

**Actuele lesbrief Engels – The Flip Side of Smartphones**

**Voor de docent**

De technologische vooruitgang heeft onze manier van communiceren ingrijpend veranderd. Toch heeft niet iedereen behoefte aan het nieuwste van het nieuwste op dat gebied.

**ERK-niveau**

Lezen B1+ - *Kan hoofdthema en belangrijkste argumenten begrijpen in eenvoudige teksten in tijdschriften, kranten of op internet. (LEB1-3d)*

Leesstrategieën - *Kan de betekenis van zo nu en dan voorkomende onbekende woorden afleiden uit de context en de betekenis van zinnen herleiden, op voorwaarde dat het besproken onderwerp bekend is.*

*- Kan digitale technologie zoals internet en zoekmachines gebruiken om woord- en zinsbegrip te controleren, indien toegestaan.*

**Intro**

Since the first smartphone became available, smartphones have changed a lot. They have more and better features every year. But how about their popularity? Is it becoming better as well?

Assignment 1

For this assignment you may use a dictionary or English-language Internet sources to help you.

a List all words you know that have to do with communication.

b How much time do you spend on your smartphone? If you don’t have a smartphone: how much time do you spend on the internet? Compare your answers with your classmates. Write down and/or discuss what you would do with this time if you didn’t have a smartphone or internet.

**The Flip Side of Smartphones**

Most people would be lost today without mobile phones. Cell phones and other mobile devices are often the main ways people use to keep in contact with each other. Communication has changed a lot over the past 200 years. Before the 1800s people only communicated by letters. These often would get lost and took a great deal of time. Other forms of communication included smoke signals and signal fires to send messages quickly from a distance. They were only for very simple messages.

Things quickly changed with the invention of a new machine. It made communication happen almost immediately and could work over great distances. This machine was called the telegraph. From then on, new inventions followed one another quickly. The first working telegraph was built in 1816. The electric telephone was invented in the 1870s. Better and better telephones were made.

As early as 1917, Finnish inventor Eric Tigerstedt filed a patent for a “pocket-size folding telephone with a very thin carbon microphone”. It took a while, but then in 1973 the first handheld mobile phone was demonstrated.

Before smartphones, most cell phones could only be used for calls and text messages. Most of them folded in half. This is why they were called flip phones. They became unpopular after smartphones came out.

Today, smartphones sales are declining. It might be because people want back some of the things smartphones take away. These include their attention, privacy and money.

Kaiwei Tang used to design smartphones. Soon, though, he grew to dislike them. He noticed people staring at the little screens everywhere he went. He started to think the smartphone was harmful. Tech companies have admitted that they designed smartphones to keep us hooked.

Tang did a study. He watched what happened when people went without their phones. At first, people told Tang they were bored. After a few minutes, though, they started to pay attention to their surroundings.

Tang met an artist and together they created the “Light Phone”. It was a simple phone that could only make calls. Tang said most of their customers are like him. They are “sick of smartphones, the notifications.”

Smartphones have been around for more than 10 years. Adrian Ward studies the effects of smartphones on the brain. He said it takes time for people to notice the bad effects.

One research company says the sales of simple phones have gone up. More and more people are sharing stories about giving up their smartphones. Many of them said they liked the experience. They were more focused. They had more time for friends and family. Their minds were free to wander.

Nokia, a technology company, recently re-released its “banana phone”. This yellow slider phone was popular back in the late 1990s. It is not exactly the same phone, though. This device allows users to check their social media pages. It also has a nice camera.

So, it is more like a smartphone in disguise. Other phone companies are also making flip phones with extra features. These phones will probably not solve all the problems of smartphones.

Some phones now have extra features to help solve these problems. One example is the “Do Not Disturb” feature. It stops notifications. Another is the “Screen Time” app. It shows how much time people spend on their phones.

Based on: www.pbs.org

Assignment 2

Read the text. Connect the words and expressions that have the same meaning in the text.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. to get lost
 | 1. an object or machine that has been made for a special purpose
 |
| 1. immediately
 | 1. at once; right away
 |
| 1. pocket-size
 | 1. becoming less
 |
| 1. handheld
 | 1. to end up in a place where nobody can find something
 |
| 1. declining
 | 1. enjoying something so much that you cannot stop using it
 |
| 1. to dislike
 | 1. feeling unhappy because you have nothing to do
 |
| 1. hooked
 | 1. giving a lot of attention to one particular thing
 |
| 1. bored
 | 1. made to be used while you hold it in your hands
 |
| 1. notifications
 | 1. made to look like something else
 |
| 1. focused
 | 1. messages that tell you about activity on one of your social media accounts
 |
| 1. device
 | 1. to not like something or someone
 |
| 1. in disguise
 | 1. small enough to be carried in a pocket
 |

Assignment 3

a Select the true statements.

1 Without mobile phones people cannot find their way.

2 Mobile phones that can be folded in half are called flip phones.

3 Some people are unhappy with their smartphone because it takes away their attention.

4 People without smartphones are quickly bored.

5 Smartpones are designed to make people sick and take away their money

6 You can install special apps to help you use your smartphone less.

b Why did Kaiwei Tang create the “Light Phone”?

1 He thought people should avoid using their phones for calls.

2 He wanted to make money with a less boring type of smartphone.

3 He was interested in getting more people hooked to their phones.

4 He was worried about the unhealthy effects of smartphones.

c Some people started to use a simple phone. What effect dit it have on them?

1 They can focus better and are spending more time with friends and family.

2 They enjoy the many features and social media apps on these phones.

3 They have started to pay less attention to their surroundings.

4 They use it to make more pictures and videos of their friends and family.