

Source : *Behaviour Needs* <http://www.behaviourneeds.com/>

Here are four strategies to help you deal with the (huge) problem of mobile phone use in lessons:

1. Pre-empt and negate the need to take emergency calls. Students will always give the excuse that they need to be able to receive emergency calls from home on their phones. Maybe they do, maybe they don't but by sending a card home with the school/college number on and the assurance that any message will be passed on to the student immediately, you remove any need to have a phone in class.

2. Offer texting time. This can only be used where the setting has no clear procedure regarding the use of phones. If clear rules are in place you obviously can't be seen to openly abuse them; however if the issue is left up to you to sort out in your own way, you could consider offering students a few minutes at the end or middle of the lesson as a spontaneous reward for completing a task.

3. Use peer pressure. Set up an agreement with students whereby they can have an early finish/extra break time/computer access/video show etc in return for losing five minutes of this preferred activity time every time a phone is heard/seen/used in class. Anyone violating the rule will make themselves very unpopular.]

4. Encourage use of phones as learning tools. Mobile phones now have hundreds of applications which can be effectively used to enhance education. While most public schools don't allow the devices because they're considered distractions, some schools and teachers have started to put the technology to positive use and this (quite surprisingly) seems to have led to a **decline in inappropriate 'phone use** during lessons.

At the most basic level a mobile phone can provide a basic suite of useful classroom tools. A class full of mobile phones means there is a full set of calculators and stopwatches right there that are able to be used without need for explanation, and without much risk of any being stolen or lost.

Most phones have cameras and while in the past students always had to draw diagrams to show their scientific method and to record evidence, now they can take a picture instead. It gives them something that they can put straight into a report.

Text messaging provides a means of communication which is a) immediate, b) easy to use and c) preferred by students. Sending regular reminders to students by text message (SMS) will be better received and less likely to be viewed as 'nagging' than face to face instruction; some students prefer to communicate through text rather than face to face contact. If it will help engage a difficult student or encourage a shy one to participate, why not utilise the technology?

Quick ideas for using mobile phones creatively in lessons:

- Timing experiments with stopwatch
- Photographing apparatus and results of experiments for reports
- Photographing development of design models for e-portfolios
- Photographing texts/whiteboards for future review
- Bluetoothing project material between group members
- Receiving SMS & email reminders from teachers
- Recording a teacher reading a poem for revision
- Creating short narrative films using video
- Downloading, listening to and translating foreign language podcasts
- Answering questions delivered via podcasts
- Using GPS to identify locations
- Transferring files between school and home
- Translate information into 'text speak' (or have students translate information into Text Language as part of a review exercise)
- Use text to pass on information for discussion
- Use text to answer questions in a quiz - text the answer to an email or phone
- Send random questions to class members

- As an end-of-lesson review activity - students record by voice or text the key points learned and then save them in a suitable folder on their phones or text them to each other
- Planning world domination (I'm sure iPhone apps are available for this if you look hard enough)