

Name: _____

Due Date: _____

Article of the week

Before you read:		
Survey:	Question:	Predict:

While you read:

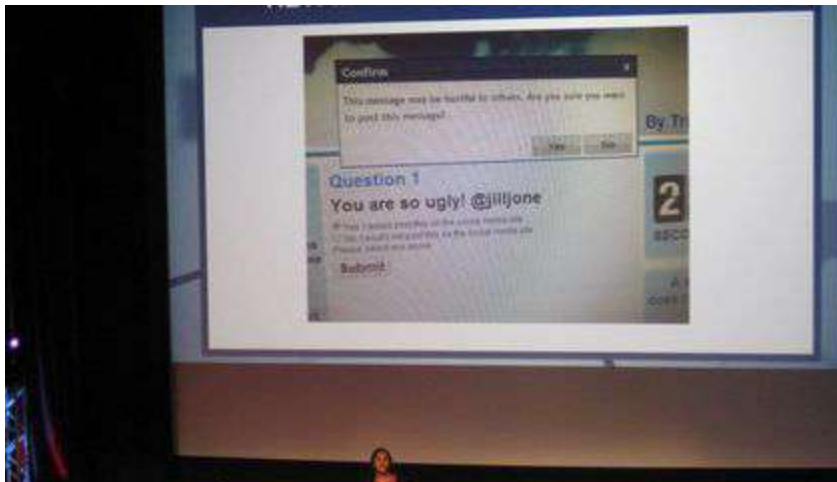
- Mark your confusion.
- Purposefully annotate the article (2-3 mature, thoughtful responses (I notice, I wonder, Questions, Connections, etc.) per page to what the author is saying)
- Fill in Vocabulary annotations with your definitions using context clues.

Article

Annotations

Software makes cyberbullies think twice

By Emily Matchar *Smithsonian Magazine* [October 10, 2019](#)



In 2013, a then-13-year-old from suburban Chicago

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named Trisha Prabhu came home from school and read a news story about an 11-year-old girl who had committed suicide by jumping off her town's water tower. In the months before her death, the girl had been repeatedly **cyberbullied**.

"I was shocked, heart-broken and angry," says Prabhu, now 15. "I knew I had to do something to stop this from ever happening again."

So Prabhu came up with a cyber-solution for cyberbullying. She invented a software called ReThink, which scans social media messages for offensive content, and gives the writer a chance to reconsider whether he or she really wants to post. The program, which can be installed by parents on home computers or by teachers on school computers, uses context-sensitive word screening to flag messages for content.

For Prabhu, ReThink is personal. She too had been cyberbullied in her younger years, receiving nasty messages about her clothes.

"I'm what you'd call thick-skinned, so I just brushed it off and moved on," Prabhu says. "But after reading about this story, I realized that many **adolescents** were really affected by these offensive messages, especially if the

Cyberbullied-

Adolescents-

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<p>cyberbullying was repeated and targeted."</p> <p>Cyberbullying is indeed a serious and growing problem. Research shows 43 percent of kids have experienced cyberbullying. Some 70 percent of students report seeing "frequent" online bullying. Bullying victims are up to nine times more likely to consider suicide.</p> <p>ReThink works on the principle that the adolescent brain is like a "car with no brakes," Prabhu says. "It's all too well-known that adolescents make impulsive, rash decisions."</p> <p>It has indeed been well-established that the prefrontal cortex-a region of the brain important for self-control and decision-making-doesn't fully develop until a person is about 25 years old. This is likely a major factor behind teenagers' sometimes irresponsible and risky decisions-texting and driving, fighting, even simply neglecting homework in favor of hanging out with friends.</p> <p>Prabhu has received numerous accolades for her work. She was a global finalist in the Google Science Fair, selected to exhibit at the White House Science Fair and received a Global Anti-Bullying Hero award from Auburn University, among other honors.</p>	<p>Impulsive-</p> <p>Neglecting-</p> <p>Accolades-</p>
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Prabhu has long been fascinated by computer science; she first began learning to code at age 11 through a local technology education program for kids. Since developing ReThink, she has created a free ReThink app for smartphones. She's also rolled out a ReThink **"ambassador"** program for schools, where student representatives spread anti-cyberbullying messages to their classmates and students are invited to take an anti-cyberbullying pledge.

Prabhu has received multiple messages from people who know firsthand the trauma cyberbullying can cause—parents whose children have committed suicide after repeated cyberbullying, police officers who deal with cyberbullying on a criminal level, school counselors and administrators who struggle to help cyberbullied students. And then there are the victims themselves. One particularly memorable note Prabhu received was not from a teenager, but from an adult, a retired teacher who had been bullied for years by an adult adopted daughter. "Trisha," the woman wrote, "ReThink would not only help adolescents, it would help adults too."

To test how it works, I downloaded ReThink to my iPhone. I started to post "I hate you" to a Facebook wall (with no intentions, of course, of actually posting it), and a ReThink bubble popped up. "Let's change these

Ambassador-

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words to make it positive," it suggested. "You're a fat," I began, and I was interrupted by "Don't say things that you may regret later!" ReThink has a high sensitivity for **obscenities**. When I started the missive with a four-letter word, the ReThink bubble showed up to ask "Are these words really you?"

That said, the program did not catch everything. I was able to type "You're ugly and stupid" without getting a ReThink message, and somehow "nobody likes you, you idiot" also snuck through.

Though ReThink is clearly not yet a perfect tool for capturing all cyber **cruelty**, when it does offer teens a second chance they tend to take it. According to research conducted with ReThink, teens change their mind about posting the hurtful messages 93 percent of the time.

Prabhu ultimately hopes to have ReThink installed for free on school computers and libraries across the country, and even the world-she has plans to develop the program in multiple languages.

"I look forward to a day when we have conquered cyberbullying," she says.

Obscenities-

Cruelty-

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Answer the following questions using RACES:

1. What evidence does this article provide to prove that cyberbullying is a big problem?

2. Who should be held responsible when cyberbullying occurs?

3. Does anything in this article surprise you? Explain If not, why not?

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Write a 5+ sentence response to the question below using RACES strategy. Do you think this app is an effective solution for ending cyber bullying? If so why, if not what would your solution be?

[illegible]

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