

BRIDGE

ACTIVITY SHEET 2

Výukový materiál vybraný
z anglického časopisu Bridge,
určený k volnému šíření
a kopírování.



AO-A1

ZÁKLADNÍ ŠKOLY
3.-5. TŘÍDA ZŠ



A1-A2

ZÁKLADNÍ ŠKOLY
5.-7. TŘÍDA ZŠ



A2-B1

ZÁKLADNÍ A STŘEDNÍ ŠKOLY
7. TŘÍDA ZŠ-2. ROČNÍK SŠ

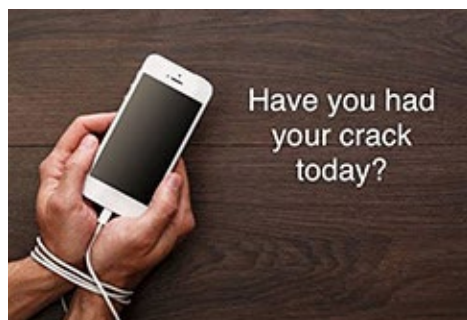


B1-B2

STŘEDNÍ ŠKOLY
2.-4. ROČNÍK SŠ

GETTING HIGH ON TECH

Before you begin, look at these pictures. What is their message?



Giving your child a smartphone is like giving them a gram of cocaine, says top addiction expert



1 Read these sentences. Which of them do you agree with? Which do you disagree with?

A Strongly agree **B** Agree a bit **C** Disagree a bit **D** Strongly disagree

- ☐ Children and teenagers should have their screen time (= time spent with computers and smartphones) limited.
- ☐ The claim that smartphones are “addictive” is nonsense.
- ☐ “Digital cocaine” is a good description of social media.
- ☐ Spending a lot of time on social media is normal and healthy.
- ☐ Some people have problems with self-control, but it’s their own weakness, not a problem with the technology.
- ☐ Smartphones and social media are addictive, but not anything like cocaine.
- ☐ Parents should not let young children have smartphones.
- ☐ You can’t live a normal life without smartphones, social media and so on any more.

2 Read the intro to the article and the section “Your Brain on Drugs”. Decide which of these sentences is NOT true, based on the text:

- A** Natural drugs are less harmful than chemical drugs because they use your brain’s natural processes.
- B** You can get addicted to healthy behaviours like exercise and to drugs like cocaine for similar reasons.
- C** Falling in love, making friends and so on can make you feel “high” in a similar way to illegal drugs.



3 Read the section “It’s Just for Fun”. What reasons does the text give that games and apps make you feel good? Write down three of them:

- A _____
- B _____
- C _____

4 The text says that “It’s natural and normal to want to spend a lot of time doing things that make you happy. It’s also normal for that to irritate some people.” Write three sentences about activities your family members enjoy but that annoy you, or that you enjoy that annoy your family:

- A _____
- B _____
- C _____

5 Read the section “Hacking Our Brains”. According to this part of the text, what makes Facebook different from other social-media apps?

- A Only Facebook “hacks your brain” by exploiting your body’s natural dopamine system.
- B Facebook engineers invented the system of notifications for likes with the intention of creating addiction.
- C Facebook gives us an opportunity for praise and social interaction.

6 Read the section “The New ‘Big Tobacco’”. Find a word meaning each of these things:

- A To say that something is not the case:

- B Computer program:

- C Something you say is true:

- D To repeat exactly what someone said, word for word:

- E To believe someone is being truthful:

7 Read the section “Out in the Open”. Find the line that says, “Ironically, the company also has another product that helps people break their app addictions.” Why does the writer of the article think this is “ironic”?

8 Read the rest of the article. Did you learn anything that was new or surprising to you?

Write down a couple of things that were “news to you”:

9 Look back at the list of statements in activity 1. Do you feel differently about any of them after reading the article? Briefly explain why or why not below:

UČITELSKÁ SADA ZDARMA

Učitelé, kteří objednávají 11 a více kusů předplatného, dostávají učitelskou sadu – časopis, CD, teachers’ file, kartu, výukový plakát a kalendář – zdarma.



Obrázky jsou pouze ilustrační.



GETTING HIGH ON TECH

SHOULD WE BE WORRIED ABOUT DIGITAL ADDICTION?

Paul Farrington-Douglas (UK)

“Giving your child a smartphone is like giving them a gram of cocaine,” reads the headline in a major newspaper. “Gaming addict kids taken into care,” reads another. Yet another warns, “Selfie generation are SO SELF-OBSESSED that it has been identified as an addiction.”

Media panic about gaming – and, more recently, social media use – is hardly new. The United States’ surgeon general (the top medical advisor to the government) was warning about the dangers of video game addiction way back in 1982. But is there anything in it?

Your Brain on Drugs

Your brain mixes up some pretty cool drugs, most famously dopamine and serotonin. These can make you feel alert, excited, happy and so on. The body produces them

to give you a natural reward for behaviours and actions that (evolutionarily speaking) give you a better chance of staying alive, like making friends and falling in love.

Many harmful and addictive drugs work by “hacking” these natural processes. Cocaine, for example, affects how your brain processes its own chemicals. What cocaine users get high on – and addicted to – are actually the brain’s natural chemicals.

Just as we can get addicted to cocaine, we can get addicted to pretty much any behaviour that persuades our brains to give us another hit of chemical happiness. Different scientific studies have recorded people being addicted to behaviours from obvious ones like gambling to tango dancing, entrepreneurship, bodybuilding and tattooing.

It’s Just for Fun

Spending a weirdly long time on something you enjoy doesn’t mean you’re addicted. It’s natural and normal to want to spend a lot of time doing things that make you happy. It’s also normal for that to irritate some people. On the other hand, addictions to social

media and gaming are real enough that there are rehab clinics offering treatment.

Games and apps provide opportunities for social interactions, puzzle solving, keeping control over a situation, getting approval from others and so on – all of which are great “brain chemical” triggers. In this sense, of course they are addictive. But is there anything *uniquely* addictive about them?

Hacking Our Brains

There is evidence that some game and app developers have been deliberately designing their apps to create addictive behaviours. One of the top people making this accusation is Sean Parker, the original

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president of Facebook. According to Parker, the platform was developed specifically to target “a vulnerability in human psychology” (in computer science, a vulnerability is a weak point in a program where it can be hacked).

Parker claims that Facebook engineers developed the system of notifications based on the neuroscience of addiction. Our brains reward us for praise and social interactions, and Facebook’s notifications mean that we can receive these rewards dozens of times a day just by opening the app. Whenever someone likes or comments on a post or photograph, Parker explains, “we give you a little dopamine hit”.

The New “Big Tobacco”?

Parker left Facebook in 2005, and Facebook denies his claim that the platform was designed to create addiction. The same

goes for Twitter, Epic Games (the makers of *Fortnite*) and several other developers. But should we trust them? Some experts have made comparisons to the way big tobacco companies used to deny that they made cigarettes to be addictive. To quote Elaine Ou, a leading software developer, “Facebook is an addictive product. Expecting the platform to protect children from harmful content is like asking the tobacco industry to make a kid-friendly cigarette.”

Out in the Open

Not all developers pretend that their products are not addictive. A company called Dopamine Labs has openly developed a program that “allows any app to become addictive” and that “changes the wiring of the brain”, though they claim that it is for things like increasing school

attendance and helping people stick to exercise plans.

Ironically, the company also has another product that helps people break their app addictions. “We’re not about starting or stopping,” they say, “we’re about giving people that choice of who – and how – they want to be.” It is, perhaps, a convenient way for them to have their cake and eat it•.

No Cause for Hysteria

At the same time, a lot of the objections to how much time we spend on social media, gaming and so on are cultural rather than scientific. But where’s the line between “plays games more than Mum likes” and “OMG get help”? There are various signs that can be used to identify addiction (see “What Is Addiction?”), but they come down to a simple question: who is in control of your life? You, or your phone, PC or games console?

DISCUSS

- Does anyone complain about how much time you spend gaming or on social media? What do you think about it?
- Do you ever feel that your gaming or social media use affects your life or relationships in negative ways? How?
- Do you think that tech addiction is something to be worried about, either in your own life or in wider society? Why? Whose responsibility is it?

LANGUAGE POINT•

The expression “you can’t have your cake and eat it” means that you can’t have two opposite things at once. Naturally, people try to do so anyway, and this is jokingly called “having your cake and eating it”.



Addiction is not just loving to do something a lot. It means there have been physical and long-term changes to the brain. Here are some signs of addiction listed by the American Psychiatric Association:

- Thinking about the activity even when you should be doing something else.
- Feeling sad, irritable or anxious when the activity is not possible.
- Needing to spend more time on the activity to feel satisfied.

- Inability to reduce time spent, unsuccessful attempts to quit.
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities.
- Continuing with the activity despite problems (e.g. loss of sleep, worsening marks at school, relationship issues with family).
- Lying to family members or others about the amount of time spent on the activity.
- The use of the activity to relieve negative moods.
- Risking relationships or other life chances due to the activity.

Showing just one or two of these signs does not mean a person is an addict, and an addict may not show all of these signs.