

Sample Essay

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PROMT:

Cellphones have become a major part of people’s lives over the past decade. Some people argue that this is a good thing because there are many practical uses for them. Others feel that smartphones, with their many functions and focus on providing entertainment are in fact making people “dumber” and are therefore detrimental to society. Is the widespread use of cellphones beneficial or detrimental to society?

Change is often uncomfortable, and rapid technological change can be very uncomfortable indeed. Complaints about how technology is corrupting society date back at least as far as the beginning of the industrial revolution. Cell phones are arguably the greatest technological leap forward of the past several centuries, so it is not surprising that they face a high degree of scrutiny from people who are slow to adapt to change. Although there are some potential downsides, the benefits of cellphones greatly outweigh the drawbacks.

The first and most obvious way that cell phones have benefited people is that they have made personal communication much easier. Until a short time ago, once people were away from a fixed location such as their home or workplace, it was very difficult or impossible to reach them by phone. These days, people who carry cell phones are virtually always available, no matter where in the world they are, and, in turn, are also able to reach out and communicate with others. In an age when travel and national and international immigration are more common than ever before, phones lessen the distances between people, and keep them close, at least in spirit.

The benefits of increased communication are not limited to social situations. Many companies have embraced cell phone technology, and many processes and procedures are now very much more convenient than in the past. An example of this is the online payment apps that have become more common in recent years. It is now possible to use one’s phone to pay for items, reducing the need to carry cash. Phones can also act as an access pass to ticketed events, a portable address book, and a means of finding directions. Additionally, emergency services are also much easier to contact, which is an obvious advantage. All of these functions are real benefits to society.

Despite these benefits, there are those who resist the use of cell phones. These people seem to focus only on the entertainment value of these phones, and not on the real benefits that they provide. It is easy to imagine similar arguments being made against the widespread adoption of printed books a few hundred years ago. Yes, it is possible for publishing technology to be used in silly, childish ways, but that is no reason to halt the production of books. And yet, these are the same types of reasons that opponents of cell phones often cite. People often waste hours playing games and fooling around on cell phones, but is that really any different than reading escapist literature?

While it is true that change is uncomfortable for some, society cannot allow its slowest, most conservative members to set the pace of change and development. If people had always done this, society would have developed very differently, and very much more slowly. It is true that cell phones can be used for simpleminded, crude, vacuous entertainment, but that is no reason to take a dim view of the devices as a whole. Many pieces of technology can be used in better or worse ways, and cell phones are no different. It is the user, not the tool, that decides how a tool is used.