Writing/Reading Journal Activities

For each week you need to complete the activity listed. These activities are to be completed in your writing journals. They will be due every Thursday.

**Week 6: 10th of March**

**Read the paragraphs below and answer the questions that follow.**

Allowing a child to have a cell phone will help the child to learn to be responsible. Today’s mobile devices are somewhat delicate and can be expensive. Children will have to exercise responsibility to take care of their phone and be sure not to damage it. Additionally, most phone plans supply a limited amount of usage. Users must responsibly monitor their time spent talking, texting, and web browsing in order to avoid additional charges. As children grow accustomed to the demands of having a cell phone, this newly learned responsibility may even bleed over into other areas of his life.

On the other hand, there are those who believe young people should not have cell phones because children will waste their time engrossed in the device. The time spent with the cell phone will therefore detract from family and school work time. Rather than using the phone responsibly, children might waste their time downloading expensive apps and playing games. As a result, students’ grades might fall through a failure to complete homework assignments and study. In addition, by choosing to play with their phone rather than engage with their families, students may not develop necessary social skills.

1. **What are some of the features of argumentative writing?**
2. **What do you think the thesis statement of this essay might be? (The thesis statement is the main claim that is being debated, e.g. ‘Watching television every night is bad for children.’)**
3. **In one sentence, summarise what the first paragraph is about, stating if the argument is for or against.**
4. **In one sentence, summarise what the second paragraph is about, stating if the argument is for or against.**
5. **Which argument did you find most convincing, paragraph one or paragraph two? Give a reason for your answer.**

**Week 7: 17th of March**

Write one paragraph (100-150 words) arguing in support of **or** against one of the following statements:

* The legal age of driving in Qatar should be lowered to 15.
* Extra-curricular activities distract young people from studying their core subjects.
* Music should be a mandatory subject in all secondary schools.
* Technology is the most important educational tool we have.
* It’s no longer important for students to learn correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.

**Week 8: 24th of March**

Formal Style

Here is a letter to a newspaper explaining why teenagers should be allowed to vote in the election. The ideas are good, but the writing is too informal. Rewrite the letter using formal language. Read the list below for notes.

Hi there,(1)

Well (2), I think that teenagers have just as much right to vote in an election as someone who's (3) as old as the hills! (4) They live in the country too, you know! (5) And (6) they're (7) the future! (8) So they're (9) bound to care about what's (10) going to happen to the country they live in when they're grown-up. But (11) some people think that teenagers are away with the fairies (12) when it comes to important things like voting. But (13) not all of us are. And anyway you know some grown ups are like that too (14). So (15) I think teenagers should be given a chance.

Cheers, (16)

Andrew

NOTES:

1. 'Dear Sir', is a more formal way to begin a letter.

2. This word needs to be deleted. It's far too chatty and informal.

3. This should be written out in full: 'who is'.

4. This is a cliché and sounds quite disrespectful. It would be better to just say elderly. The exclamation mark should be changed to a full stop too.

5. 'You know' is too chatty. Delete it and the exclamation mark that follows.

6. 'In addition' would be a more formal way to begin this sentence.

7. This should be written out in full: 'they are'

8. Exclamation marks are too informal.

9. This should be written out in full: 'they are'

10. This should be written out in full: 'what is'

11. Avoid starting sentences with 'but' in formal writing. You could use 'on the other hand' to link the sentence to the previous idea.

12. This is a cliché. 'Irresponsible' sounds more formal.

13. Rather than 'but' you could use 'though' at the end of the sentence instead.

14. This sentence doesn't sound like a sensible argument. It starts with 'And' whilst 'anyway' and 'you know' are unnecessary. 'Like that' has no power and is unclear. 'Immature' might be a better word to use instead.

15. 'In conclusion' is a more formal way to sum up an argument.

16. Far too informal. 'Yours sincerely' or 'yours faithfully' is the usual way to end a formal letter.

**Week 9: 31st of March**

Look back at the statements from the Week 7 homework. Choose a different topic from last time and write one paragraph (100-150 words) arguing in support of **or** against your chosen statement.