

Grades 9 and 10 English Language Arts, Week One

Overview: This lesson will engage students by having them debate one of their favorite topics—cell phones. Additionally, the texts focus on arguments that cover both sides of an issue and the tasks include diagnosing and evaluating claims and evidence used in an argument, as well as writing to include evidence in a response to an argument. This week’s language and mechanics practice focuses on the use of parallel structure—a grammatical form used frequently for rhetorical emphasis.

Florida Standards Covered: LAFS.910.RI.3.8 Delineate and evaluate the claims and evidence used in a text; LAFS.910.RI.1.2 Evaluating central ideas and claims in a text; LAFS.910.RI.2.6 Understanding the use of rhetoric; LAFS.910.L.1.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Part One: Reading Comprehension Skills

“Are Smartphones Making Us Stupid?” Two Article Analysis Notes and Debate Organizer

- 1. Pre-Reading Activity: Answer the following questions BEFORE reading the articles. Use 1-2 complete sentences for your answer.**
 - Do you own a smartphone? If yes, for how long have you had one?
 - Could you live or function daily without your smartphone?
 - Do you use your smartphone to prevent boredom?
- 2. Next, ask yourself, “When we make an argument, how do we convince someone to see our point of view?” BEFORE reading the articles, read through the notes below about ways we make arguments.**
 - Writers of arguments sometimes use **Emotional Appeals**. Emotional appeals are strategies which play upon the basic emotions of the reader, listener, or viewer. An example of an emotional appeal would be an author telling a sad story about an event to convince readers to donate to a charitable cause. Additional examples of emotional appeals are below.
 - *A grocery store commercial that shows a happy family sitting around the table at Thanksgiving.*
 - *A real estate ad that shows a happy young family with children moving into the home of their dreams.*
 - *A politician who argues that the other party is going to cut spending and that will have a negative impact on grandmothers living on social security.*
 - Writers of argument sometimes use **Logical Appeals**. Logical appeals include research, facts, and statistics, or a seemingly sensible connection of ideas that would persuade the reader. An example of a logical appeal would be a commercial or print advertisement that convinces the viewer or reader to buy a product based on statistics from a doctor’s study. Additional examples of logical appeals are below.
 - *A teenager argues that their parents should buy them a car because, on average, the parents are currently spending in excess of four hours per week driving the teen to extracurricular activities.*
 - *A politician argues for a tax increase because 68% of the roads in a county are in need of major repair.*
 - Writers of arguments sometime use **Ethical Appeals**. Ethical appeals establish the writer a fair, open-minded, and credible or trustworthy. An example of an ethical appeal would be an author using their title or credential (for example, Ph.D., M.D.) or a personal experience with an event (“I myself have seen that...”) to convince the reader. Additional examples of ethical appeals are below.
 - *"If my years as a Marine taught me anything, it's that caution is the best policy in this sort of situation."*
 - *"If my age doesn't convince you that I know what I'm talking about, at least consider that I am your grandfather and I only want the best for you."*
 - *"If you're still unsure, please consider that my advanced degree and fieldwork speak for themselves."*
 - Writers of argument sometimes use **Counterarguments**. Counterarguments use the opposite side of an argument to disprove the opposition’s point. An example of using a counterargument is below.
 - *A child argues with a parent to get a pet cat. The parent reminds the child that his sister is allergic to cats. The child counters that his sister has been around cats at other peoples’ houses without a problem, and that there are breeds of cats which are hypoallergenic.*
- 3. Now, read the two articles. As you read, annotate (code, underline, or highlight the text) to note where each author is using the strategies for argument outlined in the notes above.**

STUDENT NAME _____

4. After reading and annotating the article, complete the graphic organizer on the following pages to analyze and reflect upon the two arguments.

Analyzing Argumentative Claims

Read the two-article debate about smartphones from the *New York Times Upfront*. Then, follow the directions below to analyze each author's claims and decide who makes a stronger case.

AUTHOR: Andrew Keen author, <i>The Internet Is Not the Answer</i>	AUTHOR: David Weinberger Berkman Center for Internet & Society, Harvard University
Author's main claim or argument in the debate:	Author's main claim or argument in the debate:
REASON 1: Name one reason the author presents for their argument. List evidence the author gives to support reason 1.	REASON 1: Name one reason the author presents for their argument. List evidence the author gives to support reason 1.
REASON 2: Name another reason the author presents for their argument. List evidence the author gives to support reason 2.	REASON 2: Name another reason the author presents for their argument. List evidence the author gives to support reason 2.

STUDENT NAME _____

<p>REASON 3: If the author provides one, name a third reason the author presents for their argument.</p> <p>List evidence the author gives to support reason 3.</p>	<p>REASON 3: If the author provides one, name a third reason the author presents for their argument.</p> <p>List evidence the author gives to support reason 3.</p>
<p>Which persuasive devices does the author use?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> appeals to emotions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> appeals to logic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> appeals to ethics</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> counterargument</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other: _____</p>	<p>Which persuasive devices does the author use?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> appeals to emotions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> appeals to logic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> appeals to ethics</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> counterargument</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other: _____</p>
<p>Evaluate: Which author do you think makes his case more effectively? What were the aspects of his argument that made it stronger than the opposing argument? Write your response on a separate sheet of paper.</p> <p>Respond: Consider which side of the argument you disagree with. Write a brief response (5-7 sentences) directed at the writer in which you address your disagreement. You should include evidence from both the debate and your own personal experience. This should be written on the same piece of paper as your evaluation.</p>	

Debate

Are Smartphones Making Us Stupid?

Sixty-four percent of Americans own smartphones, according to a recent survey. Among young people, the number is even higher: 85 percent. We carry them everywhere and use them for everything from getting directions to watching videos. But some believe that constant connectivity and easy access to dizzying amounts of information is not without drawbacks. Two technology experts face off on the effect these ubiquitous devices are having on our brains.

Analyze the arguments, cast your vote, and see instant results at upfrontmagazine.com



YES The idea that smartphones are making us stupid might, at first, sound a little absurd. After all, that iPhone or Samsung Galaxy in your pocket is actually an incredibly sophisticated networked computer and camera with the power to immediately connect with anyone around the world. You could write a novel, edit a movie, or solve a complex math problem on this magical device.

But, of course, you *aren't* writing novels, editing movies, or solving complex math problems with your smartphone. Instead, you're using your incredibly sophisticated pocket computer to Tweet the details of what you just ate, check updates on Facebook, and post your disappearing Snapchat photos from last night's school dance. Then there's all those WhatsApp instant messages you so need to send each hour to your girlfriend or boyfriend and all those selfies—a collective 93 million a day in 2014—that you post daily on Instagram.

Our smartphones are making us more and more wrapped up in ourselves.

So rather than transforming us into Albert Einstein, Steven Spielberg, or Toni Morrison, our smartphones are actually making us more wrapped up in ourselves. In the end, all we are left with is more and more intimacy with our own lives and less and less knowledge of the wider world around us.

And that, I'm afraid, is why smartphones are making us stupid.

You see, technology doesn't exist in a vacuum, independently of the world; technology is only as good as how we use it. Smartphones could, of course, make us smarter if we use them *smartly*. But most of us don't, because we are locked in the trivia of our own lives. Our culture lends itself to instant gratification, the trivialization of serious subjects, and, above all, what psychologists call "narcissism"—unhealthily excessive interest in oneself. Smartphones are both a cause and a consequence of our selfie-obsessed culture. Unfortunately, they are, indeed, making us dumber and dumber. •

— ANDREW KEEN
Author, *The Internet Is Not the Answer*

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Smartphones BY THE NUMBERS

**1.9
billion**

Estimated number of smartphone users worldwide, almost double the number in 2012.

46%

Percentage of American smartphone users who say they can't live without their phones.

93%

Percentage of young smartphone users in the U.S. who use their phones to prevent boredom.

SOURCES: STATISTA;
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

NO Twenty-five years ago, before the Internet was known to everyone, if someone had advertised a "universal answers machine" that fits in your pocket, it would have been hailed as a miracle. If that machine also let you discover music, navigate any city or town, keep up with the news, read books, and become a virtual reality headset—check out Google Cardboard—it would have been called "a pocket university" that's ushering in a new age of intelligence.

Now, of course, we take all that—and more—for granted. But we shouldn't.

The fact that we can ask a question and get an answer, wherever we are, means that our discussions can get past disputes over facts so that we can talk about the real issues: what we make of the facts.

Because these devices are always with us, we can keep up with real-time events. We can follow news as it's unfolding. It also means that if we want to explore an idea, we can always find the right pages or podcasts.

Since our smartphones have GPS built into them, the knowledge they give us can be specific to our location.

Getting answers immediately means our discussions can get past disputes over facts.

This is convenient if we're looking for a restaurant or an ATM, but it also means our phones can point us to places to explore we otherwise would have missed, such as a little-known nearby museum or historical site.

Want to bring 20 books with you on a trip? Go ahead; they won't add an ounce to your bags or your phone. Even if you're not sure you're going to like a book, you might as well bring it along and give it a try. Being able to browse easily gives us more opportunities to become smarter.

And while many of us use our phones primarily to keep in touch with our friends, even that can nourish our brains: Social networking is often how people share the links and ideas that matter to them. When we read the articles and watch the videos our friends post, we learn more about the world.

More access to more information, ideas, and discussions? Sounds like an opportunity for smartness—but only if we choose to take it. •

—DAVID WEINBERGER
Berkman Center for Internet & Society, Harvard University

Part Two: Practice in Language and Mechanics

Parallelism: Overview, Notes, and Examples

Parallel sentence elements in grammar are just like parallel lines in geometry: they face the same direction and never meet.

More precisely, in grammar, it's less about meeting and more about balance. Parallelism in grammar is defined as two or more phrases or clauses in a sentence that have the same grammatical structure. Examples of common issues in parallel grammatical structure are below.

Issue One: Verb Forms

Incorrect: "Olympic athletes usually like practicing, competing, and to eat ice cream sandwiches."
In this sentence, *practicing* and *competing* are gerunds (verbs functioning as nouns) and "to eat" is an infinitive. It sounds pretty awkward—just like being an athlete with a sweet tooth.

Correct: "Olympic athletes usually like practicing, competing, and eating ice cream sandwiches." **or** "Olympic athletes usually like to practice, compete, and eat ice cream sandwiches."

Issue Two: Nouns vs. Verbs

Incorrect: For dinner we like lamb chops and to fry brussel sprouts.
Lamb chops is a noun. *Brussel sprouts* is a noun too, but *to fry* is a verb.

Correct: "For dinner we like lamb chops and brussel sprouts." **or** "For dinner we like to grill lamb chops and fry brussel sprouts."

Issue Three: Noun Number

Incorrect: Public transit such as buses or a train can help reduce air pollution.
Multiple buses, one train? That's not going to solve any environmental issues.

Correct: Public transit such as buses or trains can help reduce air pollution.

Issue Four: Subject Matter

Incorrect: He decided to cover the gown in sequins, and had a steak for dinner.
Huh? Unless being a fabulous designer is a recipe for steak, these two actions don't seem to have much in common. Parallelism in subject matter means that everything discussed in a sentence should have at least some amount of clarity and relatedness.

Correct: "He decided to cover the gown in sequins, and to celebrate, he had a steak for dinner."
Or "He was hungry after he covered the gown in sequins, so he had a steak for dinner."

The possible connections are endless, but for proper parallelism, that connection must be clear to the reader.

On the following page, complete the exercises for practicing writing with parallel structure.

Exercise Set One: Rewrite each sentence to correct issues in parallel grammatical structure.

1. The chapter "Taking Notes" gives useful hints, such as making notes that are brief, well organization, and writing in your own words.
2. The college was founded by Amos P. Thompkins, who was a captain of industry, went to college himself, and a philanthropist.
3. This computer is good-looking, economical, and you can take it anywhere you want.
4. Mr. Harris is both interested in and familiarly is informed about the problem involved.
5. The book was written in India, translated in Germany, and a company in England published it.
6. An actor knows how to memorize his lines and getting into character.
7. The writer was brilliant but a recluse.
8. Marcie studied for the test by reviewing her class notes and she read her textbook.

Exercise Set Two: Choose the sentence that demonstrates correct parallelism.

9. A. Phuong Tran has wit, charm, and she has an extremely pleasant personality.
B. Phuong Tran has wit, charm, and a pleasing personality.
10. A. In English class, Tashonda learned to read poems critically and to appreciate good prose.
B. In English class, Tashonda learned to read poems critically and she appreciated good prose.
11. A. He wanted three things out of college: to learn a skill, to make good friends, and to learn about life.
B. He wanted three things out of college: to learn a skill, to make good friends, and learning about life.
12. A. Coach Espinoza was a brilliant strategist, a caring mentor, and a wise friend.
B. Coach Espinoza was a brilliant strategist, a caring mentor, and friend.
13. A. We found the film repulsive, offensive, and we thought it was embarrassing.
B. We found the film repulsive, offensive, and embarrassing.
14. A. Mr. Nguyen kept his store clean, neat, and he made it conveniently arranged.
B. Mr. Nguyen kept his store clean, neat, and conveniently arranged.
15. A. Professor Ali rewarded his students for working hard on the final project and going beyond the call of duty.
B. Professor Ali rewarded his students for their hard work on the final project and going beyond the call of duty.
16. A. There's nothing I like better than finding a good trout stream, setting up camp, and spending a couple of days fishing.
B. There's nothing I like better than finding a good trout stream, setting up camp, and to spend a couple of days fishing.

Exercise Three: Identifying Parallelism

Now that you have practiced with using parallel structure, you will provide **FOUR** examples of sentences using parallel structure. Your examples can be original ones you write, examples from advertisements, or examples from poetry and song lyrics. You can write your examples in the space below.

Need help identifying examples of parallelism in the real world? See the advertisement and lyric examples below. Can you identify the parallel elements of each?



"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today." -Martin Luther King, Jr.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way... *-A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

