

Digital Citizenship

Lesson Title: Screen Time: How We Spend our Days

Middle School



Essential Question:

What is the impact of electronic media on our daily lives?

Materials:

- Chart, "Americans Use Electronic Media 11+ Hours A Day"
- "My Day" poem
- "I've Been Working So Hard" by Shel Silverstein

Procedure:

Introduction:

1. Share the chart "Americans Use Electronic Media 11+ Hours A Day" and discuss the statistics about time spent online: According to Nielsen's Total Audience Report, Americans aged 18 and older spend more than 11 hours a day watching TV, listening to the radio or using smartphones and other electronic devices. Considering that most people are awake 16 to 18 hours a day, 11 hours of electronic media usage seems like a lot, but, to be fair, much of that probably happens while doing other things at the same time. Ask students how much time they estimate they spend in front of a screen each day.
2. Transition your discussion to a more literary description of the way we spend time by reading the poem "My Day." Read the poem aloud or have students read the handout silently. Ask your students the following guided questions:
 - How would you describe the person who wrote this poem? Male? Female? Young? Old? Why?
 - What do you envision he or she looks like? Why?
 - Is this person aware of the stress the electronics put on his/her life? How do you know?
 - Do you know a person like this? Explain.
 - How does this person feel? What is this person experiencing?
 - What advice do you have for this person?

3. Next, read the Shel Silverstein poem "I've Been Working So Hard" aloud or have students read silently. How does Shel Silverstein describe his day? Use the same questions about "My Day" to analyze the Silverstein poem. How do the responses compare/contrast? How can we compare the thoughts and actions of the character in the Silverstein poem to those described in the "My Day" poem?
4. Have students write a poem about the dedication to or the lack of electronic media in their day. They can share their poetry or post it in the classroom.

Conclusion:

Reflect on the themes of the lesson. Have students discuss what they think we are supposed to learn about the impact of electronics on our lives from the poems, including those written by the students.

My Day

An early morning dog walk... feeling warm sunshine, a light breeze
Gentle dew on the grass, glistening, flowering trees
Then I felt the iPhone text buzz, look down into my palm
My thumbs go on attack mode; it's no time to be calm.

Later, driving out of the neighborhood, the light turns from yellow to red
Ah hah! Just enough to peek at the latest email thread
Who's meeting where? Who said what to whom?
Oh no. Like a sudden storm, clouds signal feelings of gloom.

The day continues... should be starting that project or finishing that book
But wait, Snapchat and Instagram demand a quick look
I thought it would be a just minute or two
But all of the sudden, time's almost up... I'm feeling unglued!

The kids are hungry, "what's for dinner?" they ask
You know, I just cannot stay on task!
I had a plan and then Googled my question
Hopping from one link to another, I've got indigestion!

The sun's setting fast and my FitBit reveals
That too few steps have been taken after all of those meals
So I grab the dirty laundry and throw in a load
While the kids finish homework, I hit the sidewalks and walk across the roads.

It's been a long day, I'm ready to sleep
Before my head hits the pillow, I bargain for one more peek
What's happening on Facebook? Who saw my photo and hit reply?
What, no comments? No likes? Feeling dejected... I cannot lie.

I toss and turn. The screen is alive in my head
Oh well, so much for getting to bed.
My phone is handy, I'll search a little bit more
24/7 shopping is available: just ship from the store.

Author Unknown

I've Been Working So Hard

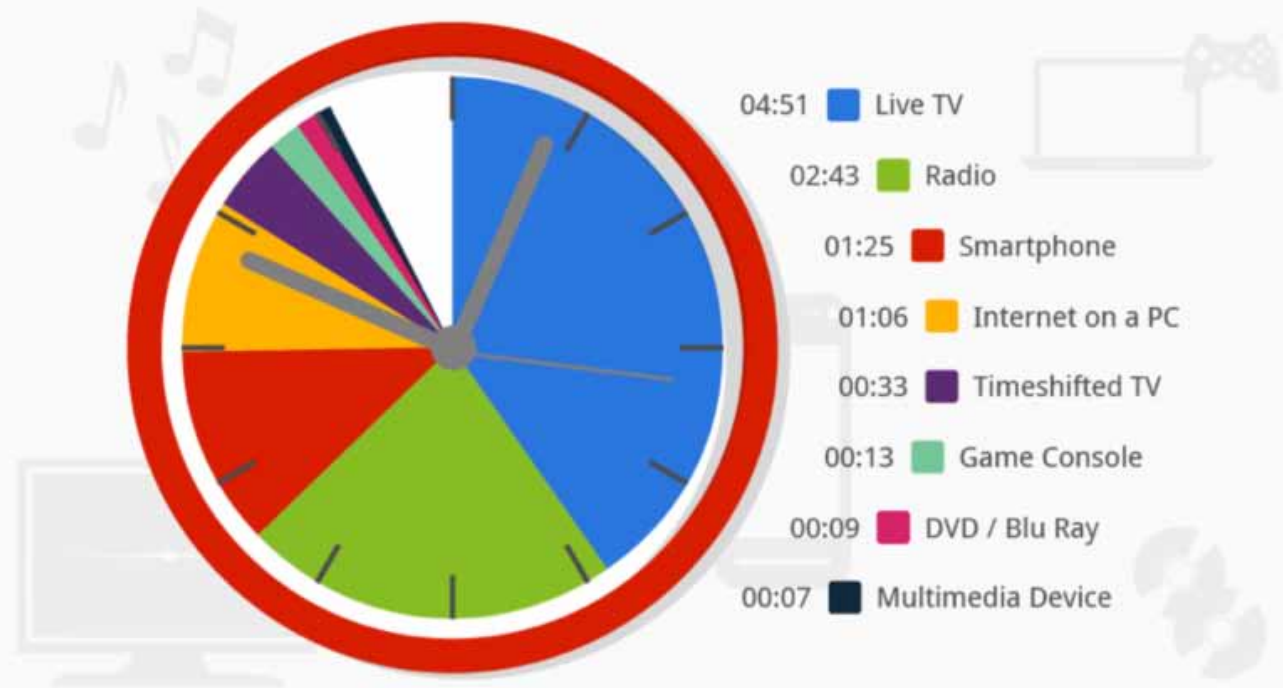
I've been working so hard you just wouldn't believe,
And I'm tired!
There's so little time and so much to achieve,
And I'm tired!
I've been lying here holding the grass in its place,
Pressing a leaf with the side of my face,
Tasting the apples to see if they're sweet,
Counting the toes on a centipede's feet.
I've been memorizing the shape of that cloud,
Warning the robins to not chirp so loud,
Shooing the butterflies off the tomatoes,
Keeping an eye out for floods and tornadoes.
I've been supervising the work of the ants
And thinking of pruning the cantaloupe plants,
Calling the fish to swim into my nets,
And I've taken twelve thousand and forty-one breaths,
And I'm TIRED!

Shel Silverstein

<http://www.inspirationpeak.com/share-a-poem.html>

Americans Use Electronic Media 11+ Hours A Day

Average time American adults (18+) spent with electronic media in Q4 2014 (hours:minutes)



@StatistaCharts Source: Nielsen



Source: <https://www.statista.com/chart/1971/electronic-media-use/>