

The gift of fire



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The presentations should analyze the situation, use analogies and similar cases where possible, mention various possible risks or consequences, etc. Include some discussion of how the new technology changes the situation. What advantages or problems result from using it, compared to the old way of doing things? Present the group's proposals and/or conclusions, supported by arguments. Asmt. 1: A Code of Ethics and Etiquette for Cell Phone Use (Exercise 1. 23) Groups 1 and 2: Do the same assignment independently. Asmt. 2: Text-messaging in 6000 languages?

Text-messaging is slow and tedious, hence not used much, without predictive software that reduces the number of key taps needed to enter a word. Predictive software is currently available for about 80 of the world's more than 6000 languages. In some countries where texting the country's language is cumbersome, people text in English. Group 3: Will most of the world's languages disappear in the near future if they cannot be used for texting? Give your reasons. Group 4: Your company makes predictive software for about 200 languages.

Give a presentation to convince a cell phone company to buy your software and install it on all their phones. Group 5: Your cell phone company currently provides predictive software for 20 widely-spoken languages and has declined to buy the 200-language predictive software. Give your reasons. Asmt. 3: Book readers for blind people Organizations for blind people argue that all book and document readers (such as the Kindle, Nook, etc.) should have features that read material aloud, and, they argue, such features should be made easy for blind people to use.

Several major brands do not meet these requirements. Suppose the administration of a major university is considering a policy not to buy, use, or sell in the campus store any readers that cannot be used easily by blind people. Group 6: Representatives of the National Federation for the Blind presenting arguments in favor of the policy. Group 7: Representatives of a company that makes a popular reader, presenting arguments against the policy. Group 8: The university's policy committee announcing and explaining its decision about whether to adopt the policy.

Group 9: What do you think the decision should be? Give your reasons. Asmt.

4: Ethics of publishing leaked files Wikileaks released about 2000 confidential U. S. State Department cables, many with candid discussions of foreign government officials and other prominent people and their policies. Wikileaks did not remove names of people who might be embarrassed or whose safety might be threatened by the leaks. Group 10: Discuss the decision to release the documents from an ethical perspective.

Group 11: Devise a policy for a Web site that publishes leaked government, business, and/or organization documents. List all the aspects and impacts to be considered in making an ethical decision about whether to publish the material. Group 12: About a year before the Wikileaks incident, someone leaked a large set of documents from a climate modeling center at a British university. The documents showed that some researchers attempted to prevent publication of articles by scientists critical of their work.

They also discussed ways to avoid providing their research data to scientists with opposing views about climate change, even though the data were supposed to be available to other scientists. Compare the ethics of the

publication of these documents to the Wikileaks case. If you believe it was right to publish both, or wrong to publish both, describe the similarities of the two incidents that support your view. If you think it was right to publish one set of documents but not the other, describe the aspects that distinguish them.