

Student Name: _____
Teacher: _____ Period: _____
Date: _____

SECTION 1: Selected-Response Assessment Questions

Directions: Read the following article to answer questions below.

New Debate: Password Protected

Do schools have the right to monitor students' online activity?

When you post a message on a social networking site, you probably don't expect your teacher or principal to read it. Neither did a 12-year-old girl in Minnesota who wrote an angry message about a fellow student on her Facebook page. When school authorities read that note and other inappropriate messages written by the student, they demanded that she give them her password.

That incident, which led the American Civil Liberties Union to file a lawsuit, is one of several recent cases in which schools have disciplined students for bad online behavior outside of school. Many people believe schools have the right to punish students if their Internet activity leads to bullying or class disruptions. Others think that punishing students for what they do on the Web is the responsibility of parents, not schools.

Do schools have the right to monitor students' online activity? *Current Events* student reporters Joseph Maneen and Akash Bagaria each posted a side.

Watch What You Type

I believe schools have the right to monitor students' online activity. Young people need to learn that when you post something on the Internet, there are consequences. Kids should not be misbehaving on social networking sites in the first place.

Second, inappropriate online activity often comes in the form of cyberbullying. Fourteen states have passed anti-cyberbullying laws, and other states are considering them. If a school catches a student bullying someone online before the police do, the student is less likely to end up in legal trouble.

Lastly, schools should have the right to punish students for online activity because doing so might save lives. If a student is bothering another student, the school could address the problem before the dispute gets physical. Peter Ivancic, a teacher from Haverhill, Mass., agrees. "If the students have done something worth taking the [social networking site] password, of course the school should take it," he says.

Freedom Comes First

Schools do not have the right to monitor what students do online outside of school. Monitoring students' online activity is an invasion of privacy and a violation of freedom of speech. Imagine teachers checking students' cell phones or spying on their after-school conversations. Tracking students on the Internet is essentially the same thing.

There should be a level of trust between teachers and students. Trust strengthens people's values of commitment and responsibility. Teachers should have faith that their students will follow the honor code and not partake in anything immoral online.

Finally, the role of educators is to teach, not to monitor kids outside the classroom. Parents should oversee their children's actions and guide them in the right direction. Maria Shepard, a teacher at Princeton Day School in New Jersey, agrees. "If the device is not school-owned and is not being used on school campus, schools [should not] monitor [a] student's online activity. ... If an issue arises, the student's parents could manage it."

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7.L.4

1. In the sentence, “Trust strengthens people’s values of **commitment** and responsibility,” the word **commitment** means

- A. loyalty B. privacy C. separation D. competition

7.L.4

2. In the sentence, “Monitoring students’ online activity is an **invasion of privacy** and a violation of freedom of speech,” the phrase **invasion of privacy** means:

- A. when a bunch of ants invade your house or picnic
 B. when a military force invades a hostile situation
 C. when unauthorized persons or groups invade others’ lives
 D. when a principal goes through a student’s discipline records

7.RL.8

Read the following statements and determine if they are strong or weak statements.

- A. strong B. weak

3. _____ Teachers should have faith that their students will follow the honor code and not partake in anything immoral online.
 4. _____ Monitoring students’ online activity is an invasion of privacy and a violation of freedom of speech.
 5. _____ Kids should not be misbehaving on social networking sites in the first place.
 6. _____ Fourteen states have passed anti-cyberbullying laws, and other states are considering them.
 7. _____ Lastly, schools should have the right to punish students for online activity because doing so might save lives.

7.RL.1

8. The passage shows two arguments that answer the question: Should schools have the right to monitor students’ online activity? Which of the following are arguments against schools having the right to monitor students’ online activity? Select all that apply.

- A. monitoring students’ online activity violates their freedom of speech
 B. students need to learn that there are consequences to their actions
 C. teachers don’t have the right to monitor students outside of school
 D. parents, not educators, should oversee their children’s actions

7.W.9

9. The author enhances the reader’s understanding of the debate in all of the following ways (Select all that apply)

- A. by showing both sides of this argument
 B. by including quotes from educators
 C. by stating several facts about the issue
 D. by showing why one side is right

News Debate: Firefight

Should teens play violent video games?

Warning! Your favorite video games may be hazardous to your health. Call of Duty, Halo, and other top titles arm players with machine guns and similar deadly weapons and send them in search of enemies. Often the more people players gun down, the more points they earn.

The violent games are popular with teens and adults alike, but they don't score big with everyone. Some researchers and lawmakers say the gory games make teens aggressive and violent. They argue that young people shouldn't be allowed to play them without parental consent.

Other researchers disagree, however. They say violent video games are just that—games—and that playing them is no more harmful than watching graphic movies or TV shows. Even the U.S. Supreme Court justices are sticking up for the games. The nation's top judges overturned a California law that barred stores from selling violent video games to minors.

What do you think? Are the intense games harmless fun or hazardous to your health?

Game Stop ...

Violent video games can be just as dangerous as the assault rifles used to gun down the enemy in Medal of Honor, some researchers say. Psychologists Douglas A. Gentile and Craig A. Anderson have been studying the effects of the games for more than 30 years. The Iowa State University professors recently analyzed more than 130 studies of video games and violence. "[We] found consistent evidence that violent games increase desensitization [and] aggressive thoughts, feelings, physiology, and behaviors and decrease helpful behaviors," they say.

Plus, the more teens play, the more the games' savage scenarios sink in, believes Melissa Henson of the Parents Television Council. That group lobbied in support of the California law. When teens play a game repeatedly, the scenarios in it can become a little too real, she says. "Prolonged exposure to violent images, such as violent video games, can result in more aggressive behavior," Henson told Current Events. "[The repetition from playing often] reinforces certain ways of thinking, certain patterns of behavior."

Even some teens think the games are no good. Raven Laddish, 15, of California, avoids titles such as *Grand Theft Auto*, in which players steal cars and shoot people. “Those types of games don’t really appeal to me,” she told [Wired.com](#). “I just don’t feel that it’s a good message to send to teens.”

Play On ...

The assault on violent video games needs to stop, says psychologist Christopher Ferguson. “Although there are some studies that find links between violent games and mild forms of aggression, there are also studies which find no evidence for any links at all,” he told CE. The Texas A&M International University assistant professor is conducting his own long-term study on video games’ effects on youth violence and bullying. “I’ve found ... no evidence of harmful video game or television violence effects,” he says.

Besides, the games’ combative content isn’t anything most teens haven’t seen before, others argue. In the U.S. Supreme Court’s recent ruling, Justice Antonin Scalia pointed out that even fairy tales are violent. In the original version of “Hansel and Gretel,” for example, the children kill the witch by baking her in an oven. “Certainly the books we give children to read—or read to them when they are younger—contain no shortage of gore,” Scalia wrote in the Court’s decision.

When it comes down to it, teens are smart enough to know the difference between real life and fantasy, says Evan Jones, 16. “[I get] an adrenaline rush during the game, and the need to win, but afterwards it’s just fine,” the California teen told reporters. “I see violent video games as an outlet to aggression and stress.”

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“Are Video Games Bad for Me?”

Lots of kids love video games. In fact, they like them so much that they might hear something like this from mom or dad: “Enough! Unplug that thing and find something else to do!”

It can be good advice, even if you were just about to crash through to the next level. Why? Too much of anything is just too much. It’s true that some studies have shown certain video games can improve hand-eye coordination, problem-solving skills, and the mind’s ability to process information. But too much video game playing may lead to health problems.

It’s hard to get enough active play and [exercise](#) if you’re always inside playing video games. And without enough exercise, kids can become [overweight](#).

Really overdoing video games also could affect other important stuff, like friendships and how well a kid does in school. And it's still unclear what effect violent and disturbing games have on a person's **brain**.

But here's the good news: Playing video games some of the time can be OK. Just choose quality games and limit screen time — which includes TV, computer, and video game time combined — to no more than 2 hours a day.

A good game will be the right one for how old you are. Games are rated like movies and your mom or dad can help figure out which ones you should use. If you can choose one that gets you up and moving, that's even better.

You might challenge your mom, dad — or even your grandma — to swing the bat in a game of baseball or try out some fancy moves in one of the dancing games. Could your grandma be a dancing queen? Time to find out!

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7.RI.9

Directions: Read each statement and decide whether the statement applies to one specific passage or both of the passages.

- A. Is true for the article titled, "News Debate: Firefight"
- B. Is true for the article titled, "Are Video Games Bad for Me?"
- C. Is true for both articles

- 10. ____ Discusses negative effects of video games.
- 11. ____ Video games can affect friendships and success in school.
- 12. ____ Violent games are popular with teens and adults.
- 13. ____ Too much video game time can lead to health problems.
- 14. ____ Playing video games can improve hand-eye coordination.

SECTION 2: Short Constructed-Response Assessment Questions

7.RL.1, 7.RI.8, 7.L.1, 7.L.2, 7.W.2

15. In two to three sentences, explain why the American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit. Cite evidence from the text to justify your response.

Short Constructed-Response Scoring Guide:

Proficient

Two or three complete sentences.
Cites evidence to justify his/her explanation.
Minimal errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation.

Progressing

Completes 2 of the "Proficient" criteria
Few errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation.

Beginning

Completes fewer than 2 of the "Proficient" criteria
Task to be repeated after re-teaching

Teacher's Evaluation _____

Comments regarding student's performance:

SECTION 2: Extended Constructed-Response Assessment Item

7.RI.2, 7.W.2, 7.W.4, 7.W.9b

16. In 50 words or more, provide a summary of the two arguments presented in the article and explain your point of view using supporting evidence and/or your own valid reasons.

Extended Constructed-Response Scoring Guide:

Advanced

All Proficient criteria *plus*:
 Writer uses transition words
 Writer uses sentence variety

Proficient

Summarizes both arguments
 States personal point of view
 Uses evidence or strong supporting reasons
 50 word minimum
 Minimal errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation

Progressing

Completes 4 of the “Proficient” criteria
 Several errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation

Beginning

Completes fewer than 4 of the “Proficient” criteria
 Task to be repeated after re-teaching
 Errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation interfere with meaning of the response.

Teacher’s Evaluation _____

Comments regarding student’s performance:

SECTION 3: Essential Questions with Big Idea Responses

Student Directions: Write a response for each of the following Essential Questions. Include supporting details and any vocabulary terms from the unit you have been learning for each response. Your responses will be evaluated using the Scoring Guide on the next page.

7.R.8

17. How does an author justify his opinion (claim) on a topic?

7.SL.3

18. If you were listening to a debate, how would you determine the validity of the speaker's claims on a topic?

Essential Questions-Big Ideas Scoring Guide:

Advanced

All "Proficient" criteria *plus*:
 Makes connections to other areas of school or life
 Provides example(s) as part of explanation

Proficient

States Big Ideas correctly in own words
 Provides supporting detail(s) for each one

Beginning

Completes 1 of the "Proficient" criteria
 Task to be repeated after re-teaching

Teacher's Evaluation _____

Comments regarding student's performance: