



Proficient | Exemplar Essay

Call or Text

A Time and Place for Each



Clarity and Focus

A clear and focused central idea is present (“Before you decide what is best for you, think about the many advantages and disadvantages when it comes to texting and phone calls”) and engages the audience. The writer thoroughly addresses the demands of the prompt throughout the essay and fulfills the writing purpose.



Development

The central idea is developed with well-chosen and relevant examples. The writer addresses the advantages and disadvantages of texting, citing appropriate evidence for support (“texting and driving has become a huge problem,” “In 2011, at least 23% of all fatal car crashes were texting related”). The same depth is not apparent for calling, as the details read more like a list (“If you have an accent, or if you just had a tooth pulled,” “Or if you don’t have a lot of time to talk”) with only one piece of paraphrased evidence (Shelly Turkle). An equally compelling and thoroughly developed approach to both sides would move this essay to a 4.



Organization

The organizational structure helps to make important connections between ideas and create a sense of cohesion throughout the essay. Appropriate transitions show relationships between and among complex ideas (“In addition,” “Studies show,” “These are important things to consider,” “However”). The introductory and concluding paragraphs thoughtfully support the ideas presented.



Language and Style

The writer maintains an objective tone throughout. Word choice (“efficiently,” “informative,” “elaborating”) and style are appropriate for the audience and the complexity of the topic. Sentence structure is adequately varied, though sometimes repetitive (“If you...”). More precise language (and considering a shift from the use of second-person pronouns) would move this essay to a 4.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait ‘looks like’ in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see “25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays” by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

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Today, Americans use their phones for everything. People use them to pay bills, shop, control the locks on their homes, and communicate with friends and family using text or by calling. However with any kind of technology, there are advantages and disadvantages to consider. Depending on your view of these devices, the good might outweigh the bad or vice versa. Before you decide what is best for you, think about the many advantages and disadvantages when it comes to texting and phone calls.

In the article, "One-third of Americans Prefer Texts to Voice Calls," it says that "text messaging encourages briefer, more efficient exchanges of information" suggesting that "the main reasons why many people prefer getting text messages over voice calls are related to time." We are all busy with our everyday lives so we need to share information more efficiently. Texting is great when you are in a loud area and unable to be heard, or if you are in a silent room and can't talk. If you are a planning a party, you can send out a group message, informative enough for all to understand. There are some disadvantages to communicating through texting. You never really know the way someone is feeling over text, even with over 300 emojis. Sarcasm is often mistaken for rudeness and it's easier to say things you might not mean. In addition, texting and driving has become a huge problem and has taken the life of many people. In 2011, at least 23% of all fatal car crashes were texting related. That's 1.3 million crashes. That number is ridiculously high and can be easily fixed by not texting while driving. Studies show that texting while driving is much more dangerous than making a phone call while driving because your eyes are not on the road, but instead on your screen. These are important things to consider when you are debating between a call and a text.

The main advantages of talking on the phone are that you can speak faster and hear the person's tone. You can communicate much faster by elaborating on what you say with quick responses. If you have a headset, you can easily talk aloud while on the move. If you have something to say, you can speak quickly and not have to take the time to type it out and wait for a response. Also, calling people you love helps you to stay connected to them and to hear their voices and emotions. Sherry Turkle is an MIT psychologist and she says that talking on the phone teaches kids important communication skills. However, there are some disadvantages of the phone call of course. It takes up all your minutes and your emotions are visible in your voice even if you don't want them to be. If you have an accent, or if you just had a tooth pulled, you may be hard to understand. Or if you don't have a lot of time to talk, you don't want to be rude and hang up.

Each way has its own advantages and disadvantages, but each is a useful way of delivering a message. Texting is faster and very efficient, but can prevent you from understanding someone's feelings and can be very dangerous. If you choose calling, it is also fast and easy, and lets you hear someone's happiness or sadness, but it can be pricey. It is really the situation that calls for its own method. There is a time and place for everything, and we need to learn when and where to do both properly.