

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

Level 1: Elementary

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: *However, though, and but*

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. *manages*
2. *authorities*
3. *rule*
4. *residents*
5. *restrict*
6. *punishment*
7. *challenge*
8. *succeeded*
9. *mayor*
10. *complained*

- 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. <i>punishment</i> | 6. <i>succeed</i> |
| 2. <i>rule</i> | 7. <i>authority</i> |
| 3. <i>challenge</i> | 8. <i>restrict</i> |
| 4. <i>complain</i> | 9. <i>mayor</i> |
| 5. <i>manages</i> | 10. <i>residents</i> |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students mark the sentences True (T) or False (F) based on the information in the article. Tell the students to correct any that are false.

Key:

1. *False – Moriyama spends eight hours a day on his phone.*
2. *True*
3. *False – Moriyama found it hard to stay off social media.*
4. *True*
5. *False – The mayor said there would be no punishments.*
6. *True*

4. Key language

- a. This activity introduces students to the use of *however, though, and but*. Ask students to match the two halves of the sentences from the article. Have students look back at the article if they need more support. Point out that the three words have the same meaning, but they are used differently. *Though* introduces a negative idea followed by a positive idea. *However* introduces either a positive or a negative idea and starts a sentence following an idea which is the opposite, i.e. positive follows negative or vice versa. *But* is used in the same way to join positive and negative ideas, but it is used in the middle of the sentence.

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Key:

1. c
2. d
3. e
4. a
5. b

- b. Ask students to complete the sentences using *but*, *however* or *though*.

Key:

1. However
2. Though
3. but
4. Though
5. but
6. However

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 do a survey in the class about how they use smartphones.
- 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 *but*, *however* or *though* in their presentations. Remind students they have an example to help them.