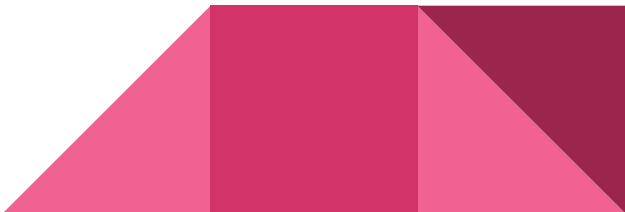# Can Media be Addictive?

Media Literacy- Unit 1

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze and draw conclusions about a series of photos depicting device use.
- Use online resources to track arguments for and against whether we are addicted to our devices.
- Complete a short writing assignment analyzing one or more aspects related to the device addiction debate.

Essential Question:

Are we addicted to our devices? If so, are big companies to blame? Where does the responsibility fall?

Essential Vocabulary

"**Addicted**"- Being physically or mentally dependent on a thing or activity and continuing to do it despite negative consequences

"**Media Balance**"- Using media in a way that feels healthy and in balance with other life activities (family, friends, school, hobbies, etc.)

"**Addictive Design**"- Features or aspects of a device or an app that are intended to hook the user into frequent use
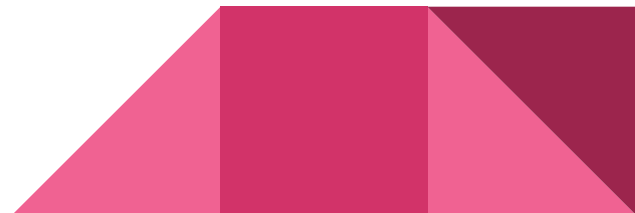
"**Humane Design**"- Features or aspects of a device or an app that prioritize what's good for people's lives

Part 1 Directions

Use the link to see the photo collection *Removed* by artist Eric Pickersgill. Review the photos and then complete the questions on your handout.
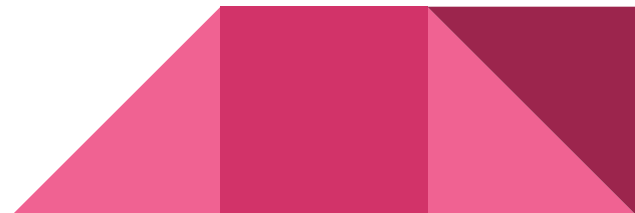
https://www.removed.social/us-original

Part 2 Directions

Different Perspectives

Directions: Complete the first row of the table using the article.   You will complete the remaining rows when you move on to Part 3 of this handout

Part 3 Directions

Directions: In your group, pick two resources from the list below to review. As you review them, consider what they say about whether or not we are addicted to our devices. Add their arguments to the Notes Tracker in Part 2.

1. **Watch**: "It's Not You. Phones are Designed to be Addicting"
2. **Read:** "Even Teens are Worried they are Spending too Much Time on Their Phones"
3. **Watch**: "Technology Addiction Isn't Real"
4. **Read:** "No, You're Not Addicted to Your Phone"

Part 4 Directions

Take a Stand!!

Think about the different articles and videos you reviewed and choose one of the two assignments to complete based on your opinions.

Option A:

Write a letter to the executives of one of your favorite apps (e.g., Snapchat, Instagram) or digital media companies (e.g., Netflix, YouTube), providing recommendations for how they can use humane design when developing their products. Identify specific features you would change or add to the product, and be sure to justify your reasoning.

Part 4 Directions

Take a Stand!!

Option B:

Is tech addiction real? Write a two-paragraph opinion piece in response to this question. Be sure to justify your answer, referencing specific resources from Part 2 (or new ones you come across in your research). Consider some of the following questions when developing your response:

- What is addiction? How do you define addiction?
- Is there a difference between addiction and being "hooked"?
- Is there a criteria you would use to determine whether or not someone is addicted to technology?

In your response, identify one thing you plan to do to create more media balance in your life.

Are We Addicted to Our Devices? Why/Why Not?

Directions:

1. Close your computer halfway and put your phone completely away.

2. Track the speaker (teacher or classmate) and practice active listening.

3. If you need to refer to your notes, check your screen quickly and then close it halfway again.

4. Did you find it difficult to keep your full attention on the speaker and not touch your devices?