

TAKE  
A SIDE

## Debate



# Should You Go Screen-Free for a Week?

Emma says no way. Her brother Tyler says yes. Who makes the better argument?

**Directions:** Read both letters.

Then complete the chart on the next page.



Dear Tyler,

Have you heard that our town is planning to take part in Screen-Free Week this spring? For seven days, millions of people around the world won't use any digital devices outside of work or school. That means no YouTube. No texting. No Netflix! I hope you'll join me in saying NO THANKS.

First of all, how would we talk to our friends after school? We wouldn't be able to message each other about homework. We wouldn't be able to send funny Snaps or share cute dog videos. I'm getting lonely and bored just thinking about it.

We'd also feel more stressed. Video games help me relax. I've been worried about my math test next week. Playing Fortnite gives my brain a break.

But screens aren't just for fun. They help us learn new skills and be creative. What would the world do without my TikTok music videos?

And what about Grandma? If we miss our weekly Skype call, she'll come across the country to make sure we're OK.

The only thing we should shut down is this terrible idea of a screen-free week. Are you with me?

Love, your sister,  
Emma



Dear Emma,

You might not believe this, but I like the idea of Screen-Free Week. I just read that the average kid is glued to screens for 4.5 hours a day. That's time we could use to play sports, have fun as a family, or hang out with friends.

Sure, you're in touch with your friends online. But how often do you have them over? Experts say that talking in person builds our social skills and empathy.

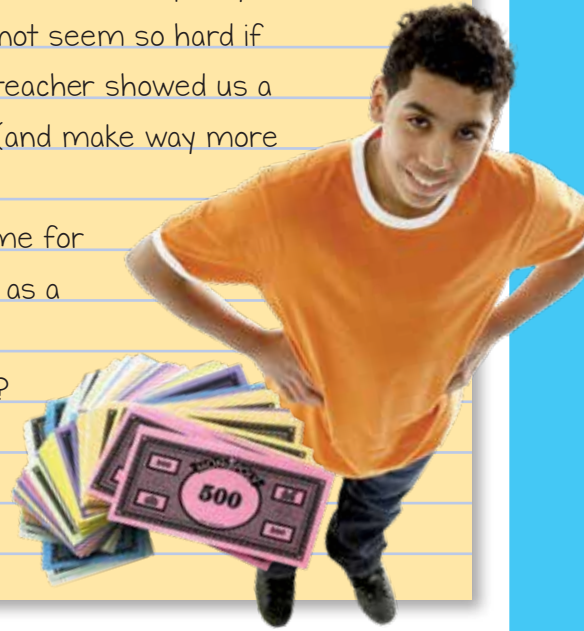
And you say screens help you relax. But math might not seem so hard if you didn't check your messages every few minutes. My teacher showed us a study that says people take much longer to finish tasks (and make way more mistakes) when they're distracted by pings and buzzes.

If we take a break from screens, we'll have more time for other things. We can ride scooters. We can play Monopoly as a family. We can write Grandma snail-mail letters!

So let's do it. Unless you're afraid I'll win at Monopoly?

Your loving brother,

Tyler



## Would you go screen-free for a week?

GET AN  
ACTIVITY  
ONLINE

Emma and Tyler both give reasons that support their arguments. Which one was more convincing? Find three reasons in each letter and write them below. Use these to decide what YOU would do—and write an opinion essay about it.

### Yes: Power down!

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

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### No: I need my devices!

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
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