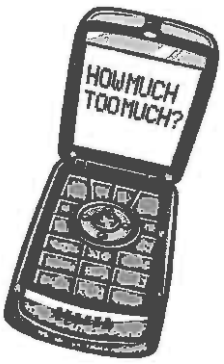
Is Txting 2 Much Bad 4 U?

By Karen Fanning

When it comes to teens and texting, many people are asking, "How much is too much?" A recent study by the Nielsen Company found that U.S. kids ages 13 to 17 sent and received an average of 2,272 texts per month in the last quarter of 2008. That's about 80 messages a day—more than double the average of 2007!

Is this cause for alarm? Doctors and psychologists warn that excessive texting may be leading to a host of problems, including distractions from schoolwork, interrupted sleep, and thumb injuries caused by too much repetitive motion.



How can you tell if you're at risk? "It's too much when it starts to interfere with the other activities in your life, like school, homework, or sports," Michael Hausauer, an adolescent psychotherapist in Oakland, California, tells *Junior Scholastic*. "When you can't put [your keypad] away and return to it later, then it's become too big a part of your life."

There are days, says Kate Morrissey, 14, when she sends and receives as many as 60 text messages. "I text at home, in the car when I'm going somewhere, at my brother's games, at the movies before it starts, in restaurants," the ninth-grader from Hingham, Massachusetts, tells *Junior Scholastic*.

It's Really Addicting

Molly Reape, 12, also finds plenty of time to text, despite a busy schedule that includes dance class five days a week. "If I have a second anywhere, I'll text," says the seventh-grader from Scituate, Massachusetts. "It's really addicting."

On average, Molly exchanges a few dozen messages a day with friends. At night, she keeps her cell phone beside her bed. Sometimes, she is interrupted by friends texting her as she drifts off to sleep.

"When someone starts texting me when I'm falling asleep, I'll say, 'I'm really tired now, I'm going to bed,'" she says. "If I don't respond to them, they'll keep texting me, 'Are you there, are you there?' It gets really annoying."

Still, Molly is reluctant to turn off her phone. "Just in case someone has to tell me something really important," she says, "I keep it on."

That, says Hausauer, is not wise. "Young people need to be able to say good night to their technology," he tells *Junior Scholastic*.

What about saying goodbye to their technology at the classroom door? Texting during class is also on the rise. Because kids can exchange messages silently, they often do so without getting caught.

Students who text in class, says Diego Fernandez-Pages, 12, may end up paying a price at test time. "Texting is really distracting," says the eighth-grader from Brookline, Massachusetts. "You definitely aren't paying attention if you're texting. [Therefore], you won't be learning anything. . . . When you are quizzed or tested, you probably would not get a good grade."

Staying Connected

Still, texting does allow teens to form social bonds with ease. "The need for intimacy at that age is so powerful," says Carolyn Meyer-Wartels, a social worker in New York City. "[Texting] is a way for kids to stay connected in a hectic, over-programmed world."

Kate agrees. Because of texting, she can easily keep in touch with her cousins in Virginia and with friends whom she sees only during the summer.

As for her hometown pals, Kate says that texting has made her social life much easier to manage. "I hang out with a big group of friends," Kate tells *Junior Scholastic*. "I have to check with a lot of people to make plans. I can just send them a quick text, rather than calling them back every five minutes."

To determine whether your texting habits are healthy, you need to answer one simple question: "Am I in charge of texting, or is texting in charge of me?" says Hausauer. "I'm in charge when I decide when I'm going to text and when I'm going to stop. If you feel overly worried or anxious when you turn your phone off, you may have a problem."

Prompt: Is texting a practice that produces benefits for teens, or is it a practice that produces negative consequences? Why? Use information from the article "Is Txting 2 Much Bad 4 U" to support your answer.

Restatement:

Details for Evidence:

Negative Consequences

1.
2.
3.

Benefits

1.
2.
3.

Concluding Statement:

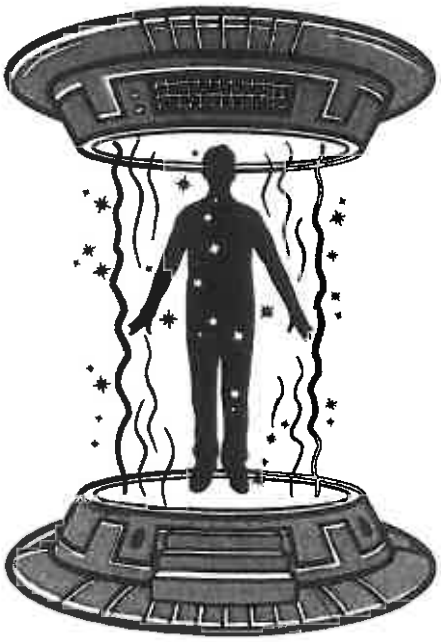
Star Trek Tech

By Karina Hamalainen

How close are we to reaching 23rd-century technology? The crew from the *Starship Enterprise* lands in theaters in a prequel to the famed Star Trek series. For the first time, fans will see how James Tiberius Kirk became Captain Kirk and how the rest of the crew ended up exploring outer space together.

During their adventures, the crew members use futuristic gadgets that allow them to beam down instantly to new planets, easily examine the sick, and cross the universe at faster-than-light warp speed. How realistic are these tricked-out tools? Read on to see how today's science stacks up against the world of Star Trek.

Transporters: "Beam me up, Scotty!"



The *Starship Enterprise* crew can instantly transport themselves to a new location. They do this by breaking down their bodies into their smallest components, or atoms, and then rematerializing in the location of their choice. However, there are some major challenges with this method of travel. According to physicist Lawrence Krauss, author of *The Physics of Star Trek*, the human body is made of approximately 10 octillion (that's 10 followed by 28 zeros!) atoms. To dematerialize a person weighing 50 kilograms (110 pounds), it would take more energy than the amount contained in 1,000 hydrogen bombs.

Reconstructing a person would require an instruction manual for the transporter that described where each of those atoms goes. Krauss estimates that such a manual would contain more than 10,000 times the information in all the books ever written.

Still, some researchers remain undaunted. A team from the University of Vienna in Austria has managed to instantaneously transport individual electrons (negatively charged particles) and photons (particles of light) more than 143 kilometers (89 miles). But Krauss doesn't believe this will work on humans. "We're big, jumbled-up, complicated matter—very different from a simple electron," he says.

Sickbay: "Live long and prosper."

In the 23rd century, healing the sick is usually a breeze. Dr. "Bones" McCoy, the medical officer, takes a crew member of the *Starship Enterprise* to the Sickbay and uses scanners to quickly diagnose the patient. If he needs to, he can perform surgery with lasers or give medicine with a needle-free "hypospray" device.

Medicine is one area where we are rapidly catching up with Star Trek. Non-invasive scanners like X-rays, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) devices, and computerized axial tomography (CAT) scans can take pictures of your insides, so a doctor can diagnose what ails you. Lasers are used to perform surgery on many body parts. And since 1985, a company named Bioject has been making devices like McCoy's hypospray. These work by using compressed air or springs to shoot out a stream of liquid medication at high speeds. The stream is so narrow and quick that it pierces the skin like a needle—minus the pain!

Tricorders: "It's life, Jim, but not like we know it . . ."

After beaming down onto an unexplored planet, crew members want to know if it is safe to check out. A handheld device called a "tricorder" allows crew members to scan the environment for harmful compounds in the air or lurking alien life-forms.

Last year [2008], researchers at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, made a tricorder-like portable mass spectrometer. This device can identify chemical compounds and measure their amounts in the air. Normally, mass spectrometers weigh hundreds of pounds, and the analysis takes a long time before it yields results. But scientists have been able to shrink the device down to the size of a large lunchbox. "That's batteries and everything," says R. Graham Cooks, leader of the Purdue research team. Once the air sample is taken, the data are transferred wirelessly to a computer that identifies the sample in fewer than five seconds. Cooks envisions a day when this device is used anywhere that chemical analysis needs to be done—maybe even on a faraway planet.

Warp Drive: "Space, the final frontier . . ."

Warp speed allows the *Starship Enterprise* to go faster than the speed of light, which is 300,000 km (186,411 mi) per second. So it takes the crew only hours to make trips that would normally take thousands of years. This enables the *Starship Enterprise* to travel deep into the galaxy.

Will we ever be able to go faster than the speed of light? "It's possible in theory," says author and physicist Krauss. Albert Einstein's theory of general relativity describes how space and time warp (bend) due to gravity (force of attraction between objects). His theory allows for warp speed to be accomplished by squishing the space in front of an object, like the *Starship Enterprise*, and stretching the space behind it. That way the object has to move only a few feet instead of a few light-years (distance light travels in one year, roughly equal to 9.5 trillion kilometers, or 5.9 trillion miles). But, as with the transporter, traveling at warp speed would take a lot of energy.

Will we ever invent a warp drive that can bend space? Maybe your generation will find a way to overcome these technological hurdles. We still have 200 years to overcome all of these challenges before the *Starship Enterprise* and her crew embark on their 23rd-century mission: "To boldly go where no man has gone before."

Prompt: How are humans using "Star Trek" inspired technology in our world? Support your answer with specific details from the article.

Restatement:

Details for Evidence:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Concluding Statement:

The Case of the Squished Tomatoes: A Courtroom Mystery

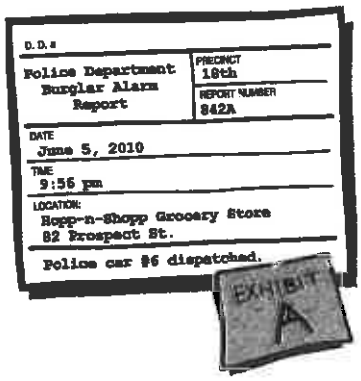
By Marvin Miller

Court is about to begin and you are the jury. Read carefully, take notes, and look at the evidence. Do whatever you can to discover the truth.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury:

If a burglary takes place and a great deal of money is stolen, the thief may be sent to prison for a very long time.

Carefully consider this serious penalty as you listen to the evidence presented here today.



Andrew Turner is accused of stealing $2,000 from the safe of the Hopp-n-Shop Grocery Store. Andrew Turner, who worked at Hopp-n-Shop, says he is innocent.

Harvey Hopp is the first witness in this case. Here is Hopp's testimony:

"My name is Harvey Hopp. I own the Hopp-n-Shop Grocery Store. On the evening of June 5, around 9:15 p.m., I locked up the store for the night and headed home. I learned later that at 9:56 p.m., the burglar alarm for the store's safe went off. Luckily, the police came right away."

EXHIBIT A is an official record of the burglar alarm report.

When the police arrived, they found that the door of the store was unlocked. In searching the store, they found the office safe open. The money inside had been stolen. In a corner of the store, near a vegetable bin, police found a basket of spilled tomatoes. The thief had left his or her mark. Damaged tomatoes, some half eaten, were on the floor. On the window, with the juice of a squished tomato, the thief had written the word "DELICIOUS!"

EXHIBIT B is a photograph of the damage done by the thief.

The state questioned Harvey Hopp further. First the question, and then his answer:

Q: Are you sure you locked the door to the store on the evening of the burglary?

A: I'm certain.

Q: Did anyone have the combination to your safe?

A: I'm the only one. But it's possible that someone who worked for me could have seen me open the safe and remembered the combination.

Q: Does anyone else use your office?

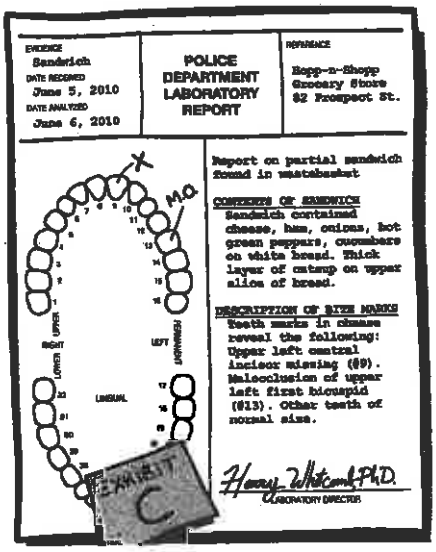
A: No. I'm the only one. But sometimes my workers come in if they want to speak with me privately.

Since there was no evidence that the door was broken into, police reasoned the burglary was an inside job. They believed that one of Hopp's workers hid in the store before closing. Then, when Hopp locked the store for the night, the thief came out of hiding and was alone in the store.

Inside the office wastebasket, near the safe, police found a half-eaten sandwich. The sandwich was sent to the crime lab for examination. A slice of cheese from the sandwich showed important evidence. There were unusual teeth marks on the cheese. The bite marks showed that the person eating the sandwich had a front tooth missing.

EXHIBIT C is the police lab report.

The teeth marks from the cheese were compared with the teeth of the people who worked in the store. Andrew Turner's teeth marks matched exactly! His front tooth is missing, and all other teeth matched the marks on the cheese. On this basis, Andrew Turner was arrested and is on trial here today.


EVIDENCE
Sandwich
DATE RECEIVED
June 5, 2010
DATE ANALYZED
June 6, 2010

POLICE DEPARTMENT LABORATORY REPORT

REFERENCE
Hopp-n-Shopp Grocery Store
82 Prospect St.

Report on partial sandwich found in wastebasket

CONTENTS OF SANDWICH
Sandwich contained cheese, ham, onions, hot green peppers, cucumbers on white bread. Thick layer of catsup on upper slice of bread.

DESCRIPTION OF BITE MARKS
Teeth marks in cheese reveal the following: Upper left central incisor missing (#9). Malocclusion of upper left first bicuspid (#13). Other teeth of normal size.

Henry Whitcomb, Ph.D.
LABORATORY DIRECTOR

EXHIBIT C

Turner had worked for Mr. Hopp for seven months. But recently there was trouble between them. It seemed that Turner loved to eat. He nibbled on store food without paying for it.

The court asked Andrew Turner about this:

"Food? Sure I love food. Anyone can see that. Just look at the size of my stomach. I love to nibble.

"But I hate tomatoes. I'm allergic to them. Every time I eat a tomato my eyes get watery and I break out in a rash."

Turner was asked about the half-eaten sandwich in the wastebasket. He said the following:

"I admit it. That's the sandwich I ate. But I didn't eat it the night of the burglary. I got hungry in the afternoon. I know Mr. Hopp doesn't like me eating. So I sneaked into his office while he was in the front of the store and ate that fantastic sandwich. When I saw Hopp coming, I tossed the last of it in the wastebasket."

Andrew Turner's lawyer says that at the time the store alarm rang, Andrew was at home talking on the telephone with his girlfriend, Nancy King.

Miss King said that they did talk on the phone for about a half hour. However, she was not sure of the exact time of the call.

Andrew Turner's lawyer says that Nancy King provides Turner with an alibi. And since Turner is allergic to tomatoes, he must be innocent.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury:

You have just heard the "Case of the Squished Tomatoes." You must now make a decision. Be sure to look carefully at the evidence in EXHIBITS A, B, and C. Did Andrew Turner steal the money from Hopp-n-Shopp's safe? Or is he innocent?

Prompt: If you were a member of the jury in "The Case of the Squished Tomatoes: A Courtroom Mystery," what verdict would you choose? Why? Use evidence and details from the passage to support your opinion.

Restatement:

Details for Evidence:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Concluding Statement: