

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

Level 1: Elementary

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: Suffixes *-ful* and *-less*

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>ban</i> | 6. <i>socialise</i> |
| 2. <i>social media</i> | 7. <i>algorithm</i> |
| 3. <i>survey</i> | 8. <i>addictive</i> |
| 4. <i>neutral</i> | 9. <i>media literacy</i> |
| 5. <i>platform</i> | 10. <i>consent</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>ban</i> | 4. <i>media literacy</i> |
| 2. <i>consent</i> | 5. <i>neutral</i> |
| 3. <i>addictive</i> | 6. <i>platform</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 minimums and they are easy to avoid
- If they don't understand why there's a ban and without alternatives to socialise online.
- to give parents more control
- 2016
- a user's habits
- They risk harming children by providing them with endless content.
- providing endless content; telling us we are right when we're wrong; more hate speech; making people more divided
- consent education
- It is a warning, to social-media platforms and may help parents confidence to decide when their children join platforms.

4. Key language

- a. The activity gives students an opportunity to practise using the suffixes *-ful* and *-less*. You may wish to remind students that *-ful* means *full of* or *with* and *-less* means *without end* or *missing*. You may wish to ask students to discuss the differences in meaning and / or have them work in pairs to write sentences to illustrate this. As an extension activity, ask students to think of other words they know with these suffixes.

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

Level 1: Elementary

Key:

1. *harmful, harmless*
2. *careful, careless*
3. *hopeful, hopeless*
4. *colourful, colourless*

- b. Students have the opportunity to work with the suffixes some more. These examples do not have an equivalent opposite. As an extension activity, ask students to use a thesaurus to find an opposite.

Key:

1. *endless*
2. *peaceful*
3. *homeless*
4. *beautiful*

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.