

YEAR 12 *Exam Practice*

2019

**ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE
(EAL)**

Section C Exam Practice

TASK BOOK

Instructions

A question and answer book is provided with this task book.
Refer to instructions on the front cover of the question and answer book.
You may keep this task book.

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* Note that some texts that have been previously published have been edited for the purposes of the Section C task.

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SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language**Scenario 1: A tax on meat****Background information**

Parminder Preciosa is a columnist for a local newspaper. Her opinion piece calling for a tax on red meat appears on the following page. The opinion piece is followed by a letter to the newspaper's editor from a reader.

Taxing the T-bone: it's time to give red meat the chop

Parminder Preciosa

Allow me to set the scene.

It's lunchtime in the outdoor area of your favourite restaurant and you've just placed your order. One glass of wine and the special of the day, your favourite: sausages and mashed potatoes.

The food arrives quickly and the waiter leaves after filling up your glass and offering a kind 'Enjoy your meal'.

The moment you've been waiting for is here, but just as you ready yourself to take that first bite – fork in hand, napkin in collar, excited at the expectation – you smell it.

Smoke.

Cigarette smoke. Wafting over to your table. Stinging your eyes. Sticking to the insides of your nostrils.

The offender is well within the legal range from your seat (you've checked), but it doesn't matter – the odour is overpowering.

Your potatoes have taken on the taste of an ashtray. Your glass of red wine resembles a puddle on a dirty cement road.

It's disgusting, you think to yourself. Another selfish smoker, poisoning themselves – and those in the surrounding area – with their dirty habit, sending your tax dollars up in smoke and making life uncomfortable for everyone else.

You're mad. You're furious. You're going to say something! And, to be honest, not many people would blame you.

Because, there's no doubt, it's easy to get angry about smoking in the twenty-first century.

The latest statistics suggest that 14.5 per cent of Australia's adults smoke, and the government is making sure those who can't quit know all about the cost of their habit, both to our society and to themselves.

Cigarettes are now taxed to high heaven, and the packages they come in are covered in images of the gruesome medical conditions that can affect even the most casual smoker.

But while you might be hyper-aware of the dangers of smoking, there's another killer in this picture, and it's hiding in plain sight. Yep, right *there*, next to your mashed potato.

I'm talking about the sausages. Red meat. Delicious, maybe, but just as much a threat to your health as that packet of cigarettes.

The World Health Organization (WHO) now classifies red meat as a carcinogen – that is, a substance capable of causing cancer – with the consumption of processed varieties such as sausages, ham and bacon showing an elevated risk to humans.

It's estimated that by 2020, 2.4 million deaths around the world will be attributed to eating red and processed meat, with the estimated cost to healthcare expecting to reach US\$285 billion.

But mention any of these statistics to the average person, and you're sure to draw looks of disbelief. Pepperoni pizza, bacon and eggs – fatal? But they're so delicious!

Sorry, people, but that's pretty much what they said about cigarettes once upon a time.

It wasn't easy to change the way we as a society think about smoking, and it's not going to be easy to change the way we think about red meat, either.



But just because something is difficult in the beginning, that doesn't mean it isn't worth doing.

It's time to treat meat the way we treat other threats to human health, and the first step should be taxing consumption.

Taxes such as the ones we have on cigarettes would address the enormous strain on our health budgets associated with eating red meat.

Taxes would also have positive knock-on effects that go beyond the economic, like encouraging people to make healthier choices, therefore potentially reducing their weight.

But even if the health argument won't convince you, there are many other reasons for bringing in a tax on meat.

One issue worth considering is how red meat consumption is affecting the planet.

Livestock farming is posing a terrible risk to our ecosystem, from the large amounts of greenhouse gases animals produce and the water needed to sustain them (500 grams of beef is estimated to require some 7000 litres of water), to the huge areas of carbon-absorbing forests being cleared to accommodate more farms. And with demand for red meat growing globally, the problem is only going to get worse.

Animal rights groups have also pointed to the sometimes appalling ways we treat the animals we eat, including the unethical practices used to raise and slaughter millions of cows and pigs each year. (Australia kills an astonishing 170,000 cattle each week, according to statistics.)

The case, then – to my mind, at least – is clear. And, in some ways, it's more persuasive than the arguments for taxing cigarettes.

Red meat has costs: economically, ethically and in terms of our health. And while it's nobody's right to dictate what people can and can't do, it's reasonable that individuals should pay for those activities that place a burden on all of us, be it smoking that cigarette or eating a T-bone steak.

Dear Editor,

I'm writing in regards to the recent opinion piece 'Taxing the T-bone: it's time to give red meat the chop' in your newspaper. I am a butcher by trade, as my father and his father were before me, and I was extremely disappointed by the narrow point of view expressed in this article. Humans have eaten red meat since they were living in caves, and have lived long and productive lives into our current century. Like many others, I believe red meat is part of a balanced diet, and as long as people are sourcing good-quality cuts from reputable butchers, they can forget about many of these health worries. In fact, taxing meat like the author suggests would likely drive people to purchase lower-quality products and actually increase the risk of health complications! I also resent the implication that, alongside my fellow butchers, I am poisoning citizens and ruining the economy. What about the alcohol industry? The author has picked a vulnerable target – farmers and hardworking small-business owners – and decided to ignore the fact that the alcohol business makes huge profits out of making people sick. Save your steak and flush that wine down the toilet, I say. And consider how such reckless opinion pieces in the media can affect everyday people – including local butchers, who are desperately trying to make a living for themselves.

Terrence Torvill

**END OF SCENARIO 1
TURN OVER**

SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language

Scenario 2: Buying pet-shop fish

Background information

Animal rights activists have long criticised pet shops for their treatment of fish, accusing them of shipping fish in cramped and cruel conditions and not caring for them when they arrive. Despite activists' calls for boycotts, many aquarium forums support pet shops as ethical places to buy pet fish, claiming that the fish are transported safely. Such forums also warn against shops that breed them irresponsibly.

Bettas (also known as Siamese fighting fish) don't require filters or air pumps in their aquariums and are classified as easy pets to care for, which leads to them being one of the most popular, and often mistreated, fish in the industry.

The first text is a blog post by a mother, Rowena Smith, sharing her negative experience of buying fish in a pet shop. The post appeared on her blog site 'EcoMums'. The blog post is followed by a response from a father, Jürgen, arguing in favour of ethical pet shops.

boycott: withdraw from commercial or social relationships as a punishment or protest.

Betta fish deserve betta!

So I've just been to the chain pet shop in town and I am *furious*. I've been thinking lately about getting my son a Betta, but after what I just saw I'm never going back there again!

First, they weren't even in proper tanks! Each fish was in a tiny plastic cup with hardly any room to swim or move around. They all had unclear water and the poor fish were practically stacked on top of each other. A lot of them looked sick, and as far as I could tell some of them were already dead.

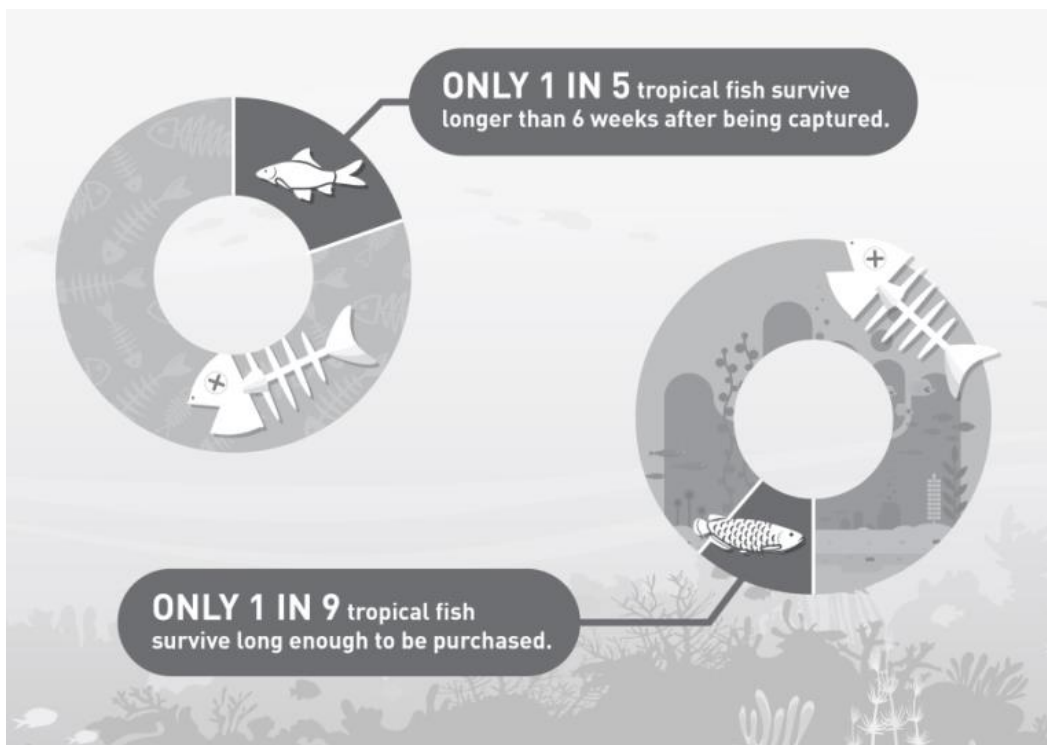
What are these pet shops thinking?!

I tried to find someone I could talk to, but of course there were only two people working that I could see. When I complained that the fish were living in such horrible conditions, the employee just shrugged and said there was nothing he could do. Apparently they have so many other important things to take care of in this little pet shop that no one has time to even change the water. And on top of that, he couldn't even answer me when I questioned him about why these beautiful fish were kept in plastic prisons.

I tracked down the other employee and asked him what he knew about keeping tropical fish, and he had absolutely zero knowledge on caring for a Betta. That's when I demanded to speak to the manager, but of course she was 'not in today', so I was given a corporate phone number to call to make my complaint.

It horrifies me to think how many people have gone in and purchased fish with absolutely no idea how to care for them. And what bothered me the most, other than the incompetent 'pet care' staff, were the products being sold in the shop.

There were quite a few tanks that were labelled as aquariums for Bettas, but they were disgustingly small. Some were even designed to house several together, with nothing but a piece of plastic to keep them separated. As one of the most aggressive fish you can buy, Bettas should not be able to see other males every second of the day, with nowhere to hide. It would be sure to cause a massive amount of stress on the fish, and stressed fish are very likely to get sick and die.



Data sourced from: <https://forthefishes.org/>

I just couldn't believe it!

These pet shops are only concerned about one thing: money. They think that by marketing Bettas as easy pets to care for with these cute small tanks, they can make more sales.

After seeing those gorgeous fish in their little cups, I started to wonder if they were treated just as badly before they got to the shop. A quick internet search showed me that I was right. The fish are packed into cardboard boxes in tiny plastic bags with a very small amount of water, and many of them die on the journey.

I could only stomach looking at the pictures for a few minutes before I had to turn away. Fish feel pain, people! It's been proven, and we need to do our part to help them.

So I'm asking all of my friends and followers to take my example and never buy from pet shops again. How can a company claim to love animals when their fish are dying in transit, on the shelves and in the homes of ignorant buyers?

I almost went back to the shop to buy their whole stock of Bettas so I could rescue them, but realised there would only be new fish brought in and left to starve and rot in their own dirt. I hope everyone else feels my disgust, and joins me in boycotting these unethical shops. If we don't support pet shops, hopefully they'll leave those poor Bettas alone. And you can bet I'll be calling that manager's number every day until something gets done!

COMMENT

I've seen this post going around a few times, but before we start shaming every single pet shop, I thought I would share my experience.

A few months ago I decided to buy an aquarium for my daughter's birthday so she could have her own fish. At first I ended up at a pet-shop chain like the one the blogger described, with the fish looking a bit sickly and neglected. I left immediately and made a phone call to the corporate office. They put me through to a representative who was extremely concerned about the state of the shop. She told me their policy is to thoroughly train their employees, requiring them to complete a series of modules to learn about each animal the shop sells. They also make sure that if the buyer shows signs of ignorance or doesn't have the proper equipment at home, they will refuse to sell to them.

However, I went to the next suburb over and found an independent aquarium. As soon as I walked in, I could see the fish were much healthier. They had clean water and I was greeted by many wiggling Bettas, not to mention a very helpful employee. Though the male Bettas were still in tiny jars, there was a sign by the display explaining that it was necessary to keep them safe until they were sold and given proper tanks. Out of curiosity, I asked her how the Bettas are transported to the shop, and she went to get me one of the bags. Each one is filled with a small amount of water meant to make the journey as easy as possible. Bettas need lots of oxygen since they breathe from the surface, and less water means less pressure on their bodies as they travel. To state that the conditions are cruel in all pet shops is not accurate at all, and I think the spreading of such information would hurt ethical fish shops that support the industry in a positive way.

SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language**Scenario 3: Sunflower selfies****Background information**

The small town of Sunnyside is known for its sunflower plantations, which are a major contributor to the town’s economy. Recently, Sunnyside has experienced large numbers of tourists visiting the fields and taking photos. The number of visitors has caused damage to the crops and is upsetting farmers. One farmer, Harvey Sunshine, called an emergency council meeting to address the problem. The following is a transcript of the speech he delivered.

Alysha Savannah, a popular social media influencer, was a regular visitor to Sunnyside’s sunflower fields. Her social media post expresses her disappointment that the town might start charging a fee for tourists and photographers to enter the fields.

Speech at Sunnyside council meeting by Harvey Sunshine

Ladies and gentleman of our beloved community: for those who aren't familiar with me, my name is Harvey Sunshine, long-time local of Sunnyside and resident curmudgeon.

Most of you have come to know me as the man who is always complaining about something, and while that reputation is partly justified, it's not something I take lightly. Every now and then, issues need to be brought to people's attention and we must speak our mind, loudly and clearly.

I've called this meeting today to talk about an issue of increasing concern for our community.

For the past two summers, I, like many of my fellow farmers, have been dealing with a huge increase in the number of tourists visiting my sunflower fields.

Tourists have always been a presence at Sunnyside. We live in a beautiful part of the world, after all, and the sunflowers in full bloom are something truly special to behold.

But the sheer number arriving in the summer months is causing chaos across the region.

People tell me it's a 'social media' problem, and that what these folks are after is a photo or two to share on the internet.

But the damage they're willing to cause to get that one perfect shot is, frankly, disturbing.

They arrive in huge crowds – sometimes hundreds a day – parking along the single road that runs by my property, blocking the traffic.

They come armed to the teeth with selfie sticks and snacks.



Harvey Sunshine inspects his sunflowers for damage.

Some of them – the decent ones – enter through my front gate and ask permission to take a photo, but the rest are climbing my fence, or cutting the wire.

I've seen people trample hundreds of dollars of plants underfoot. I've seen others snap the heads off my plants and take them home. I've spent days clearing litter from my property and hours arguing with those who think they have a right to wander around my farm without a care in the world.

'Well, what's to be done?' you ask.

As far as council is concerned, there's nothing we can do.

Put up and shut up until the season is over, they tell us.

Absolute cowardice!

We need urgent and concerted action if sunflowers are to have any kind of future here in our community.

My solution? Simple. Or, at least, simple economics. If these people want to take photos of the crop then we should let them – but at a price. I'm suggesting we farmers charge a fee to the tourists who enter our property and take photos of the flowers.

This is, after all, a very fragile plant, and one that only blooms during a small window of time in the year.

Charging these people is a way to help our farmers get through the non-productive season with a little extra money to invest when the next crop comes around.

curmudgeon: a bad-tempered person.

It's not just the farmers who would benefit, either.

Think of what a bonus a little extra money would be to our community, to our local businesses.

And then there are the opportunities to explore new projects. Coffee carts outside every farm. Local markets selling fresh produce from around the region. The potential is limitless.

I know of a number of towns in other regions doing the same thing.

Dandyville is already earning the benefits of asking tourists to pay to see their flower plantations, and we can't let them get ahead of us.

Whether you can believe it or not, people are willing to pay to take photos of our sunflowers, and we have a choice: let them do so, or let our farmers wear the bill for leaving the situation as it is.

I'm calling on all of you to get behind our farmers and get behind our community. Support my motion for implementing a town-wide price of admission to our sunflower fields. Support our local businesses. Support the future of Sunnyside!

Instafamous8

1 DAY AGO



Hey, photogenics!

Remember this one? I took this a year ago today in the gorgeous sunflower fields of Sunnyside. I could hardly believe it when I heard the town are planning to charge photographers a fee to take a few snaps during the blooming season. What's so wrong with sharing the beauty of nature with the world? Next they'll be asking for a couple of bucks every time you want to enjoy a sunny day or a glass of water. And why do we need to pay them, considering the publicity we give them for free? I think I've sent a thousand people their way based on my photos' view counts alone. There are plenty of other beautiful places out there that won't charge you for the privilege. Sorry Sunnyside, but I'm going elsewhere next summer.

**END OF SCENARIO 3
TURN OVER**

SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language**Scenario 4: Single-use takeaway coffee cups****Background information**

Slow Joe's is a well-known cafe franchise with stores across Australia. Due to growing concern about the environmental effects of plastic in our society, the company has decided to stop selling coffee in single-use takeaway cups. The reaction to the decision among Slow Joe's customers has been mixed, and one customer has decided to write a letter of complaint to the company, which is printed on the next page. It is followed by a response to the complaint from Slow Joe's CEO, Slow Dan.

Dear Slow Joe's Coffee,

I'm writing this letter regarding your company's recent decision to stop providing customers with single-use takeaway coffee cups.

I am a long-time 'Regular Joe', who has been purchasing coffee from my local Joe's for the last 15 years.

On the whole, my experience has been positive. The coffee at your cafe is always fresh, the staff are always friendly and the service is second to none.

That being said, the decision to do away with takeaway cups has proved to be deeply disappointing to me and many other former customers of your stores.

As a busy person who runs a medium-sized company in the city, time and convenience are very precious to me.

I wake up at 4.45 am every single morning, run 5.5 kilometres and am showered and dressed to catch the 7.00 am train to work.

Every hour of my day is accounted for, including the time spent on public transport, where I catch up on emails and organise my schedule for the day.

So when it comes to caffeine, I think you'll understand I have little in the way of time to sit down and enjoy my coffee in your cafe – even if I sometimes wish this wasn't the case.

I simply can't afford the extra minutes to take my seat at a table and wait for my latte to arrive, and I certainly can't spare the time it would take to drink that latte sitting down.

The takeaway cup is perfect for my purposes. I can drink it on the go, it's easy to dispose of and, unlike the reusable cups that are currently in fashion, it requires no washing. (Who has the time to wash their cup after each use?)

There's no doubt that the environment should be of concern to us all – but to what lengths should we be expected to go to protect it?

I believe there are changes we can make to reduce the amount of plastic pollution in our environment without sacrificing some of the conveniences we enjoy in our daily lives.

Perhaps Joe's would have been better to investigate biodegradable options for takeaway cups and utensils such as stirrers and teaspoons, for example. This would have ensured you held on to those loyal customers like me whose lifestyle simply necessitates purchasing coffee to go.

I now purchase my coffee from your competitor Steady Steve's, and though I admit that their lattes are not of the same high standard, I have been forced to make this sacrifice for the sake of convenience.

One disgruntled patron gone to a competitor? You might not think it amounts to much, but I have met many ex-customers of yours who have had to make the same decision.

All of us can agree: walking past Slow Joe's each morning to purchase sub-standard coffee in a sub-standard cafe is a bitter experience, and not just for the taste.

On behalf of your regular customers everywhere, I urge you to reconsider your decision and reinstate single-use coffee cups in your stores.

Yours sincerely,

Elwina Aberforth

Dear Elwina,

Thank you for taking the time to write to us.

It's policy here at Slow Joe's that every customer complaint is replied to and, in your case, I have personally taken on the responsibility of addressing your concerns.

I'd first like to say that we appreciate your business and were saddened to learn that you are now purchasing your coffee elsewhere.

In making the decision to discontinue disposable cups at our stores, we recognised that we might make some customers unhappy.

It's my view, however, that the argument for doing so was clear.

I believe each of us is responsible for ensuring that the world we are leaving to the next generation is in at least comparable shape to the one we've been fortunate to enjoy.

This means doing what we can to protect the environment – making adjustments to our lifestyles or, in Slow Joe's case, our business model, to bring about real change.

At the moment, there are no truly biodegradable options for single-use coffee cups (contrary to what you might have heard), and the last thing we would like to see is our products floating in the ocean, clogging up creeks or taking up space in landfill.

Convenience will always be an argument against doing things differently, and I sympathise with your experience, but it's on all of us to make some degree of sacrifice in the interests of preserving our future world.

For Joe's this means taking a significant financial risk, and for our customers, it means giving up a certain amount of the comfort and convenience to which they've become accustomed.

But the expected benefit to the environment is just one part of our decision.

For a cafe that prides itself on delivering 'slow' coffee with a wholesome touch, we feel that takeaway cups are no longer compatible with our vision for the business.

We hope this decision will encourage customers to enjoy their coffee in-house, where they can experience the kind of authentic hospitality Joe's is renowned for.

Like you, I am a busy person, but I have learned that some things are best enjoyed slowly and in the company of others. Coffee, in my opinion at least, is no exception.

We hope you can come to respect our decision, and we look forward to seeing you back in a Joe's store soon.

With kind regards,

Slow Dan (son of Slow Joe), CEO



**Save our planet –
drink your coffee
the *slow* way.**

SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language**Scenario 5: The 9-to-5 workday****Background information**

A recent trend in the workplace has been to give people more freedom with the hours they work, such as moving to a four-day working week with longer hours each day, or allowing employees to choose their own hours as long as their tasks are completed. As more research appears on what makes us more productive during the workday, some are sticking to the routine they know. The following blog post written by Jayne Thompson explores the issue further.

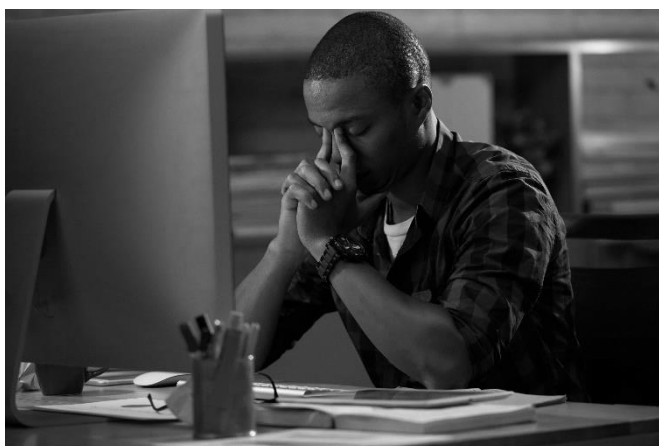
Working 9-to-5 (not a way to make a living?)

By Jayne Thompson

Is it me, or is the world splitting into two tribes of workers?

On the one side, the 9-to-5'ers – salary slaves who have to give everything to their job just to survive. On the other, business owners and the self-employed – people who work for themselves, from anywhere, and take control of their time. If you had a choice, which would you choose?

The question is a trick, of course. We're supposed to feel sorry for the unfortunate people in traditional employment, counting the days until retirement. Clearly, 9-to-5 is the enemy, something to reject, escape and avoid wherever possible. Admitting that you go to work gladly – that you love your co-workers and look forward to the daily grind – is a bit like saying you like to kick puppies.



Working from home might sound like fun ...

Why is this?

Is working 9-to-5 a waste of your life?

The way I see it, the fervour for freelance is based on the following arguments.

Working 9-to-5 is not a natural state for most of us. Sure, there are some who love the routine of going to work and spending eight hours at a desk, but others – usually labelled 'creative' types – can feel trapped and stifled by this level of routine.

Humans are not robots, we don't plug in and perform at the same rate of output for eight hours straight. Our energy comes in peaks and troughs. Why not work when we're most productive, not when a job demands it?

People were not born to work in cubicles. A cubicle is literally a box that you are put inside. It's a metaphor for the inauthentic life, where you can't charge what you're worth and recognise your full value.

Most of these arguments revolve around one alleged truth: that people would rather be broke and do what they love than be rich and miserable. In this sense, work is held up as something revelatory about your character. Those who refuse the 9-to-5 are portrayed as being more creative, more adventurous, more credible, more virtuous, more self-improving than the soulless salaryman who will never self-actualise and achieve happiness.

Therefore, 9-to-5 is something for people with limiting beliefs who are not empowered to live authentically.

The 9-to-5 as liberation?

It's possible to be a successful and passionate and authentic person while working 9-to-5. I know this is not an impossible dream, because I do it.

As a freelancer, in a profession that allows me to set my own schedule – work from a beach should I wish to, structure my week according to my own personality traits – I choose to work the 9-to-5. In an actual office with a desk and swivel chair and a half-hour off for lunch. I actually work a more traditional job now than I ever did as a corporate 9-to-5'er.

And it's blissful.

Because this way, there's a firm distinction between work and not-work. For eight hours a day, my clients get to call on me, my editors get to manage me ... and that's all they get. After 5pm, my time belongs to me.

When you live in your head like I do, it's so important to embrace the liberating boundaries of a well-defined workday.

And I think there's a reason very few people do better starting their own business compared to working for someone else. And that's because most people would rather live this way. Every single person who successfully starts their own business works double the hours of the 9-to-5. Being the boss doesn't mean more freedom, it means more responsibility. You work nights. You work weekends. You skip holidays to keep the cash rolling in. It is easy to lose money and your mind when starting your own business.

By contrast, look what a 9-to-5 (or shift work, or any other type of predictable work pattern) gives you:

- A secure job that pays a predictable wage, where you know what your goals are, where most of the risk is on someone else's back (or at least it's shared).
- A life outside of work. Come 5.00 pm, you're free to do whatever you want. That means you get to cook dinner, work out, go on a date, train living trees into artistic shapes – whatever you choose to do. Except work!
- Greater efficiency. Essentially, you have a deadline every day at 5.00 pm. Firmly holding yourself to these boundaries means you have to focus and prioritise tasks. Structure means productivity and for some personalities, this level of focus is a must.
- The opportunity to give back. Instead of hoarding their skills for personal gain, seasoned professionals can pass their knowledge on to co-workers who deserve and appreciate support.

You get to be one person at work, and another person after work. For many people, there's a lot to be gained from compartmentalising your personality. You do your job, you serve society, and then you retreat to your private world. For me, having these distinctions is how I get to be everything I want to be. Being able to unplug and come home with a clear mind is a wonderful thing.

Now, there are some who call for shorter working weeks, which is a perfectly reasonable request in the face of ever-increasing workdays. No one benefits from being tied to a working construct that constrains their other pursuits and desires. But when the 9-to-5 works, it gives you the best chance of creating a work–life balance that prioritises the other areas of your life. So as long as you're getting paid the right amount for your time, it's liberating.

Reclaim the 9-to-5!



The immeasurable benefits of working a 9-to-5 job.

**END OF SCENARIO 5
TURN OVER**

SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language

Scenario 6: The narrowing of Beach Road

Background information

For about twenty years, Kingston City Council in south-east Melbourne has been attempting to complete a Bay Trail: a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists along the beach from the Mentone Lifesaving Club to Mordialloc. However, many people in the local community oppose the narrowing of Beach Road because they believe that removing parking spaces along the beach will place cyclists in danger. This is because cars will be forced to park on the road, which will include some of the cycling lane. Those in favour of completing the path by narrowing the road argue that it will help protect the natural flora and fauna.

The first text on the next page is an opinion piece written by a local resident expressing his concerns about the proposed completion of the Bay Trail. The opinion piece is followed by a contribution to the community's newsletter, written by another resident who wants the project completed.

Cyclists caught in the battle of Beach Road

Many of Australia's top professional cyclists use it as a training track. Thousands of recreational riders just love to pedal along it for pleasure. Now part of Melbourne's famous Beach Road is about to be narrowed and it could become a deathtrap. Steve Perkin reports.

For much of this year, a battle has been going on in Melbourne's south that could impact on the thousands of cyclists who ride around Beach Road each week.

In March, Kingston councillors voted to narrow Beach Road between Mentone and Mordialloc. To be more specific, it's the couple of kilometres between Mentone Lifesaving Club and Mordialloc's Peter Scullin Reserve.

It's the same section of road where cyclists often get up a final sprint before resting, or just turning, at Mordialloc Creek.

By narrowing the road, council will be able to extend a joint walking and riding path without removing vegetation it deems to be important, but which others have described as nothing but scrub.

Councillors supported the motion despite massive outcry from residents who argue that narrowing the road will create dangerous issues for drivers and cyclists.

The anti-narrowing lobby has presented a petition with some 1,200 signatures; has conducted massive leaflet campaigns; bombarded councillors and residents with emails; and built a Facebook page that has nearly 800 followers.

Residents along Beach Road are now planning a display of banners from their balconies in the hope of generating more public support, particularly from cyclists, many of whom don't know that a battle, partly created to improve their safety, has raged for five months.

The Do Not Narrow Beach Road lobby has even said it will provide signs 90cm by 120cm to every resident in the area who wants one.



One of the councillors opposed to the narrowing, Cr Geoff Gledhill, recently wrote his regular column for the newsletter Kingston Your City and claimed that councillors were ignoring 'the strongly expressed demand of the community that has made it very clear, do not narrow Beach Road'. He described the narrowing as a 'complete debacle'.

At the last minute, the decision was made not to publish the column and Cr Gledhill was told it breached the council's media policy. Cr Gledhill promptly sent the unpublished column out on email and Facebook.

Now, unlike the five councillors who are behind this road narrowing, I actually live just off Beach Road along the section to be affected.

Largely, I've been a passive campaigner. I've provided my signature to petitions and pressed the 'like' button on the website because the logic of narrowing Beach Road totally escapes me, particularly if it's to extend something called the Bay Trail.

I don't like walking along the Bay Trail, as it currently exists closer to the city. It's dangerous. Cyclists not confident of riding on the road instead ride along this trail. Many are young kids. Others are senior citizens.

lobby: a group of people seeking to influence legislators on an issue.

SCENARIO 6 – continued
TURN OVER

Just crossing the trail to get to or from the beach is dangerous enough. I've seen a dog on a leash get smashed by a cyclist, and I have a friend who upended a pedestrian.

Both broke limbs.

What this narrowing means is that cyclists, cars and people trying to get to the beach or the popular lifesaving clubs in Mentone and Mordialloc will have to share less space.

There will be fewer car parking spots made available, meaning these people will be forced to park their cars in streets like mine where an increase in multi-level development has already resulted in so many cars parked in our area that visitors have been forced to park hundreds of metres away.

So, if you're a cyclist who likes to crank up their bike as they approach Mordialloc, or if you're one of the many national cyclists who use Beach Road to train – and there are plenty who do – get ready to slow down.

Riding conditions along that part of Beach Road will change. Cyclists will be sharing a lane with car drivers, and that's already well proven to be a dangerous combination. Even a fatal one.

Dear readers,

Beach Road, once a peaceful drive close to my home and heart, has been an eyesore for months now. Protest signs have been tied to fences and balconies, cluttering the view of the beautiful beach houses with giant signs all shouting the same message: 'Do not narrow Beach Road'. And honestly, it's getting a bit ridiculous.

The people with the signs are ignoring the fact that all of the council's plans have been approved. VicRoads thinks the proposed changes to Beach Road are perfectly safe, and it will stay two lanes wide.

Yet I keep hearing complaints that parking spaces will disappear, causing cars to park on the road itself and get in the way of cyclists. The council even compromised with the protestors and reduced the number of removed parking spots from 40 to 17. So why is this still an issue? I don't understand how our 'community' can be so worked up over 17 parking spaces when we still have 900 available.

I know they're also trying to say they're concerned about cyclist safety, but if they really cared, they would be promoting the construction of the Bay Trail. Regardless of skill level, cyclists will always get into accidents on the road. So why would we want to oppose building a safe trail for riders and pedestrians? Bicycle Network Victoria, the state's foremost cycling organisation, agrees with the council, saying yes please, build the Bay Trail! Save lives!

So if you're like me and you've been wondering why there are still so many signs up, let me offer an answer. Perhaps the owners of those lovely beach houses have figured out that by keeping the road the same width, building the Bay Trail will cut into the vegetation along the beach. Then those owners will end up with a much better view of the ocean, and increase the value of their houses by thousands of dollars.

Something to consider.

SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language

Scenario 7: Device-free spaces

Background information

Analogue Alternative Alliance (AAA) spokeswoman Maria Tsipras recently published an opinion piece in an online newspaper advocating for more ‘device-free’ spaces in Australian cities. The group is proposing several initiatives, including device-free carriages on all metropolitan trains. The article is followed by a comment from one of the newspaper’s readers.

analogue: not involving or relating to the use of computer technology, in contrast to a digital counterpart.

Save us from ourselves: the case for device-free spaces

By Maria Tsipras

Another day on our city's trains and another round of obnoxious mobile phone users.

It's 8.00 am, the middle of the peak-hour commute, and my still-waking brain is under assault from the passengers broadcasting their telephone conversations across the carriage.

Did I really need to know what the man next to me had for breakfast? Or whether the lady on the aisle seat watched *Bachelor in Paradise* last night?

And then there's the woman who Skypes her mother in the US for her entire seven-stop journey into the city.



Peace and quiet on public transport is the latest casualty of our phone-obsessed culture, and, to be frank, I've had enough.



Catching two trains to work every morning has given me firsthand insight into how attached we've become to our digital devices, and the terrible effect it's having on our ability to interact with one another.



It's not just those commuters shouting their innermost thoughts down the speaker of their phone, it's the thousands of others glued to their screens in a zombie-like daze, who can barely manage to sit properly in a designated seat or display basic social manners.

What happened to the time when we talked to one another on the morning commute? Or when we did anything else but lean over our phones and wiggle our thumbs?

Humans are on track to become a species reduced to the biological extension of a handheld device, and the question needs to be asked: is this a reality we truly want?

It's not what I want and, as it turns out, a growing number of us feel the same way.

As a proud member of the Analogue Alternative Alliance (AAA), a group of community-minded individuals for the preservation of device-free spaces, I believe in putting limits on the way our society uses digital technology.

AAA members want to protect the parts of us that still make us human, like basic interaction and communication skills (without the need for a phone or a tablet).

But contrary to what you might think, we are not anti-technology or anti-devices.

Like me, the alliance recognises that we live in an age in which mobile devices are simply a necessary part of life, and many alliance members work in jobs that depend on twenty-first-century digital tools.

Perhaps the position would be better described as anti-antisocial technology.

Our grievance is with the way in which the digital is ever-present. We believe there is an urgent need to draw a line between the areas of our lives that are device-friendly and those that are device-free.

We all know about the dangers of using phones in cars, but what about the disruption caused when people take their devices to the bedroom, the dining table or the spaces we share with strangers – like the train?

The alliance is currently working on an agenda to take back more public space from handheld devices, starting with a proposal to implement ‘device-free carriages’ across the city’s train network.

Under the proposal, every rear carriage of every train would be designated a device-free zone, and passengers who disobeyed the rules would be asked to leave.

The move would be the first of its kind in the Asia-Pacific – something similar is already in place in parts of Western Europe – and would distinguish this country as one that respects some spaces as well and truly device-free.

Can you imagine it? (It might help if you looked away from that screen!)

Picture a sanctuary from the ever-present glow of blue light; a place without the stockbroker taking part in a conference call to your right or the woman sharing the horrible details of her latest operation with her sister to your left.

Picture passengers on their morning commute reading a newspaper, a book or – shock, horror – striking up a friendly conversation instead of scrolling through their social-media feed.

Is it really that far-fetched?

The AAA understands that there will be pushback from some members of the community. ‘Why should we reserve space for a bunch of high and mighty complainers?’ they might say.

But the AAA case is simple: give people the opportunity to imagine a different reality, a more human reality, and let them decide for themselves if they’d like to participate.

AAA isn’t looking for a total ban on mobile phones, we’re simply asking for an alternative – an option for those who are no longer comfortable with the way we use our mobile devices and the effect they’re having on our lives.

And, who knows, maybe the idea will catch on.

Support our right for device-free spaces and sign the petition on the Analogue Alternative Alliance website to implement device-free carriages.

ALL COMMENTS	SORT
Boondoggle87 2 DAYS AGO	
<p>Sorry Maria, but I’m not sure I agree with the AAA’s idea. I find the spectacle of people on their devices just as depressing as the next person (and don’t get me started on those people talking on their phones on trains), but I wonder if this is really a new problem. What do you think everyone did on trains before mobile phones? It’s likely they were all staring at their shoes avoiding each other’s eyes. The handheld device is really just a convenient cover for essentially doing the same thing. And, on that point, are conversations between passengers any better anyway? Often, they’re just as obnoxious and equally annoying. Mobile phones aren’t making us antisocial, they’re just making us socialise differently, and I don’t think it’s as bad as you make it out to be.</p>	

SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language**Scenario 8: Wedding photography****Background information**

The following is a post by a young woman dedicated to blogging her wedding-planning experience who believes that professional photography is a dying art. The blog post is followed by a comment from a reader giving her opinion on the issue of hiring a photographer; her response is based on her own experiences and knowledge.

Chiffon blues wedding blog

Pics or it didn't happen?

Hey ladies! I hope all of you budgeting brides-to-be are keeping cool, calm and collected while you're planning your big day. As for me, I faced off against my mum-zilla this week, and it was rough. We went for brunch on Saturday and she asked me if I had hired a professional wedding photographer yet.

Um, no!

Do you know how strange it is to hire someone to follow you around for an entire day? Not that I don't love feeling like a movie star, but as I tried to explain to my poor, Stone-Age mother, more and more brides are choosing not to spend a fortune on a wedding photographer. In fact, professional photographers in general are dying out, and here are just a few reasons why.

In the days of thousands of Instagram pictures of latte art and flower walls, it seems as if the phrase 'pics or it didn't happen' is completely true. We're pressured to document every second and every meal of our lives, and who wants that kind of pressure on your wedding day? After everything I have to organise leading up to the big event, I want to be able to relax and spend time with all of my guests (not to mention my groom!), rather than standing around in awkward poses for several hours.

Have you ever been to a wedding where you weren't bored out of your mind while everyone took photos at a mysterious location? I certainly haven't! So maybe our generation could use a little more of living-in-the-moment and a little less of obsessing over getting just the right shot. Did you know that most married couples don't even look at their wedding photos more than once? And how many times do people actually find a use for the hundreds of pictures they take over their lifetime? I hope I'm not just speaking for myself when I say I'm planning my wedding day to be unforgettable, whether I have an artsy profile picture in my pretty dress or not.

And did I mention how expensive it is to hire a photographer? An average wedding photographer could charge between \$2000 and \$9000! It's totally crazy, especially when you're trying to keep your budget under control. Can you imagine spending thousands of dollars for a USB drive of pictures? It's insane! Besides, think of all the other magical things you could be spending that money on that would help ALL of your guests remember the day – like food and favours.

Also, have you ever actually made the mistake of talking to a professional photographer? They're so desperate to book people and make money that they practically stalk you. After finally emailing a very insistent photographer who kept asking me strange questions like what my favourite colour was and which celebrity I was crushing on, I had to take a step back. Wedding photographers are obsessed with helping you tell your 'epic love story', but not with letting you live it. I came to the realisation that I want to spend our money on fun things like an ice-cream truck or a good band to help everyone enjoy the day, rather than throwing it away on a total stranger.

mum-zilla: a mother who is extremely demanding and controlling.



This is how I imagine my wedding – surrounded by my loved ones, and no creepy strangers.

Plus, with all the social media that our generation uses nowadays, just about anyone can be a photographer. My advice, if you still want an old-school camera clicking away, is to ask your wedding guests if anyone takes pictures for a hobby. They'll be honoured that you asked them to help out, and might only charge you a few hundred. Not to mention the fact that you'll be able to look relaxed and comfortable in every single shot!

But if you're totally set on having pictures of your wedding but the idea of spending any type of money on them has you shaking in your vintage-store heels, not to worry! It's guaranteed that your guests will bring their phone on the day, so come up with a catchy hashtag and let them do the work. Throughout your special day, everyone you love will be uploading pics left and right, which means you won't have to wait months and months and months to enjoy what it looked like when all your planning came together.

Not to mention the fact that you'll be sure to have great pictures of everyone who came (because who doesn't love a selfie?!) and each picture will be unique. It's hard for one person to catch each and every awe-worthy moment, but with 200 people on the lookout, who knows what kind of special photos they'll manage to take! One thing's for sure: only the people that know me will be able to take pictures of the things that are important to me. Why would I trust a stranger with that? And with all of our technology advances, cameras on phones are, like, ridiculously good. Plus, my friends know my favourite filter.

However, if you still find yourself siding with my mother on the issue of getting a professional to document your wedding, then hire away! But if you're looking for alternatives to dropping a boatload of cash on something the modern bride can definitely do without, then I hope I was able to give you some helpful tips.

Until next time, fellow brides! xo

COMMENT

Interesting ideas here, but I'm afraid you're wrong about quite a few things. My brother is a wedding photographer and I really don't think he would appreciate being painted as someone who stalks people for money. Professionals are just that. Professional. They're all trained artists, not to mention the fact that they run their own businesses. That money that you're complaining about spending goes towards travel, expensive equipment and insurance, spending a whole day in a high-stress working environment, and not to mention the endless hours selecting and editing thousands of pictures. A friend who takes pictures 'for a hobby' is not going to be able to get you proper results or know what type of pictures you're going to regret passing up. My brother has heard so many horror stories from couples who didn't invest in a professional: from getting blurry pictures back to never getting their pictures at all. One couple told him their photographer never once took a picture of the bride and groom together. Plus, wasn't the whole point of your post that you want to spend quality time with your friends and family? Hiring a professional would allow you to relax and do just that, while they capture all of those beautiful moments between you and your guests. And at the end of the day, your pictures will be the only thing you've spent money on that will last.

SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language**Scenario 9: Wearable technology in the workplace****Background information**

The following article was published in *SuitNoTie*, an online publication for business executives who want to keep up with the latest trends and developments in the business world.

Following the article is a cartoon from the workers' rights website *Stand Up!* The cartoon is responding to the potential negative effects of monitoring employees' health and fitness using activity trackers.

The wearable workplace

By Brannigan Forsythe

It's official – the wearable technology revolution is here, and there's plenty of room for businesses to get in on the action. From managing employee health to improving overall productivity, companies around the globe are using wearables to supercharge their operations, and there's no reason you can't do the same. Curious? We show you why now is the time to start thinking about working wearables into your world.

You can't put a price on health – or can you?

A quick survey of wearable tech on the market right now will tell you two things: one, wearables are more popular than ever; and two, they're predominantly pitched at the health conscious (or those trying to be).

It might be a little hard to see the angle here, at least at first glance.

Being health conscious – getting your steps in, measuring the distance you run each morning – is great, but what does that have to do with you and your business?

There are plenty of reasons why health and fitness should be a company concern as well as a personal one.

Research tells us that fitter and healthier employees have higher energy levels, are less likely to get sick and are more productive in the long term.

But getting your workers to take responsibility for improving their health is not so easy, especially as many employers are understandably reluctant to order their employees to do so.

Enter wearables. As many companies can tell you, encouraging employees to use wearable tech like a Fitbit is a great way to foster greater health consciousness in your workplace, and the cost for the company is relatively small.

After all, what would you prefer to be paying for? A fitness tracker – which is getting cheaper by the day – or the cost of covering sick leave?

Wearables that work for you

Sickness and injury are simply an unpleasant reality that workplaces have to deal with, but there's no doubt that the incidence can vary from industry to industry.

When it comes to retail and manufacturing, the risk (and cost) can be crippling.

US insurance company Liberty Mutual estimated the direct cost of overexertion injuries in these areas to be US\$15.1 billion (one quarter of the total workplace injury direct costs), and there's no reason to think that the proportion of costs in Australia would be significantly different.

Unless we replace the entire workforce with robots, this is a problem that won't go away.

Would activity trackers stop your workers getting injured on the job? Probably not, but there are a range of other wearable options out there – with some very impressive applications.

Step inside an Audi assembly plant, for example, and you'll be greeted by some of the world's first bionic workers.

The German carmaker has been trialling the use of wearable exoskeletons to reduce the stress on workers' bodies.

wearables: electronic devices that can be incorporated into clothing or worn on the body as implants or accessories.

Worn like a piece of clothing, the exoskeleton connects at the hips and features support structures across specific points on the upper and lower body.

Wearables also offer a number of benefits when it comes to responding to on-the-job accidents.

Though not as complex as an exoskeleton, tech like Wearsafe is set to dramatically improve safety in high-risk environments.

Wearsafe is a wearable tag that can be activated with the push of a button in an emergency, automatically contacting first-responders and supervisors with location data and real-time audio from the incident.

It's a deceptively simple tech solution to an age-old problem – knowing where your workers are, what they're doing, and when they get into trouble – and another example of wearable tech's revolutionary potential.

Working out what fits (and wearing the consequences)

Okay, you might now be convinced about the value of bringing wearables into the workplace, but be warned – it's not going to be such an easy sell to your employees.

With privacy concerns around technology use a high priority for many people, the prospect of employers collecting data on workers is likely to be met with some resistance.

A recent survey by PricewaterhouseCoopers found that 82 per cent of respondents were concerned about the privacy implications of wearable tech, with many voicing concerns about the kinds of data collected, who would have access to it, and what it might be used for.

The real issue, then, is trust, and the decision to implement wearable tech should come with a comprehensive plan for educating employees about how they will be affected and what processes are in place to protect their information.

That being said, it's clear that wearables are here to stay (they're not wearing out!), and keen CEOs need to keep ahead of the curve – or the revolution will pass them by.

Forsythe is a staff writer at SuitNoTie and the former CEO of a multinational company.



SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language**Scenario 10: Artificial intelligence in the classroom****Background information**

Around the world, schools are increasingly using technology in the classroom. There are now numerous computer applications that aim to improve education and encourage teachers and students to work better together.

Principal Gibson from Highburg Primary School has sent a letter home to parents about introducing an artificial intelligence application at the school. The email that follows is a reply from a concerned parent.

Dear parents,

I hope everyone is getting excited for the summer holidays coming up! I am writing to you to announce some exciting news: our school has been selected to test brand new technology in our classrooms next year.

A local company called Teachie has developed an artificial intelligence (AI) application for tablets and computers that is designed to help our students learn.



Starting next year, the students in Years 5 and 6 will need to purchase their own tablet to use both in class and at home. All of their teachers will have access to the work the students complete, and they can upload study plans, homework and tests straight to the device. The technology is quite revolutionary, in that the AI will monitor each student as they work through daily lessons and tasks at home.

Our teachers are incredibly excited by the possibilities. The app will be able to identify how students work through maths problems, how they analyse texts and how they memorise information. From there, the AI can identify their individual strengths and weaknesses. Just think how much easier it will be to help our students grow when a detailed report on their learning abilities can be printed at the end of each day.

This application will completely transform the role that teachers play in the classroom. Rather than standing at the front of the room giving speeches, they'll be able to spend much more time with each student, offering encouragement and guiding them through the learning process. The AI will be able to answer simple questions instantly, but our teachers will be able to spend time going over complicated concepts with those who need the extra help. All in all, students will receive more face-to-face time with their teacher, and there will be fewer interruptions to their study should they encounter difficulties.

I have spent a lot of time discussing this idea with our teachers and we were all able to appreciate the benefits these tablets would bring to the classroom. Students these days are incredibly technology literate, and they can sometimes find it difficult to focus on a textbook or a whiteboard for hours at a time. By transferring the lessons to an interactive application, they'll be able to absorb more information throughout the day. Clicking and writing answers as they learn will also help them to remember more than if they were forced to take notes or listen to a speaker, so we fully expect our test scores to increase by the end of the experiment.

The tablets will also be able to store a lot of data, which we are hoping will decrease the amount of money parents generally spend on textbooks and workbooks. In fact, the price of the tablet would equal the price of two textbooks, but it won't need to be replaced for many years. Not to mention the amount of paper and printing costs we'll save by moving to tablets.

A possible issue that came up in my discussion with the teachers is the concern some parents might have about the amount of screen time their child has at school, as well as at home.

However, the research team at Teachie assures us that by using the tablets and interacting with the artificial intelligence, our students will be more prepared for the types of jobs they might have in the future.

The sorts of work our kids might be doing after university will be far more technology-based, and might even require them to coexist with AI and similar programs to the one they'll be using here at school. Though that means more screen time for them now, it could also mean giving them an edge for their future careers. There is also the possibility that new technology – such as virtual reality and voice recognition – will become available to us, which would only enrich the classroom experience further.

I am incredibly excited for our students and our school in regard to this new experiment, and I hope all of you will embrace these changes with us. If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to email me and I can arrange a time to discuss the issue with you.

Kind regards,
Debbie Gibson

Dear Principal Gibson,

I received your letter and though I think this idea sounds very interesting, I admit to being deeply concerned. I certainly see how this application could help the teachers and students, but I can't seem to move past the increased amount of screen time. When my son gets home from school, we like to make an effort as a family to spend time without our phones and our laptops. We spend time doing activities such as talking to each other over dinner or playing cricket outside in the backyard. I'm worried that after introducing the tablets, students will need to spend even more time on their devices at home. I don't want my son to miss out on time with his family. And what about other families who don't have rules against screen time? Will this experiment only contribute to technology addiction?

I'm also very worried about students losing the opportunities school provides for social development. Will they still get to work in groups for projects? Will they have the chance to compare answers with classmates and work out what they got wrong together? To me, it doesn't matter how advanced or human-like this artificial intelligence is – working with and talking to other students is part of the educational process that can't be replicated by a machine. It will be the same with teachers, I expect. Sure, they'll have more time to give attention to students individually, but a lot of important social skills are taught in a classroom setting. Students won't be able to observe body language, voice emphasis, or other things real people do when they speak to a group. By giving them tablets and a robot to have conversations with, our kids are going to miss out on a lot of important lessons that can't be clicked through on a screen.

I look forward to hearing your opinion on these issues very soon.

Regards,
Ron Butler

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