

## 'It made my day more meaningful': the Japanese gen Zers attempting a two-hour limit on smartphone use

### Level 3: Advanced

**Article summary:** This article explains the rule that a Japanese town put in place to restrict smartphone usage and the effect that it had on people.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Writing, Speaking

**Language focus:** Phrasal verbs with *in*, *out*, *up* and *down*

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

#### 1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to let students consider when the use of smartphones should be controlled and why. Ask students to share how their daily routines would change if they used their smartphones less.

#### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do this task individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to highlight the key words in the article.

**Key:**

1. *phenomenon*
2. *measure*
3. *controversial*
4. *worthwhile*
5. *initiative*
6. *ordinance*
7. *sacrificing*
8. *meaningful*
9. *excessive*
10. *toll*
11. *sleep deprivation*
12. *conceded*
13. *interfering*

14. *devote*
15. *scrolling*
16. *claimed*
17. *struggle*
18. *amid*
19. *enforced*
20. *asset*

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use the key words in the correct form to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they know how the words are used in other contexts.

**Key:**

1. *sleep deprivation*
2. *interfere*
3. *excessive*
4. *struggle*
5. *concede*
6. *sacrifice*
7. *initiative*
8. *ordinance*
9. *claim*
10. *devote*
11. *scroll*
12. *meaningful*
13. *toll*
14. *amid*
15. *measure*
16. *controversial*
17. *worthwhile*
18. *phenomenon*
19. *enforced*
20. *asset*

#### 3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. If possible, encourage students to add more explanatory information when they answer, e.g. in item 1, they may say, *Typical habits for his generation scrolling through news and social media, checking messaging apps and watching video clips.*

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**Key:**

Suggested answers:

1. scrolling through news and social media, messaging apps and off-the-wall video clips
2. eight hours
3. a limit on smartphones to two hours a day
4. LINE, TikTok, Instagram and X
5. read, study, go to the gym
6. They felt the government was interfering in their private lives.
7. sleep and family time
8. over five hours a day
9. more time enjoying conversations and noticing the world around her
10. If it makes even a few people stop and talk about their habits.

#### 4. Key language

- a. This activity helps students see how phrasal verbs often use the same particles and that those particles can help them understand the meaning of the phrasal verb. In preparation, ask students to look at the examples from the article and the particles used by each phrasal verb. Ask them if they know what any of the phrasal verbs mean or if they can make a logical guess. Have students complete the table.

**Key:**

- (1) down = reduce or decrease something = cut down
- (2) in = control or restrain something = rein in
- (3) out = use something until it is finished = eke out
- (4) up = build a total over a long time = clock(s) up

- b. Students complete the sentences using the verb in brackets and the correct particle from the previous activity. Point out that these other phrasal verbs have a similar meaning to the previous ones because they have a particle in common.

**Key:**

1. hold in
2. turn down
3. keep in
4. burn out
5. stacking up

6. narrowing down

7. saving up

8. run out

- a. Students complete the sentences with their own ideas.

#### 5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

#### 6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to conduct a survey in the class about how they use smartphones. Have students look at the questions to guide what they might ask in their survey. Tell students they will need to compare the different uses of smartphones in the class and present the differences.
- b. Students present their survey results to the class. Ask them to compare the different members of the class and describe people who use their smartphones a little and those who use them a lot. Encourage them to include phrasal verbs with *in*, *out*, *up* and *down*, such as *cut down*, *rein in* and *eke out*, in their presentations. Remind students they have an example to help them.