

Englisch Klasse 12

Thema: Übung zum Abitur – Reading, Analysis, Comment, Mediation



Good luck!

Name: _____ Datum: _____

Punkte: _____ / 54 Note: _____

Unterschrift: _____

Part A: Reading comprehension

Read the opinion article (about 490 words) carefully. Then do tasks 1 to 6.

In Praise of Boredom

An opinion article by Ruth Ashdown, an English teacher with twenty years' experience

- 1 When did you last do absolutely nothing? I do not mean scrolling, streaming or swiping. I mean simply looking out of a bus window and letting your mind wander. If you have to think hard about the answer, you are not alone. Boredom, that slow and uncomfortable feeling we all used to know so well, is quietly disappearing from our lives – and I believe we should be worried about it.

- 5 For most of human history, boredom was unavoidable. Children waited for buses and spent rainy afternoons with nothing to do. Today, a smartphone fills every empty minute before it can even begin. In my classroom, I see it every day: the moment a lesson ends, thirty heads bow down to thirty glowing screens, as if in prayer. Nobody talks. Nobody stares at the ceiling. Nobody is bored – and, I suspect, nobody is really rested either.

- 10 Some readers will say that this is simply progress. Why should anyone put up with boredom when the whole world is waiting in their pocket? It is a fair question, and I do not want to sound like a grumpy teacher who thinks that everything was better in the past. Phones are wonderful tools. They help my students to research and to stay in touch with friends abroad.

- 15 Yet boredom is not just an empty space waiting to be filled. Psychologists have long argued that a wandering mind is a working mind. When we are bored, the brain starts to make its own entertainment: it remembers, it plans, it invents. If we never allow our minds to wander, we may lose the very space in which creativity grows.

- 20 There is a second, quieter cost. Being bored teaches us to cope with discomfort. A teenager who has never had to sit alone with her thoughts will find it harder to concentrate on a difficult text or to wait patiently for anything at all. Constant entertainment, in other words, is a bit like fast food: it is tasty and convenient, but a steady diet of it leaves us hungry for more and strangely unsatisfied.

- 25 So what can be done? I am not calling for a ban on smartphones; that would be neither realistic nor fair. Instead, we should rediscover the value of a few empty minutes. Schools could offer phone-free breaks and quiet corners where nothing is expected of anyone. Parents could leave their own phones in a drawer at dinner – children copy what we do, not what we say. And each of us could try a simple experiment: the next time you are waiting in a queue, keep your phone in your pocket and see what your mind comes up with.

- 30 It may feel strange at first, perhaps even unbearable. But give it a chance. Boredom is not the enemy of a full life; it is the soil in which our own thoughts can finally take root. Let us stop running away from it.

- 1 **Decide** whether the statements are true or false. Mark the correct box with a cross. Give the line(s) that prove your answer.

Statement	true	false
a) Most people can easily remember the last time they did nothing at all. Line(s):	☐	☐
b) According to the author, smartphones prevent boredom from even starting. Line(s):	☐	☐
c) The author admits that smartphones are useful in many ways. Line(s):	☐	☐
d) The author wants smartphones to be banned from schools. Line(s):	☐	☐
e) In the author's view, boredom helps people to deal with unpleasant feelings. Line(s):	☐	☐

___ / 5

- 2 **Summarise** the article in about 100–120 words.
Use your own words and the present tense. Do not quote from the text.

___ / 6

3 Outline the structure of the author's line of argument.

State the function of each paragraph in note form. The first one has been done as an example.

Lines	Function / main content (note form)
ll. 1–5	<i>introduction: hook (rhetorical question), thesis – boredom is disappearing, which is worrying</i>
ll. 6–11	
ll. 12–16	
ll. 17–21	
ll. 22–26	
ll. 27–33	
ll. 34–36	

___ / 3

Part B: Analysis

4 Identify the stylistic devices in the quotations and **explain** their effect.

Quotation	Stylistic device	Effect / function
"scrolling, streaming or swiping" (ll. 1–2)		
"thirty heads bow down to thirty glowing screens, as if in prayer" (l. 9)		
"Nobody talks. Nobody stares at the ceiling. Nobody is bored" (ll. 9–10)		
"it is the soil in which our own thoughts can finally take root" (ll. 35–36)		

___ / 6

5 Analyse how the author tries to convince her readers of her view. Consider the line of argument, the tone and the use of language.

Write your answers to tasks 5, 6 and 7 on separate sheets of paper.

___ / 10

Part C: Comment

6 **Choose** ONE of the following tasks. Write about 250–300 words.

- A **Comment** on the author's claim that "Boredom is not the enemy of a full life" (l. 35).
- B **Assess** the author's suggestions in ll. 27–33. Consider how realistic and useful they would be at your school and in your everyday life.

___ / 12

Part D: Mediation (German → English)

7 **Mediate** the information.

An international youth website is collecting reports on how schools around the world deal with smartphones. Based on the German newspaper article below, write a contribution in English (about 200–250 words) in which you inform the readers about the experience at the Gymnasium am Kirchberg.

Do not translate word for word. Leave out details that are not relevant for an international audience.

Pause ohne Display – ein Jahr Handyregel am Gymnasium am Kirchberg

Seit Beginn des letzten Schuljahres gilt am Gymnasium am Kirchberg eine neue Regel: Von der ersten bis zur sechsten Stunde bleiben Smartphones ausgeschaltet in der Tasche, auch in den Pausen. Wer sein Handy trotzdem benutzt, muss es bis zum Ende des Schultages im Sekretariat abgeben.

Nach einem Jahr hat die Schülvvertretung (SV) rund 650 Schülerinnen und Schüler befragt. Fast zwei Drittel finden die Regel inzwischen gut oder zumindest in Ordnung. Viele berichten, dass sie in den Pausen wieder mehr miteinander reden, Tischtennis spielen oder sich in der Bibliothek Brettspiele ausleihen. Auch die Lehrkräfte stellen fest, dass es weniger Streit um heimlich gemachte Fotos und Videos gibt.

Ganz ohne Kritik ist die Regel jedoch nicht. Vor allem die Schülerinnen und Schüler der Oberstufe fühlen sich bevormundet: Sie seien alt genug, um selbst zu entscheiden. Außerdem möchten manche Eltern ihre Kinder in Notfällen erreichen können. Die Schule hat deshalb einen Kompromiss gefunden: Die Oberstufe darf ihre Handys in einem eigenen Aufenthaltsraum nutzen, und in dringenden Fällen können Eltern jederzeit im Sekretariat anrufen.

Schulleiterin Dr. Anja Brehm zieht eine positive Bilanz: „Wir wollten den Jugendlichen nichts wegnehmen, sondern ihnen Zeit zurückgeben.“ Im Unterricht dürfen die Geräte weiterhin genutzt werden, wenn die Lehrkraft es erlaubt, zum Beispiel für Recherchen. Im nächsten Jahr will die SV erneut eine Umfrage durchführen.

___ / 12

Lösung: Übung zum Abitur: Reading, Analysis, Comment, Mediation

Insgesamt sind 54 Punkte erreichbar, halbe Punkte sind möglich.

Note 1	Note 2	Note 3	Note 4	Note 5	Note 6
54–49 P.	48,5–43,5 P.	43–35,5 P.	35–27 P.	26,5–16,5 P.	16–0 P.

Part A: Reading comprehension

- 1 **Decide** whether the statements are true or false. Mark the correct box with a cross. Give the line(s) that prove your answer.

Statement	true	false
a) Most people can easily remember the last time they did nothing at all. Line(s): ll. 2–3: "If you have to think hard about the answer"	☐	☒
b) According to the author, smartphones prevent boredom from even starting. Line(s): ll. 7–8: "fills every empty minute before it can even begin"	☒	☐
c) The author admits that smartphones are useful in many ways. Line(s): l. 15: "Phones are wonderful tools"	☒	☐
d) The author wants smartphones to be banned from schools. Line(s): l. 27: "I am not calling for a ban on smartphones"	☐	☒
e) In the author's view, boredom helps people to deal with unpleasant feelings. Line(s): l. 22: "Being bored teaches us to cope with discomfort"	☒	☐

5 / 5

- 2 **Summarise** the article in about 100–120 words.
Use your own words and the present tense. Do not quote from the text.

Example answer:

In her opinion article "In Praise of Boredom", the teacher Ruth Ashdown argues that boredom is disappearing from our lives because smartphones fill every free moment, and she considers this a reason for concern. Although she admits that phones are useful tools, she claims that boredom is valuable: a wandering mind produces ideas and creativity, and being bored teaches people to cope with discomfort, to concentrate and to be patient. Constant entertainment, by contrast, leaves people unsatisfied. Instead of banning smartphones, she suggests phone-free breaks and quiet corners at school, phone-free family meals and personal experiments without a phone. She ends by encouraging

her readers to accept boredom instead of avoiding it. (113 words)

Expected content:

- introductory sentence: text type, title, author, topic
- thesis: boredom is disappearing because of smartphones – a cause for concern
- concession: phones are useful tools
- arguments: creativity / ideas; learning to cope with discomfort (concentration, patience)
- suggestions: phone-free breaks / quiet corners, parents as role models, personal experiment
- conclusion: appeal to accept boredom; own words, present tense, no quotations, no own opinion

6 / 6

3 Outline the structure of the author's line of argument.

State the function of each paragraph in note form. The first one has been done as an example.

Lines	Function / main content (note form)
ll. 1–5	introduction: hook (rhetorical question), thesis – boredom is disappearing, which is worrying
ll. 6–11	description of the problem: boredom used to be normal; today smartphones fill every minute (classroom example)
ll. 12–16	counter-argument / concession: progress – phones are useful tools
ll. 17–21	first argument (refutation): boredom makes the mind creative
ll. 22–26	second argument: boredom teaches us to cope with discomfort (comparison with fast food)
ll. 27–33	solution: no ban, but phone-free times for schools, families and individuals
ll. 34–36	conclusion: appeal to the readers to accept boredom

3 / 3

Part B: Analysis

- 4 **Identify** the stylistic devices in the quotations and **explain** their effect.

Quotation	Stylistic device	Effect / function
"scrolling, streaming or swiping" (ll. 1–2)	alliteration, enumeration (tricolon)	makes the endless, almost automatic use of phones sound monotonous; easy to remember
"thirty heads bow down to thirty glowing screens, as if in prayer" (l. 9)	simile (and parallelism)	compares phone use to worship: screens seem almost holy, students seem dependent
"Nobody talks. Nobody stares at the ceiling. Nobody is bored" (ll. 9–10)	anaphora, short parallel sentences	stresses that boredom has completely disappeared; creates a strong rhythm
"it is the soil in which our own thoughts can finally take root" (ll. 35–36)	metaphor	presents boredom as the basis from which ideas grow; positive image of nature

6 / 6

- 5 **Analyse** how the author tries to convince her readers of her view. Consider the line of argument, the tone and the use of language.

Expected answer (content 6 points, language 4 points):

- introduction: text type (opinion article), author, topic, intention – to make readers value boredom and use their phones more consciously
- line of argument: hook with a rhetorical question and direct address; description of the problem with an example from her classroom; concession of the opposing view (ll. 12–16) and refutation introduced by "Yet" (l. 17); two arguments with growing importance ("a second, quieter cost"); moderate, constructive solution; appeal at the end
- credibility: personal experience as a teacher of twenty years; reference to psychologists; fair, balanced tone ("It is a fair question", "Phones are wonderful tools") and self-irony ("grumpy teacher") – she does not sound one-sided
- tone: personal, conversational and calm; first person "I", direct address "you", inclusive "we/us" – readers feel included, not blamed
- language: rhetorical questions (l. 1, l. 12), alliteration, anaphora, simile ("as if in prayer"), comparison with fast food, tricolon ("it remembers, it plans, it invents"), antithesis ("what we do, not what we say"), metaphor of the soil, imperatives and appeal ("give it a chance", "Let us ...")
- conclusion: the author combines personal experience, fair

concessions and vivid images to persuade readers in a friendly but convincing way • language: analytical vocabulary, quotations with line references, clear structure, correct English	
	10 / 10

Part C: Comment

6 Choose ONE of the following tasks. Write about 250–300 words. A Comment on the author's claim that "Boredom is not the enemy of a full life" (l. 35). B Assess the author's suggestions in ll. 27–33. Consider how realistic and useful they would be at your school and in your everyday life. Expected answer (content 6 points, language 6 points): • introduction: reference to the text and the claim / the suggestions, clear question or thesis • A: arguments for the claim (e.g. time for ideas and creativity, rest for the brain, more real conversations, better concentration) and against it (e.g. boredom can lead to frustration or bad habits; phones also give access to learning, art and contacts), with examples • B: each suggestion assessed (phone-free breaks, quiet corners, parents as role models, personal experiment): chances and problems, e.g. control, acceptance by older students, emergencies, habits; possible improvements • own opinion clearly stated and justified; conclusion that sums up the position • language: structure with paragraphs, linking words (moreover, however, on the other hand, all in all), range of vocabulary, correct grammar, appropriate register, required length	
	12 / 12

Part D: Mediation (German → English)

7 Mediate the information. An international youth website is collecting reports on how schools around the world deal with smartphones. Based on the German newspaper article below, write a contribution in English (about 200–250 words) in which you inform the readers about the experience at the Gymnasium am Kirchberg. <i>Do not translate word for word. Leave out details that are not relevant for an international audience.</i> (The German article is printed with task 7 in the task section.) Expected content (6 points, 1 point each): • the rule: phones switched off and kept in bags from the first to the sixth lesson, including breaks; otherwise handed in at the school	
---	--

office until the end of the day

- survey by the student council after one year (about 650 students): almost two thirds like the rule or find it acceptable
- positive effects: students talk more, play table tennis, borrow board games from the library; fewer arguments about secretly taken photos and videos
- criticism: older students (sixth form / upper school) feel treated like children; some parents want to reach their children in emergencies
- compromise: upper-school students may use phones in their own common room; parents can always call the school office
- phones may still be used in lessons with the teacher's permission (e.g. research); head teacher: the aim was to give students time back

Language and text type (6 points): suitable headline and introduction for an international audience, culture-specific terms explained (Gymnasium → grammar school, Oberstufe → sixth form / upper school, SV → student council, Sekretariat → school office), reported speech or paraphrase instead of quotations, own words, correct English, required length.

Example answer:

Phones at school: How a German school gave its students time back. At the Gymnasium am Kirchberg, a grammar school in Germany, students have had to follow a strict new rule since the beginning of last school year: from the first to the sixth lesson, smartphones must stay switched off in their bags – even during breaks. Anyone who uses a phone anyway has to hand it in at the school office until the end of the day. After one year, the student council asked about 650 students what they thought. Almost two thirds now like the rule or at least accept it. Many say that they talk to each other more during breaks, play table tennis or borrow board games from the library. Teachers have also noticed fewer arguments about photos and videos taken secretly. However, not everyone is happy. Older students in particular feel treated like children, and some parents want to be able to contact their children in an emergency. As a compromise, upper-school students may use their phones in their own common room, and parents can call the school office at any time. Phones can still be used in lessons if the teacher allows it, for example for research. The head teacher believes the rule has been a success, as the school wanted to give young people time back rather than take something away. Another survey is planned for next year. (226 words)