficult task itself to most students, even without the introduction of texting, music players, or the smart phones. By adding those components the attention level paid to the lesson is slowly diminishing. A student wanting

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to waste time in class not only has the option to stare out of the window, but now, they can bury their phones in their books and text, surf the web, and listen to music. Now that these devices, such as the iPhone and the Blackberry are available, students don't have to worry about how they can preoccupy their time, they just have to take out their phones. Cheating is another hindrance that has been more wide spread now that texting has been presented into the classroom. This act of getting answers from one another has been even more enhanced with the rise of smart phones. Now, the student doesn't only have to rely on their friend, but they have a better option: the internet.

These phones allow the students to get on the internet and search for the answers that they need. The iPhone and Blackberry only encourage students to quickly memorize what they get off the web, instead of actually studying the material in depth. Why study when you can get the answers at the tips of your fingers? Also, with programs and features available such as Cha Cha, a number where the student can text a question and receive the answer in a text, the possibility of cheating gets higher and higher. Another problem presented by these phones and their access to the internet is the falsified information on the world wide web. It is highly unusual to find a good source when searching for answers on web search engines such as Google and Yahoo. Also, there is not much time or thinking needed when keying in some words on to these search engines to get the answer that is desired, and who's to say that the material generated isn't completely false? The first website that Google provides is always Wikipedia, and since Wikipedia can be altered by anybody, the information on it isn't necessarily credible. Other

sites that are provided by Google are usually blogs or personal opinion essays that aren't very credible at all, either.

This decreases the amount the student is learning because instead of studying the correct material before a big test, they can just get quick and easy answers off of their phones right away, not necessarily guaranteeing that these answers they receive are correct. Also, with the growing use of these phones it is more likely that a disturbance will occur in class. Even without these smart phones, a text or a call can happen during class and the ringer can go off, disrupting everybody. The iPhone and Blackberry also include alarms, calendars, and music, etc... and at any time, one of these components can go off in class. This disruption takes time away from the lecture or lesson the teacher is trying to give. Since almost every student can be found on their phones, that means the rate of disturbances will also go up. All of these distractions take a lot of time away from learning: a text message goes off here, an alarm goes off there, and someone's music might start accidentally playing. Since the focus is more on these devices that keep going off, students don't get the most fulfilling learning experience in class.

Smart phones, such as the iPhone and the Blackberry, have the potential to completely decrease the amount of learning done in the classroom. While one can argue that they are a beneficial tool that can be used by the students, any classroom in any high school shows the total opposite. These phones have more cons than pros when it comes to their uses in the classroom: their ability to increase cheating, disruptive behavior, falsified information provided by them, and their ability to make students pay

attention less in class. Overall, the smart phones will lower the standards and the quality of the education taught today because of these unfortunate cons.