

Name

Date

Issue

How many times have you heard a student get yelled at for using their cell phones in class? While many agree that cell phones are good to have in class and provide a fun learning experience, others disagree and say that they are just a distraction to kids and annoying to see during class. So, should cell phones be allowed in middle schools?

First of all, cell phones should be allowed in the middle school classroom because young people feel like they provide a fun learning experience that kids will enjoy. “The 1st Amendment applies to any portable device that can be used to create, receive, access, or store electronic data (First Amendment News, 2011). This means that the First Amendment applies to cell phones. Banning cell phones from school is a violation of students’ rights to the First Amendment, especially since students do not “shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.” (Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 1969) “Cell phones are also a vital instrument in preventing kidnappings, or help save the victims of a kidnapping.” ([www.teenink.com](http://www.teenink.com)). According to Mark Prensky, “They give students a chance to collaborate with each other, or connect with peers in other countries. They can be used for high-tech alternatives to boring classroom lectures, letting kids take part in interactive assignments like classroom polls” says Kevin Thomas. ([www.theatlantic.com](http://www.theatlantic.com)).

As far as statistics and examples, there are plenty to show the. For example, “An April 2010 study by Pew Research Center found that 75 percent of 12-to-17-year-olds own a cell phone.” ([www.usnews.com](http://www.usnews.com)). Also “only 12 percent of teens with cellphones said they can have them in school at all times.” ([www.dispatch.com](http://www.dispatch.com)). One tragic example of cell phone use is when “on an NAU campus, a student was kidnapped, drugged, and assaulted. Another death would’ve made it to the headlines if that student didn’t have her cell-phone on her, which she used to send a message to her roommate, pleading for help. Luckily, the police arrived and were able to save her from further harm.” ([www.teenink.com](http://www.teenink.com)). Another fine example of the positive effects of cell phones could be students using phones during emergencies like; “Student cell phone use during emergencies will not cause panic. We were all moved to our practice football field and most of us proceeded to call our parents and you know what, no panics started.” ([www.idebate.org](http://www.idebate.org))

On the other hand, people disagree with cell phones in the middle school classroom. Many teachers and others say they’re a distraction to students and annoying to see during class. “Schools make rules to facilitate a quality education in a respectful and safe environment. Cell phones are a distraction in classrooms and have no place there. I support rules banning their use—by students and staff—in the classroom.” ([www.teacher.scholastic.com](http://www.teacher.scholastic.com)). “Come the end of the term, a handful of students would fail the class and far too many would drop out of school. The ones for failure should be placed on distractions in the classroom, specifically cell phones.” In the words of one person who got fed up with cell phones, ““It was getting just too disruptive to the learning process,” Wade said. ([www.nbcnews.com](http://www.nbcnews.com)). Another student stated that cell

phones are disruptive in class. “On a day-to-day basis, they are disruptive to the educational environment.... Ringing cell phones can disrupt classes and distract students who should be paying attention to their lessons at hand. Text message has been used for cheating. And new cell phones with cameras could be used to take photos of exams, take pictures of students changing clothes in gym locker areas, and so on.” ([schoolsecurity.org](http://schoolsecurity.org)).

On the negative side of the debate, are many statistics. “According to a 2010 survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, 62 percent of teens said they can have their cellphones at school but not in class” ([www.dispatch.com](http://www.dispatch.com)). Some research proves that cell phones should be forbidden altogether, “While another 24 percent attended schools that forbade the devices altogether.” “Student cell phone use during an emergency does more harm than good. Even a small amount of student calls could spark a panic among parents; the last thing a SWAT team needs is a rush of concerned parents blocking their way to the school.” ([www.idebate.org](http://www.idebate.org)). “Text message has been used for cheating. And new cell phones with cameras could be used to take photos of exams.” ([www.schoolsecurity.org](http://www.schoolsecurity.org)),

In conclusion, cell phones in the middle school classroom is a really big discussion and debate. Many agree that cell phones are a fun way to connect with a student and get them to pay attention, others disagree and say they are still a distraction in class. So, should cell phones be allowed in the middle school classroom?

## **Works Cited**

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