Grade 9 -10 Argument Writing
Standard W.9-10.1

Grade 9-10 Argument

W.9-10.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

  a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claims(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

  b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

  c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claims(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

  d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

  e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

The Reading/Thinking/Writing Task

Student were presented with the scenario that their student council would be deciding whether or not to ban social media and cell phone use during school hours. As a class, students read and analyzed multiple sources that addressed the issue before formulating their own opinions. Later, students followed up class resources with their own research. Finally, students debated their opinions and wrote their essays individually.

This writing piece assesses the students' ability to select reliable sources, synthesize sources, group data into multiple reasons that support an argument, and acknowledge the limitations or nuances of their proposals.

Focus of the Writing Task

Should we ban social media and cell phone usage at _____ during school hours?

The Writing Task in the Curriculum

How is the writing embedded in curriculum/content?

✡ *Class:* heterogeneous 9th grade English class

✡ *Curriculum unit*
- focus on researching, formulating, and explaining an argument
- focus on whether or not the school should ban social media and cell phones during the school day
- unit followed a unit on excerpts of *Desert Solitaire,* which explored the way technology can both connect and isolate us

✡ *Standards*
- Reading: RI and RL.9-10.1, RI.9-10.6, RI.9-10.8
- Writing: W.9-10.1, W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8, W.9-10.10

How did students build the knowledge they needed?

✡ *Text*
- a number of articles were provided for whole-class note taking, discussion, and analysis
- students researched outstanding questions, and collected and analyzed the articles that they found

✡ *Reading, re-reading, note-taking, and seminars*
- students read, reread and discussed informational and argument pieces about social media and cell phone use
- students took notes on the text, discussed the authors' perspectives and possible biases, and double-checked statistics
- students began this process as a whole class, using shared texts, then began working in small groups, and finally finished their research independently
- students prepared and participated in a whole-class debate before writing their essays

What instructional approaches were used to teach writing?

✡ *Craft lessons*
- students had already read and analyzed arguments and counterarguments in previous units
- students read a model of an argument piece, and analyzed the way the piece integrated sources to support multiple reasons. In addition, students noted approaches to acknowledging alternative perspectives.

✡ *Writing approaches*
- students had already written an argument piece in their previous unit. They had received feedback that focused on how they build an argument using chains of logic.
- for this piece, students focused on integrating sources in their writing, in addition to organizing their reasoning and acknowledging counterclaims

What was the timeframe?
Ten eighty-five minute blocks

Ban Them!

At _____, students often have their phones out during class for purposes such as texting, listening to music, and social media. Having a device out during class distracts the student, and usually, multiple students. This results in a dispute between teachers and teens. The feud continues for what feels like hours, taking students away from their learning. Sadly, social media also causes mental health issues such as negative body images, probably because they are a natural part of teen's lives. Devices should be banned at _____ because they do much more harm than good.

Cell phones have become a natural part of our lives and are causing negative body images. Psychotherapist, Katie Hurley, did research on the effects phones have on the teenage brain. Hurley wrote about a study from the University of Pittsburgh which discovered, "Those who had spent more time on social media had 2.2 times the risk of reporting eating and body image concerns compared to their peers who spent less time on social media" (Hurley). Why should we allow something in our school that causes such negativity? Devices are such a natural thing for teens and reducing the time teens spend on them would help improve their mental health. In Jeff Vrabel's article in the Washington post, he describes his personal experiences with devices and social media, "A friend recently relayed to me a story about his daughter's Snapchat streaks, a means by which you mathematically rank your friendship on the basis of app-use frequency; he did not so in any grandiose way but in one that suggested that it was simply part of her life " (Vrabel). It is such an unhealthy thing, for teens to be so connected to social media. I, myself, consider social media and my phone a natural part life. I participated in a "social media fast" a while back and various times during the fast, I picked up my phone and used social media. forgetting that I was supposed to stay offline. I only did this because it is a natural part of my day. A phone ban at _____ would be a great first step to reducing the amount of time students spend on their phones, and a great first step to improving their mental health.

Devices in the classroom are a distraction that cause behavioral problems, and student's grades would improve if devices were removed from the environment. Tara Bahrampour from *Valley News* wrote about an interview with San Lorenzo High School's

principal, Allison Silvestri, "'Grades have gone up and discipline problems have plummeted,' said principle Allison Silvestri. Referrals for defiance and disrespect are down by 82%" (Bahrampour). As you can see, this high school in California has been much better off without their electronic devices or social media. At _____, students and teachers argue all of the time about having devices out during class. Devices are a distraction from learning and there is no importance for social media in the classroom. A phone ban was place at Seymour High School in Connecticut, and the principle, Jim Freund claims that, "I've had students come up to me and say, 'you know I've never gotten so much homework done before" (Associated Press). Clearly, not only are teachers glad they do not have to argue with students about phones, but students are also glad that they are getting their work done. A phone ban would be a win-win for teachers and students, so why shouldn't we ban phones at _____?

Social media and devices help people share their talents and get publicity which can be a great thing for students to begin working on early. On NPR, African American writer, Kima Jones tells her story of how writing has helped her, "Twitter has been a way for me to find people who are interested in doing the work of literature" (Jones). Although it is a good idea for teens to get a head start on life, they have plenty of free time to do so outside of school and not in the middle of class. Also, time spent on phones during class is hardly ever spent for that reason, students are usually just scrolling through social media, liking useless posts.

Devices and social media come with many problems and hurt more than help. Although devices are good or helpful during free time, there is not much need for them during school. Using a phone is such a natural part of teen's lives that a phone ban at _____ would help them disconnect and take a look at the world they are missing out on.

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Let's Turn it Off

In the modern world, social media has impacted the way people of all ages communicate. The widespread usage of social media has impacted our modern culture. It can have both positive and negative effects on people. Teenagers tend to use social media the most, and are therefore are affected by it most. Social media should be banned at _____ during school hours.

Social media is often a distraction at school. This is shown in the article *No more social media: B.C. school district restricts Wi-Fi access* by Tamara Rahmani, which talks about a school that blocks students' access to social media over the school's Wi-Fi. In paragraph 5, it reads, "They were concerned that social media platforms were a distraction in the classroom" (1). With that distraction blocked, students would probably be more focused in class. This is shown in the article *Some Schools Plunge Students' Phones Into Darkness* by Tara Bahrampour. In this, another school blocks students' access to social media. The principal reported that "Grades have gone up and discipline problems have plummeted" (2). All this shows that banning social media during school would eliminate the distraction, so students would be more focused on learning.

Social media can limit face-to-face interactions. Since social media is a communication tool through technology, people use it to communicate across distances. Often, it's an option to talk in person, but sometimes people communicate through social media anyway. This is shown in the article *Some Schools Plunge Students' Phones Into Darkness* by Tara Bahrampour. On page 2, it says, "Students are interacting, talking to each other, reading, kicking a ball, socializing - because they're not standing in a circle texting each other" (2). This shows that blocking social media encourages people to interact face-to-face more. Social media can limit face-to-face interactions.

Cyberbullying is often done through social media. This is shown in the article *Cyberbullying and Social Media* by Bahati Russell, who talks about how social media gives people the freedom to share whatever they want on it. In paragraph 5, it says "Children, especially bullies, being exposed to this much freedom can negatively affect them." Banning social media would limit cyberbullying, allowing people to be happier and therefore, healthier.

_____ would be a better place if social media was banned during school hours. There would be less distractions, less cyberbullying, and people would interact in person more. Social media is a communication tool that can be beneficial, but it shouldn't be used during school.

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Don't Ban Social Media!

In many schools teachers and students use social media during school for many different reasons in class or out of class. The big question that is being asked is "Should we ban social media usage at _____ during school hours?". _____ should be able to use social media during school hours and these are my reasons why I and many others are against the ban of it.

First, social media is shown to help with social connection. Some studies show that online connections with small groups of people can be beneficial to teens. For example, by using technology with other people online can help with making new friend that have the same interests as you, from the, Social Media and Teens by Katie Hurley. Teens who struggle with social skills, social anxiety, or who don't have easy access to face-to-face socializing with other teens might benefit from connecting with other teens through social media. For instance, People who struggle with social skills can feel more comfortable making friends online instead of having to communicate in person. Also from Katie Hurley on Social Media and Teens. "Twitter has been a way for me to find people who are interested in doing the work of literature". That was from Code Switch by Kima Jones explaining why Twitter and other social media websites can help finding work that you personally are interested in doing or finding a job. A problem found by Jones was when using social media social connections can lead to bullying and being judged by other people that see you on social media and other online websites. This could lead to personal problems about your appearance. Overall, using social media helps with social connections.

Second, social media has been shown to be useful for education for students and teachers. "While Gray was procrastinating on Twitter, she also wrote a collection of essays and a novel. Also from Kima Jones, this shows that by using social media, it can help with assigned school projects. Social media also shows articles and information sharing with one another, it can also be a resource for research. It can be used to create a public profile to showcase personal research interests and to connect with a broad advice. From Duke University on Learning Innovation by Lynne O'brien, showing classmates your work by using social media helps with

understanding. One low about using social media during school can lead it to be a distraction in and out of class and leads to getting off topic with school work you are learning about. For more than the time social media is very useful for education for students and teachers during school.

In conclusion social media has been shown to be used all over the world with many different uses that are helpful to people in what they are trying to get out of it to help them in school or out of school. This is why at _____ we should be able to use social media during school hours.

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Technology with Responsibility

In recent years, social media has gotten a bad reputation in schools. Whether it be shifting social norms, or the extremely large amounts of people who use it to communicate, it all can seem very overwhelming. All of this doubt and distrust might lead our high school to believe that banning the use of social media will solve all the suspected problems that correlate with it. But before we do so, we should not only consider the immense opportunities social media can bring us when we use it correctly, but also how it could modernize the school system for the new age. A healthy balance of technology would bring benefits that include engaging students in their work, extending learning opportunities beyond the classroom, and creating connections and communities that might not have been possible before. There should not be a ban on social media because of its ability to enrich the school experience, but at the same time we should be aware of how and when it is used.

If used in the right way, social media can engage students in their work. In a age where technology is everywhere, a common problem we have is keeping focused on unengaging assignments. The way this situation commonly plays out for students is to procrastinate by being on their phones. Shawna Bu Shell, an educational technology professor at Rowan University, has found a potential solution to this problem that does not involve to ban social media. Rather she states, "If a teacher is good at designing homework and is willing to integrate social media, then students won't be sneaking, trying to use it" (Dunn). With Shell's proposed solution, students will be less likely to use social media instead of doing homework, because they will be using social media to do homework. Our problems are not only on a small scale, but also the school system as a whole. Edudemic (a teaching resource site) speculates that, "...students become distracted when homework is not engaging, which is not always the fault of the teacher, but a school district's reluctance to stray from the curriculum" (Dunn). The idea of using social media to engage students through something they are familiar with and enjoy using could help advance our outdated school systems. Some argue that using too much social media could lead to less work and more time online. A way to regulate and balance this is to have teachers outline specifically what students are doing on social media and how much time they spend on it. With

the right balance of social media, students can become more engaged in their work and assignments.

The question has arisen that if social media is in the classrooms, what are the benefits of using it compared to continuing with the classic learning environment? One of the most noteworthy benefits, is its ability to extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom. For example, Edutopia author, Jim Asher, talks about how students can, "Use a classroom twitter account to connect students with the world. They can have real-time dialogues with experts, museums publishers, journalists, and more" (Asher). This is a unique experience that normally would be much harder and take longer to make happen. In an article by Scholastic, a teacher talks about the conversations his students have over skype with kids from Afghanistan; he claims, "You can't find this in a textbook, and those the kind of authentic conversations we have"(Adjout). These kinds of opportunities wouldn't be possible in classic classroom settings. With these examples, it can seen that there are multitudes of possibilities brought by social media. It can be argued that Social Media should not be a big part of education because it is not an effective way to learn and can have negative effects on behavior. CBC News lets us understand "Instead of banning social media, teachers should lay out expectations about their use in the same way they would with any other classroom rule"(Tamara Tahmani). Yes, there can overuse can be dangerous, but if teachers find a balance where students are able to take advantage of the extended learning opportunities social media brings while also using a traditional classroom education, we would be one step closer to a more modern, efficient and connected school.

Beyond a tool for extending learning, social media also allows students to find and connect and get support from others. Social media communities can be a unique way to get multiple perspectives and voices heard even in topics students wouldn't have as much easy access to. Kima Jones talks about how a community of black poets has been able to share their work on twitter and get recognition where they might have not before. She talks about how,"social media's range and impact on how literature is produced and received can no longer be reduced to making sure an author has a well-designed website"(Jones). These same benefits can be translated to the classroom, whether it be sharing essays and student written papers with other young writers, or just in general, projects. These types of supportive communities can also help in more ways than just academic. In Katie Hurley's article "Social Media and Teens" she

talks about how, "Teens in marginalized groups- including LGBTQ teens and teens struggling with mental health issues- can find support and friendship through use of social media" (Hurley). Coming from a small school, it is easy to sometimes see that there aren't people around that are going through your same experience and problems and it can be hard to talk to people who don't understand. The large amount of people on online communities, means that almost always you can find people who understand your struggles and most likely need support as much as you do. It could be argued that students could become detached from their real life communities, and there is no reason students should need to be taking to their social groups during the school day. Like every other benefit of social media, it should be used in moderation. This doesn't mean social media should be banned. It implies that schools should be aware that student's communities online can benefit their mental health and might also help them get their voices heard.

Therefore, there should not be a ban on social media. The benefits of not banning it range from connecting communities, extending learning opportunities, to engaging students in their work. Although social media is a powerful tool with many benefits, we should also be aware of how it can change the way we communicate with other people, and the way we spend our time. It's both the student and the teachers responsibility to moderate how much time is spent of social media so a good balance can be maintained. Maybe part of the reason our school is hesitant to respect the benefits of social media is because as a culture, we have painted it as something that is bad. If we are able to shift our norms and realize how technology can enrich the school experience, while also being savvy enough to use it in moderation, we could become a more modern and new age school system. So before we implement a ban, we should consider the opportunities we will be missing if we don't take advantage of everything social media has to offer.

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Ban Them!

At _____ , students often have their phones out during class for purposes such as texting, listening to music, and social media. Having a device out during class distracts the student, and usually, multiple students. This results in a dispute between teachers and teens. The feud continues for what feels like hours, taking students away from their learning. Sadly, social media also causes mental health issues such as negative body images, probably because they are a natural part of teen's lives. <u>Devices should be banned at _____ because they do much more harm than good</u>.

Cell phones have become a natural part of our lives and are causing negative body images. Psychotherapist, Katie Hurley, did research on the effects phones have on the teenage brain. Hurley wrote about a study from the University of Pittsburgh which discovered, "Those who had spent more time on social media had 2.2 times the risk of reporting eating and body image concerns compared to their peers who spent less time on social media" (Hurley). Why should we allow something in our school that causes such negativity? Devices are such a natural thing for teens and reducing the time teens spend on them would help improve their mental health. In Jeff Vrabel's article in the Washington post, he describes his personal experiences with devices and social media, "A friend recently relayed to me a story about his daughter's Snapchat streaks, a means by which you mathematically rank your friendship on the basis of app-use frequency; he did not so in any grandiose way but in one that suggested that it was simply part of her life" (Vrabel). It is such an unhealthy thing, for teens to be so connected to social media. I, myself, consider social media and my phone a natural part life. I participated in a "social media fast" a while back and various times

> **Introduces** the topic by explaining its relevance: while some of the wording is awkward (specifically the use of "they" in the second to last sentence of the paragraph) and the scenarios are general, the writer attempts to set the stage for the argument, at the same time attempting to **establish a formal style**.

> **Introduces a precise claim**

> States a clear reason and then **clarifies the relationships between claim and reasons** and **between reasons and evidence**

> States a clear reason and then **clarifies the relationships between claim and reasons, between reasons and evidence**

during the fast, I picked up my phone and used social media. forgetting that I was supposed to stay offline. I only did this because it is a natural part of my day. A phone ban at _____ would be a great first step to reducing the amount of time students spend on their phones, and a great first step to improving their mental health.

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Social media and devices help people share their talents and get publicity which can be a great thing for students to begin working on early. On NPR, African American writer, Kima Jones tells her story of how writing has helped her, "Twitter has been a way for me to find people who are interested in doing the work of literature" (Jones). Although it is a good idea for teens to get a head start on life, they have plenty of free time to do so outside of school and not in the middle of class. Also, time spent

While this personal aside lapses a bit from the formal tone of the piece, it is evidence of the writer acknowledging a counterclaim and anticipating the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

Integrates information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas (W.9-10.8) by using evidence from two different sources to support the reasoning in the paragraph that argues that devices cause distractions

The writer **distinguishes the claim from alternative or opposing claims.** The writer **develops counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence and pointing out the strengths and limitations** respectfully.

Uses phrases to create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claims and counterclaims

on phones during class is hardly ever spent for that reason, students are usually just scrolling through social media, liking useless posts.

Devices and social media come with many problems and hurt more than help. Although devices are good or helpful during free time, there is not much need for them during school. Using a phone is such a natural part of teen's lives that a phone ban at _____ would help them disconnect and take a look at the world they are missing out on.

<table>
<tr><td>**Anticipates audience's concerns and** acknowledges **counterclaim**, but also **provides a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented**</td></tr>
</table>

Works Cited

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Final Thoughts
(Gr 9 Argument: Proficient)

Overall, this piece is effective because it lays out a clear argument with logical reasons that are the focus of each paragraph. Following the reasons clearly articulated in the first few sentences of each body paragraph, the writer integrates evidence drawn from multiple sources. Although formulaic transitions are not employed between each paragraph, the writer uses the consistent pattern of organization in her essay to signal the relationships between reasons and evidence.

Throughout the piece the writer integrates an awareness of counterarguments and counterclaims. In addition, she devotes her third body paragraph to a counterclaim and evidence that might support that perspective. While she respectfully acknowledges the validity of the counterclaim, she uses it to define the boundaries of her argument—that social media doesn't need to be employed in school, even though she suggests it could be used productively at other times.

Next steps for this writer might be practice with hooks and introductions, so that she can capture the audience's attention and provide context effectively. Although the writer could use formal transitions at the beginning of each paragraph more explicitly, her organization and conclusions in each paragraph help to make the organization and reasoning in the piece logical and clear.

A Word about Language and Conventions
(Gr 9 Argument: Proficient)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.

Let's Turn it Off

In the modern world, social media has impacted the way people of all ages communicate. The widespread usage of social media has impacted our modern culture. It can have both positive and negative effects on people. Teenagers tend to use social media the most, and are therefore are affected by it most. Social media should be banned at _____ during school hours.

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Introduces the topic by explaining its relevance: while the context is general, the writer attempts to set the stage for the argument.

Introduces a precise claim

States a general reason and then **clarifies the relationships between claim and reason** and **between reasons and evidence:** in this case, the writer uses one source as evidence for his reasoning. He attempts to introduce and explain quotes and synthesize their significance.

Some wording makes the connections between reasons and evidence unclear. There is an attempt made to acknowledge a **counterclaim,** but it is not explored in depth and the relationship between counterclaim and claim is not adequately explored.

encourages people to interact face-to-face more. Social media can limit face-to-face interactions.

Cyberbullying is often done through social media. This is shown in the article *Cyberbullying and Social Media* by Bahati Russell, who talks about how social media gives people the freedom to share whatever they want on it. In paragraph 5, it says "Children, especially bullies, being exposed to this much freedom can negatively affect them." Banning social media would limit cyberbullying, allowing people to be happier and therefore, healthier.

> Some evidence supporting this paragraph's reasoning is included, but a greater depth of analysis is needed to adequately **develop** the argument.

_____ would be a better place if social media was banned during school hours. There would be less distractions, less cyberbullying, and people would interact in person more. Social media is a communication tool that can be beneficial, but it shouldn't be used during school.

> The writer **provides a concluding statement that** restates the focus and the reasons presented in the essay. The final statement acknowledges the complexity of the issue. The conclusion, however, requires more depth to adequately synthesize and reflect upon the essay's core arguments.

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Final Thoughts
(Gr 9 Argument: Approaching)

Overall, this piece is approaching proficiency because of its clarity of purpose and organization. The writer makes a clear argument and logically builds on that argument throughout the piece. The writer also cites quotes from multiple sources as evidence in support of his argument.

Next steps in moving towards grade-level proficiency for this writer would be to synthesize evidence from multiple sources to support each reason, revise quote introductions and explanations for fluency, add transitions between paragraphs and within paragraphs to improve the flow of ideas, and reflect on the significance of his argument in his conclusion. In addition, the writer could incorporate evidence and specifics around one or more counterarguments to show how the discussion is nuanced and complex. Finally, the writer needs to delineate his argument in relationship to that complexity, so that his argument is more nuanced.

A Word about Language and Conventions
(Gr 9 Argument: Approaching)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.

Don't Ban Social Media!

In many schools teachers and students use social media during school for many different reasons in class or out of class. The big question that is being _____ during school hours?". _____ should be able to use social media during school hours and these are my reasons why I and many others are against the ban of it.

> **Introduces** the topic with minimal detail

> Employs **a style** that is slightly informal, due to the use of imprecise language (ex. "big question") and use of "I"

> **Introduces claim**

First, social media is shown to help with social connection. Some studies show that online connections with small groups of people can be beneficial to teens. For example, by using technology with other people online can help with making new friend that have the same interests as you, from the, Social Media and Teens by Katie Hurley. Teens who struggle with social skills, social anxiety, or who don't have easy access to face-to-face socializing with other teens might benefit from connecting with other teens through social media. For instance, People who struggle with social skills can feel more comfortable making friends online instead of having to communicate in person. Also from Katie Hurley on Social Media and Teens. "Twitter has been a way for me to find people who are interested in doing the work of literature". That was from Code Switch by Kima Jones explaining why Twitter and other social media websites can help finding work that you personally are interested in doing or finding a job. A problem found by Jones was when using social media social connections can lead to bullying and being judged by other people that see you on social media and other online websites. This could lead to personal problems about your appearance. Overall, using social media helps with social connections.

> **Uses** transition **words to link major sections of the text**

> The writer attempts to **use words and clauses to create cohesion.** However, although he successfully uses transition words to show the relationship between claims and reasons, his transitions between reasons and evidence are awkward and confusing.

> Although the writer attempts to cite sources, he does not attend to the citation conventions required of a research paper.

Second, social media has been shown to be useful for education for students and teachers. "While Gray was procrastinating on Twitter, she also wrote a collection of essays and a novel. Also from Kima Jones, this

> **Uses** transition **words to link major sections of the text**

shows that by using social media, it can help with assigned school projects. Social media also shows articles and information sharing with one another, it can also be a resource for research. It can be used to create a public profile to showcase personal research interests and to connect with a broad advice. From Duke University on Learning Innovation by Lynne O'brien, showing classmates your work by using social media helps with understanding. One low about using social media during school can lead it to be a distraction in and out of class and leads to getting off topic with school work you are learning about. For more than the time social media is very useful for education for students and teachers during school.

The writer attempts a **counterclaim,** but doesn't **supply evidence** for it or **use clauses or phrases to clarify the relationship between the claim and the counterclaim.**

       In conclusion social media has been shown to be used all over the world with many different uses that are helpful to people in what they are trying to get out of it to help them in school or out of school. This is why at _____ we should be able to use social media during school hours.

Provides a concluding statement that restates the focus and that refers to general reasoning concerning the argument

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Final Thoughts
(Gr 9 Argument: Beginning)

Overall, this piece shows some understanding of the topic. The writer stated an argument and then focused each body paragraph on reasons, which supported his focus. In addition, the writer included transition words to indicate new ideas and emphasis. However, the writer included vague and general language throughout, which sometimes made his voice seem less formal. In addition, he lacked appropriate transitions to introduce and explain quotes from multiple texts, as well as the ability to cite these sources according to research conventions. Finally, while he included a general counterargument, he required evidence to fully explore the counterargument fairly and lacked additional language to help him unpack the complexity of the issue fairly.

The student would benefit from instruction in evidence selection, analysis (tied to the focus), and organization. The student also lacks the flexibility and facility with language needed to be able to successfully explain the relationships between reasoning and evidence, claims and counterclaims.

A Word about Language and Conventions
(Gr 9 Argument: Beginning)

Partial Control of Conventions: Although the writer has some control over language and conventions, the student could benefit from instruction in the following skills:
- citation formatting (MLA conventions for citing quotes, italicizing titles, etc.)
- precise language
- syntax

Technology with Responsibility

In recent years, social media has gotten a bad reputation in schools. Whether it be shifting social norms, or the extremely large amounts of people who use it to communicate, it all can seem very overwhelming. All of this doubt and distrust might lead our high school to believe that banning the use of social media will solve all the suspected problems that correlate with it. But before we do so, we should not only consider the immense opportunities social media can bring us when we use it correctly, but also how it could modernize the school system for the new age. A healthy balance of technology would bring benefits that include engaging students in their work, extending learning opportunities beyond the classroom, and creating connections and communities that might not have been possible before. <u>There should not be a ban on social media because of its ability to enrich the school experience, but at the same time we should be aware of how and when it is used.</u>

> **Introduces** the topic by explaining its relevance: in addition, this introduction **anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns** and **develops claims and counterclaims fairly, pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.**

> **Introduces a precise,** nuanced **claim** and **distinguishes the claim from alternate or opposing claims**

If used in the right way, social media can engage students in their work. In a age where technology is everywhere, a common problem we have is keeping focused on unengaging assignments. The way this situation commonly plays out for students is to procrastinate by being on their phones. Shawna Bu Shell, an educational technology professor at Rowan University, has found a potential solution to this problem that does not involve to ban social media. Rather she states, "If a teacher is good at designing homework and is willing to integrate social media, then students won't be sneaking, trying to use it" (Dunn). With Shell's proposed solution, students will be less likely to use social media instead of doing homework, because they will be using social media to do homework. Our problems are not only on a small scale, but also the school system as a whole. Edudemic (a teaching resource site) speculates that, "...students

> While the writer has some minor wording errors, **she effectively uses words and phrases to create cohesion between her reasons and evidence.**

become distracted when homework is not engaging, which is not always the fault of the teacher, but a school district's reluctance to stray from the curriculum" (Dunn). The idea of using social media to engage students through something they are familiar with and enjoy using could help advance our outdated school systems. Some argue that using too much social media could lead to less work and more time online. A way to regulate and balance this is to have teachers outline specifically what students are doing on social media and how much time they spend on it. With the right balance of social media, students can become more engaged in their work and assignments.

> The writer **uses phrases and clauses to clarify the relationships between claims and counterclaims.**

The question has arisen that if social media is in the classrooms, what are the benefits of using it compared to continuing with the classic learning environment? One of the most noteworthy benefits, is its ability to extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom. For example, Edutopia author, Jim Asher, talks about how students can, "Use a classroom twitter account to connect students with the world. They can have real-time dialogues with experts, museums publishers, journalists, and more" (Asher). This is a unique experience that normally would be much harder and take longer to make happen. In an article by Scholastic, a teacher talks about the conversations his students have over skype with kids from Afghanistan; he claims, "You can't find this in a textbook, and those the kind of authentic conversations we have"(Adjout). These kinds of opportunities wouldn't be possible in classic classroom settings. With these examples, it can seen that there are multitudes of possibilities brought by social media. It can be argued that Social Media should not be a big part of education because it is not an effective way to learn and can have negative effects on behavior. CBC News lets us understand "Instead of banning social media, teachers should lay out expectations about their use in the same way they would with any other classroom rule"(Tamara Tahmani). Yes, there can overuse can be dangerous, but if teachers find a balance where students are able to take advantage of the extended learning

> Fluently **synthesizes multiple sources (W9-10.7)** and **integrates information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas (W9-10.8).**

> The writer acknowledges an **alternative claim**, then suggests a solution which supports her argument without disregarding the counterclaim.

opportunities social media brings while also using a traditional classroom education, we would be one step closer to a more modern, efficient and connected school.

Beyond a tool for extending learning, social media also allows students to find and connect and get support from others. Social media communities can be a unique way to get multiple perspectives and voices heard even in topics students wouldn't have as much easy access to. Kima Jones talks about how a community of black poets has been able to share their work on twitter and get recognition where they might have not before. She talks about how,"social media's range and impact on how literature is produced and received can no longer be reduced to making sure an author has a well-designed website"(Jones). These same benefits can be translated to the classroom, whether it be sharing essays and student written papers with other young writers, or just in general, projects. These types of supportive communities can also help in more ways than just academic. In Katie Hurley's article "Social Media and Teens" she talks about how, "Teens in marginalized groups- including LGBTQ teens and teens struggling with mental health issues- can find support and friendship through use of social media" (Hurley). Coming from a small school, it is easy to sometimes see that there aren't people around that are going through your same experience and problems and it can be hard to talk to people who don't understand. The large amount of people on online communities, means that almost always you can find people who understand your struggles and most likely need support as much as you do. It could be argued that students could become detached from their real life communities, and there is no reason students should need to be taking to their social groups during the school day. Like every other benefit of social media, it should be used in moderation. This doesn't mean social media should be banned. It implies that schools should be aware that student's communities online can benefit their mental health and might also help them get their voices heard.

Establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone while attending to the conventions of the discipline

Uses phrases and clauses to link the major sections of the text and create cohesion

Uses phrases and clauses create cohesion between reasons and evidence: the writer spells out the connection between pieces of evidence in terms of how they support her reasoning.

Therefore, there should not be a ban on social media. The benefits of not banning it range from connecting communities, extending learning opportunities, to engaging students in their work. Although social media is a powerful tool with many benefits, we should also be aware of how it can change the way we communicate with other people, and the way we spend our time. It's both the student and the teachers responsibility to moderate how much time is spent of social media so a good balance can be maintained. Maybe part of the reason our school is hesitant to respect the benefits of social media is because as a culture, we have painted it as something that is bad. If we are able to shift our norms and realize how technology can enrich the school experience, while also being savvy enough to use it in moderation, we could become a more modern and new age school system. So before we implement a ban, we should consider the opportunities we will be missing if we don't take advantage of everything social media has to offer.

Provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the argument presented: the writer restates the complexity of the issue and ends with a call to action that demands knowledge of both sides of the debate.

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Final Thoughts
(Gr 9 Argument: Exceeds)

Overall, this essay shows solid and insightful understanding of the topic. While many elements of this piece are proficient, the precise, nuanced claim and the smooth integration of evidence helps it exceed the standard. The writer anticipates reader concerns by setting up the tension within the question in the introduction. Her claim acknowledges the complexity of the problem by rejecting a ban but simultaneously calling for more awareness of how devices are used in school.

The writer's organization is clear and logical throughout and each section helps her build meaning. Although she does not provide evidence to support her counterclaims, she does include a counterclaim for each of her body paragraphs, making a respectful acknowledgement of the complexity of the issue central to her argument. Her conclusion adequately reflects on her argument and calls for a new philosophy around the use of technology. Overall, the piece is solid; however, with her nuanced treatment of the claims and counterclaims, her piece exceeds the standard.

A Word about Language and Conventions
(Gr 9 Argument: Exceeds)

Partial Control of Conventions: Although the writer has some control over language and conventions, the student could benefit from instruction in the following skills:
- Citation formatting (MLA conventions for citing quotes)
- Syntax
- Possession (apostrophes)
- General editing for typos