

## Until social-media giants take responsibility for the harm they cause, I support Australia's age ban

### Level 3: Advanced

**Article summary:** The article explains the author's rationale for supporting Australia's social-media age ban.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Speaking, Writing

**Language focus:** Suffix *-tion*

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

#### 1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to get students to reflect on their social-media habits and how their use affects their emotional health and wellbeing. Use these questions as a springboard for a pair, group or class discussion about the role of social media in daily life, its impact on personal relationships, and how people might adapt to life without it. Encourage students to express and justify their opinions.

#### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to highlight the key words in the article.

**Key:**

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>weaponise</i>      | 10. <i>malleable</i>       |
| 2. <i>copious</i>        | 11. <i>proliferate</i>     |
| 3. <i>addictive</i>      | 12. <i>mandate</i>         |
| 4. <i>dopamine</i>       | 13. <i>detrimental</i>     |
| 5. <i>echo chamber</i>   | 14. <i>romanticisation</i> |
| 6. <i>polarisation</i>   | 15. <i>normalisation</i>   |
| 7. <i>misinformation</i> |                            |
| 8. <i>disinformation</i> |                            |
| 9. <i>counteract</i>     |                            |

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

**Key:**

- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>addictive</i>       | 6. <i>normalisation</i> |
| 2. <i>copious</i>         | 7. <i>proliferate</i>   |
| 3. <i>counteract</i>      | 8. <i>weaponise</i>     |
| 4. <i>romanticisation</i> | 9. <i>dopamine</i>      |
| 5. <i>detrimental</i>     |                         |

#### 3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. They may do this in different ways, e.g. in item 1, they may say, 'Forty-two per cent of young people were positive about the ban.'

**Key (suggested answers):**

- 42 per cent
- because there have always been age restrictions and they're easy to evade
- a lack of education about the ban and looking for alternative ways to socialise online
- to give parents greater control
- in 2016
- content based on a user's interactions and engagement
- They risk harming children by getting them hooked on dopamine from unlimited fast-paced content.
- They create echo chambers, provide intense confirmation bias, and allow hateful and extremist rhetoric.
- Mandated consent education began with a social-media campaign.
- It could put social-media platforms on notice and may give parents confidence to restrict the age their children join platforms.

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#### 4. Key language

- a. The activity gives students an opportunity to practise using the suffix *-tion* with more advanced vocabulary. Remind students that sometimes you must add *-ation*. You may wish to remind students that some words (like *misinform* and *disinform*) are less commonly used as verbs in everyday speech but are still valid. You may also want to note that *romanticise* and *idealise* follow a pattern where *-isation* is replaced with *-ise* (or *-ize* in American English). Remind students about the spelling difference between American and British English for words like *normalize / normalise*. As an extension activity, ask students to look for these examples in the article.

**Key:**

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. <i>restrict</i>  | 6. <i>disinform</i>   |
| 2. <i>interact</i>  | 7. <i>frustrate</i>   |
| 3. <i>confirm</i>   | 8. <i>idealise</i>    |
| 4. <i>polarise</i>  | 9. <i>romanticise</i> |
| 5. <i>misinform</i> | 10. <i>normalise</i>  |

- b. Students have the opportunity to add the suffix in this activity. Remind students of the different spelling rules that apply. Point out that for most of these words, we simply remove the *e* at the end of the verb and add *-tion* or *-ion*.

**Key:**

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>education</i>   | 4. <i>prevention</i>    |
| 2. <i>interaction</i> | 5. <i>demonstration</i> |
| 3. <i>regulation</i>  | 6. <i>proliferation</i> |

- c. Students have an opportunity to choose nouns with the suffix *-tion* and write sentences using them. Invite students to challenge themselves and get creative as they write their own sentences. Save some time for students to share examples of their work. As an extension activity, ask students to think of other nouns ending in *-tion* or *-ation*.

#### 5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

#### 6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to research more about the effects of social media on mental health. They can choose to learn more about its particular impact on tweens and teens, or they can research it more generally. Ask them to answer one or more of the questions.
- b. Students could then present their reports to the class. Encourage students to include facts and statistics when they share their research findings. Also encourage them to share their opinions and give reasons to support their answers.