

EXTRA TEXTING NOTES NOT COVERED IN CLASS

- Two beneficial uses: student/teacher communication OR classroom learning

There are many beneficial ways to use texting for keeping students up-to-date about assignments, due dates, projects, etc., especially through various on-line services. Texting is also extremely beneficial for communicating with students outside the classroom when they need homework help, have questions, etc.

- Texting in school is Controversial

CON: considered a waste of time, an encouragement to take shortcuts, etc.

“I totally disagree with the thought of incorporating SMS language as part of the school education system as we will begin to lose our own heritage. The Irish Government has tried so hard for years to revive Gaelic as a recognized language in the Republic of Ireland and only now are beginning to see results. Do we really want to come to the day when we have to fight for our language? Studying the likes of Shakespeare will be like tapping into the ice age. It makes me so sad. The creativity and freedom of expression of our children will be diminished as a smiley will take the place of all those hundreds of beautiful words that could express our emotions to a tee; adapted and come about after thousands of years of our developing language to make it what it is today. All I know is that I’d rather be Shakespeare than R2D2 any day.”

- Alicia Zaragoza commenting on a PBS Teachers article, “Should Schools Teach SMS Text Messaging?”

PRO: increases participation, encourages shorthand, develops interest in subject

“If students can understand that when they text, they are indeed WRITING (albeit informally and in condensed form), and that this writing is just another chapter or era in written communication, perhaps they will be more willing to learn more about another relevant and important chapter: formal Standard English of the 21st century. In addition, if teens see their teacher validate their text writing for certain audiences and specialized purposes, it may help students to view and identify themselves for what they are: writers. Perhaps they would be more likely to tackle writing for different audiences and purposes that we do see as important.”

-Kristen Montgomery as quoted in an Edutopia article, “Zero-Thumb Game: How to Tame Texting”

- Object lessons with texting:
 - Study language elements by comparing texting expressions and abbreviations
 - Build critical thinking and deciphering skills by having students try to interpret new or unknown texting abbreviations, or make their own then quiz other students
 - As a class, create a modern dictionary and allow various students to present meanings and uses of symbols, abbreviations, etc. *(this is great for otherwise reluctant students, and you will learn a ton from them!)*
 - 160 character limit of texting can force students to summarize passages

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- Final comments about benefits:
 - Engages otherwise shy students
 - Useful across subject matter
 - Greatly increases student interest and involvement
 - Validates part of student's everyday lives instead of calling it "banned behavior"
 - Can increase multi-tasking skills

-Build confidence by letting students be the teachers; let them prepare a presentation on how it helps them maximize their study time, condense thoughts, brainstorm, etc. Or, have them teach the class (but especially you) about new abbreviations and/or codes that you didn't know.

-Give students complex words or concepts and have them create their own texting lingo, then let them text it to another group and have them try to figure it out (builds critical thinking, team work)

-History: explore connections between texting and other forms of rudimentary communication, such as messages in a bottle, homing pigeons, and especially telegraphs or morse code. (Create a lesson where students study telegraph writing style, then give them messages to text to each other using this style)

-NOTE: you don't have to text yourself; just use your email address to send and receive texts.