

# CAPT Interdisciplinary Writing Test

## Session 2

### Overview

The purpose of this Interdisciplinary Writing test is to determine how well you can write to persuade others to think as you do about a specific topic. In this test, you will read two short articles about a controversial issue, take a position on the issue, and write the first draft of a persuasive essay. You must support your position with information from *both* of the source materials. Your response will be read and scored by trained readers.

### About This Test

In this Interdisciplinary Writing test, you will think about and take a position either supporting or opposing a controversial issue. While you are working on the test, you will use skills and knowledge you learned in your language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts, and other classes.

# Steps to Follow

## 1. Read the source materials.

Before taking a position either supporting or opposing the issue, it is important that you read both source materials related to the issue. (Take a minute to locate the source materials beginning on page 42 in this booklet.) As you read the source materials, you may underline information, highlight, or write notes on the articles themselves. When you write your essay, you must include information from each source.

## 2. Prepare to write your letter.

You have been given two organizers, which you may find useful as you consider the various arguments for and against the topic provided. You may use the organizer that best suits your position. In addition, scratch paper has been included for any additional notes or outlining you may wish to do in preparing to write your letter. The organizers and scratch paper can be found on pages 46–48. **You are not required to complete these pages, and they will not be scored.**

## 3. Write your essay in the answer booklet.

Only what is written in the answer booklet will be scored. Three pages have been provided for your response. Any additional pages will be removed prior to scoring.

## Your Score

Your score will be based on the following criteria:

1. **Position**—Did you take a clear position on the issue?
2. **Comprehensiveness**—Did you use information from *both* sources that are provided?
3. **Support**—Did you support your position with accurate and relevant information from the source materials?
4. **Organization**—Did you organize your ideas in a logical and effective manner so that your audience can understand and follow your thinking?
5. **Clarity and Fluency**—Did you express your ideas clearly and fluently using your own words?

## Organizing Your Time

You will have 65 minutes to complete this test. The following schedule is suggested:

- 30 minutes for reading the source materials and planning your letter; and
- 35 minutes for writing your letter.

**You may re-read or refer to the source materials at any time during the test. You may also highlight or make notes on the sources if this is helpful to you.**

Know your purpose for writing and remember to:

READ, THINK, PLAN, WRITE.

## The Issue: CELL PHONES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

**Should young children be given cell phones?** Cell phone companies recently started marketing to pre-teens. These companies maintain that young consumers represent a profitable market. Many agree with the companies, noting the benefits of cell phones for children. Conversely, many disagree with the companies, noting the downside of cell phones for children.

**You will read two articles about the issue and take a position for or against cell phones for young children.** Using information from *both* articles, you must write a letter to the mother of a seven-year-old either supporting or opposing the purchase of a cell phone for her young child.

## Source One

The following article appeared in the *San Antonio Express-News* on July 30, 2004. It presents different perspectives on cell phones designed for children.

# Cell Phone Companies are Targeting Kids

BY L.A. LOREK

One of the hottest back-to-school accessories this fall is a cell phone made for kids as young as 6.

The kid-styled phones come in bright colors such as electric blue and bubblegum pink, have big keypads for small fingers, and some offer educational games.

But not everyone is happy about the children's cell phone trend. A group of 30 children's advocates this week sent letters to Congress asking it to investigate the marketing of mobile phones to kids and what kind of effects the phones might have on children's privacy, education, safety and health.

"Given that this technology is fraught with problems, there is a really good argument for not giving phones to kids," said Gary Ruskin, executive director of Commercial Alert, a consumer watchdog organization in Portland, Ore.

As the adult cell phone market becomes saturated, telecommunications companies have increasingly turned to a younger audience. An estimated 55 percent of teens have wireless phones now, and 10 percent of kids 12 and younger have mobile phones, according to the Yankee Group, a Boston research firm.

"We've gotten to the point where every adult who wants a phone, and can afford one, has one," said Adam Zawel, Yankee Group's director of wireless U.S. research. "The cell phone companies are looking for the next subscriber."

Just in time for back-to-school shopping, Firefly has a \$99 phone that comes with only a few buttons for parents to program to restrict outgoing and incoming calls, and the phone doesn't allow for text messages.

In August, Mattel is expected to market Barbie-branded mobile phones, and Hasbro is producing one called "Chat Now." Earlier this month, Walt Disney Internet Group and Sprint teamed up to offer wireless telephone service aimed at children 8 to 12.

San Antonio parent Deborah Vallejo likes the fact that her daughter, 17-year-old Viana, bought a prepaid phone from Best Buy when she was 13. Her phone comes in handy during emergencies or just to keep in touch at the mall.

But MacArthur High School, where Viana will be a senior, has a strict policy that if a cell phone rings in class, the teacher will confiscate it and a parent must pick it up. So far she hasn't had her phone confiscated.

Critics worry about privacy issues and whether predators could gain access to children through their cell phones. Other concerns are that parents might get stuck with enormous phone bills and that the phones might cause health problems. Some reports have linked cell phone usage with brain tumors and cancer.

Phones also could cause disruptions in school.

Manufacturers say they take the safety concerns seriously and have built in safeguards that prevent unwanted calls. They also say that parents want the mobile phones to keep track of their busy kids.

The "Wherifone" for children 7 to 12 includes a built-in global positioning system. Wherify, based in Redwood Shores, Calif., plans to release its \$150 phone late this summer. The company originally came out with a GPS locator watch for kids, but parents said they wanted a phone, said spokesman John Cunningham.

"What we are all about is providing family security and peace of mind," he said.

Enfora, based in Plano, has a \$99 phone debuting in August called "TicTalk" aimed at kids 6 to 12 that has educational games from LeapFrog Entertainment.

"The parents have complete control of the device," said Mark Weinzierl, Enfora's president.

The company excluded text messaging and Internet capabilities, he said. It also put controls in place allowing parents to restrict access to the educational games, and the phone doesn't come with a contract, letting parents control how much kids spend on airtime.

"It provides that ability to reach out and call your kid to be able to give them peace of mind and give you peace of mind," Weinzierl said.

But Michelle Valicek, a San Antonio lawyer and mother of two sons, Mason, 6, and Evan, 11, doesn't think young children need cell phones.

"Kids should be able to enjoy their lives as kids and not worry about talking on a phone," Valicek said. "Anybody whose 6-year-old requires a cell phone is not being properly supervised by their parents. They might be lucky to use their mommy's (cell phone) and press the buttons to talk to their grandparents, but that's it in my book."

Commercial Alert contends the telecommunications companies really want to use children as conduits to their parents' wallets, and that marketers want another way to bypass parents.

"Children already are bombarded with too much advertising," Ruskin said. "They don't need more advertising through their phones."

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## Source Two

The following article appeared in *The Grand Rapids Press* on July 3, 2005. It presents reasons both for and against young children having cell phones.

# Calling on Kids; Cell Phone Industry Aims at Youngest Customers

BY MICHELE M. MELENDEZ

They're cute, colorful and entertaining: cell phones just for kids.

And they may help the wireless industry captivate new customers.

Such big names as Nickelodeon and Disney are offering games and ring tones based on cartoons. Manufacturers are producing handsets specifically for children.

Analysts see a ripening market, especially among the 8-to-12-year-olds dubbed "tweens"—those between childhood and adolescence.

Boston-based Yankee Group estimates 80 percent of Americans ages 18 to 65 have a wireless phone, while about 55 percent of those 13 to 17 do.

Studying even younger consumers, the NPD Group of Port Washington, N.Y., finds that 22 percent of those 9 to 11 have phones, while New York-based NOP World Technology estimates 14 percent of 10- and 11-year-olds do.

Lewis Ward, senior research analyst at IDC, an international information technology consulting firm headquartered in Framingham, Mass., said "family share plans," with service providers offering free or reduced-price phones for group packages, have helped spur growth among the youngest users.

Whether children should have mobile phones is both complicated and personal.

Safety concerns led Debbie Middleton, 36, of Valley Stream, N.Y., to give a phone to her 9-year-old son, Terrell. "My main reason—he goes to school by himself," she said. "There are three sex offenders in our neighborhood."

Terrell can send text messages and play games but isn't allowed to call friends, just family.

He was shy when explaining why he liked having a phone, but his mother prodded:

"Tell the truth. It makes you look cool, like a teenager."

"Yeah," Terrell agreed, smiling.

Others believe cell phones detract from parenting.

Michael Bugeja, director of the journalism school at Iowa State University at Ames, is among them.

The author of "Interpersonal Divide: The Search for Community in a Technological Age," Bugeja said children must be taught "about whom to avoid and whom to trust, and how to go about doing that—a sophisticated and often time-consuming public interpersonal lesson."

Cell phones, he said, do not protect children.

Wireless companies say a phone can give parents peace of mind. The challenge is making the appropriate choice.

"We, as parents, feel that it's a little bit indulgent to give our kids a regular cell phone, with all the bells and whistles," said Fred Bullock, chief marketing officer of Chicago-based Firefly Mobile Inc., which launched a tweens' cell phone in March. "It's almost too much too soon."

### Parents in Control

Enfora L.P. of Plano, Texas, considered parents' preferences while designing the TicTalk for ages 6 and up.

"Literally everything about the device is parentally controlled" via the Internet, said Mark Weinzierl, Enfora's chief executive officer and president.

That discretion includes what time the phone can ring, whom kids can call, how long they can talk and what games they can play.

Weinzierl said the company soon will announce an educational partner, which will provide content for the phone: "We wanted to stay away from the shoot-'em-up, explosive type of games. We focused on learning games."

Bill Hensley, Sanrio's U.S. marketing director, said that although youngsters are drawn to the Hello Kitty phone, the company intended the device for the broad age spectrum.

"Kids obviously want to grow up fast; this is a desirable accessory," Hensley said. "It's the cutest phone you'll ever talk into."

Mattel Inc. plans to join the wireless phone market in August with its \$79.95 My Scene Mobile phone, themed after the line of dolls, which includes an urban-chic Barbie. Bob Aniello, director of Mattel Interactive, said an associated Web site will "promote responsible mobile phone use," as parents and tweens track chores, homework and other deeds for phone time.

Even younger kids are becoming familiar with wireless technology through their parents' phones.

This year, Verizon Wireless added Sesame Street and Nickelodeon video clips to its V CAST wireless broadband service.

Kids can watch Kermit the Frog teach about the letter X and the Blue's Clues gang sing about brushing teeth, among other educational snippets for children.

The V CAST-capable phones start at \$149.99.

"We're not selling phones and service to 10-year-olds. This is a premium service," said Jeffrey Nelson, Verizon Wireless spokesman. "Parents who have some time with a kid are finding this kind of content to be a great diversion for a couple of minutes," say in a dentist's waiting room or in a grocery line.

Linda Barrabee, senior analyst with the Yankee Group, said such offerings might hook a budding consumer's loyalty to a company.

"If they can capture the mindshare of a 9-year-old, that might be good for them."

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"Calling on Kids; Cell Phone Industry Aims at Youngest Customers" by Michele M. Melendez. Copyright © 2005 by Newhouse News Service. Reprinted by permission of Newhouse News Service.