

DM fac. MP-PC-PSI type MINES-PONTS (1h30)

Partie I : EXPRESSION ÉCRITE (12 points) - question 1 (4 points), question 2 (8 points).

Vous indiquerez avec précision à la fin de chaque réponse, le nombre de mots qu'elle comporte.

Partie II : THÈME (8 points) **NB Laissez une marge !**

Partie I : EXPRESSION ÉCRITE (12 points)

As it turns out, one of the main ways smartphones change what we think and do is by compelling us to spend hours and hours in front of them. Today, anxiety around screen time is ubiquitous throughout the generations. Ofcom found nearly a quarter of UK five- to seven-year-olds have their own phone, with 38% using social media. But it's just as likely the oldies among us will be spending hours on ours. I was shocked to find my daily average was over four hours: mostly before and after sleeping, spent on news websites and YouTube.

There is huge debate in academia as to the effect smartphones, and their social media apps, are having on us. While psychologists argue that they make children more anxious, fragile and depressed, and amplify political polarisation, others believe the evidence for this is thin.

I am inclined to think the effect of Apple's brilliant invention has been profound. My use of these machines has been compulsive: when I walk my dogs having left my phone at home, I find myself repeatedly grabbing for an empty coat pocket, my arm moving independently of free will. I read fewer books because of social media; I concentrate less in front of films and TV shows. I watch YouTube more than the BBC, ITV or Channel 4. I have been through phases of forcing myself on to a virtually app-less dumb phone, but the convenience and often necessity of maps, parking apps and train tickets pushed me back.

Yet my smartphone has affected my life in often negative ways. The world I disappear to inside it has made me – and probably you – angrier. That's my main impression of how the world has changed since 2007: we're all a lot more pissed off with each other. And I really do blame phones. Humans are profoundly social and wired to solve the problems of existence by forming into collaborative groups. When we feel we belong and are valued, we're happy; when we feel isolated and worthless, we become anxious and depressed.

Smartphones have gamified and monetised these powerful aspects of human nature. They don't benignly offer us the connection and status we desire: they strategically withdraw it in order to drive engagement. Whenever we're outraged by the behaviour of an identity group that's not our own, it's an attack on our status: we are drawn further into our phones to find out more and perhaps take part in a counterattack – an attempt to restore our threatened status and reinforce the connection with our team. We're made to feel good or bad by likes, reposts, comments or follower-counts, but our phone issues these precious rewards unpredictably, just as a slot machine does. It's this unpredictability that helps make them compulsive.

For us deeply social animals, much of our social life now takes place inside apps designed to manipulate via the manufacturing of social competition and tribal conflict. Of course we're tired and angry and suspicious of each other. But at least we have a greater awareness of this now. More than 60 Labour MPs have recently urged the prime minister to follow the example of Australia where under-16s have been prohibited from using social media sites.

Adapted from Will Storr, *The Guardian*, January 31st, 2026

1. According to the journalist, how have smartphones affected people's lives? ***Answer the question in your own words.*** (80 words +/- 10%)
2. Under-16s in Australia have been banned from using major social media services. Do you think it is a good idea? ***Illustrate your answer with relevant examples.*** (180 words +/- 10%)

Partie II : THÈME (8 points)

Dans la moiteur de sa chambre, Thomas déplie son bras engourdi. Comme chaque jour avant de poser le pied par terre, avant d'allumer la lumière, d'étirer ses membres sous le drap, avant même

d'être tout à fait réveillé, il cherche son téléphone. Depuis quand ce geste est-il devenu le premier de la journée ? Depuis quand dépose-t-il l'objet chaque soir si près de son visage, pour le garder ainsi, à toute heure de la nuit, à portée du regard et de la main ? Il ne saurait le dire, tant ce geste, ces gestes – celui du matin quand il se reconnecte au monde, celui du soir quand il passe en mode avion – échappent à sa conscience. Oui, il dort à côté de son téléphone, pour ne pas dire avec, et ce, depuis pas mal d'années. Il n'est pas le seul. Il ne peut même pas invoquer l'usage de la fonction alarme, puisqu'il continue, pour des raisons sentimentales, à utiliser le réveil électronique Casio que sa mère lui a offert pour ses dix ans.

Delphine DE VIGAN, *Je suis Romane Monnier* (2026)