

Read the passages and answer items 3 and 4.

Step Away from the Smartphone

With the world at our fingertips at the touch of a button or the swipe of a screen, it's no wonder that people are spending more time on electronic devices. It seems that almost every facet of life can be improved using technology. Questions can be answered, friendships can be developed, and businesses can be promoted. Online storefronts make shopping a breeze. When people want a break from devices, they can lounge in front of theater-quality televisions and enjoy movies, TV shows, or gaming. Technology clearly makes life easier. But in actuality, it is making life a bit too easy. In fact, overuse of technology is contributing to a dangerous decline in fitness and health.

Research supports this worrisome truth. One recent study reviewed physical activity in the United States, China, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and India between 1965 and 2009. Every nation showed significant drops, but the U.S. experienced the greatest decline, with total activity falling by about one-third. Notably, most of the decline in activity levels occurred between 2003 and 2009, when Internet use first blossomed in popularity.

Based on this research, scientists predict that Americans will participate in almost 42 hours a week of seated leisure activities by 2030. That's more than the average workweek. Experts link this largely to the use of digital media, which has increased to an average of 11 hours per day.

The massive reduction of activity has contributed to an overall rise of weight levels and a loss of cardiovascular fitness. According to experts, heart fitness exceeds other types of fitness, including strength and flexibility, in its importance to overall health. Alarming, both children and adults have experienced a serious decline in heart health. One study reveals that children and teens today are approximately 15 percent less fit than their parents were as kids. The average mile-run is about 1.5 minutes slower for children today than it was for children 30 years ago. And over time, of course, we know that increased inactivity will lead to more heart disease, a higher incidence of diabetes, and other serious illnesses.

What can be done to reverse this trend? Adults and kids alike should put down their electronic devices, get up, and move. Instead of texting a friend, we should get out and visit that friend. Instead of shopping online, we can take back the experience of actually walking through stores, handling the merchandise, and talking to people. And while it is certainly entertaining to watch professional athletes play sports on our shiny new technical gadgets, it is far healthier to get outside and take part in sports activities ourselves. Our health and well-being depend on it.

Getting Fit with Technology

For many people, staying fit is a challenge in the modern world. Careers often require people to sit for hours in front of screens. After a long workday, it is tempting to collapse on the sofa and catch up on social media or zone out with television. But more and more people are glancing at their wrist-bound fitness devices and deciding to hit the gym instead. While some aspects of our technologically driven world may encourage physical inactivity, others are actually helping people monitor and improve their fitness levels.

The fitness tech industry is growing by leaps and bounds. In fact, more than 17 million wearable fitness devices were shipped in 2014. These gadgets can check heart rate, count steps, estimate calories burned, and count calories consumed. Some even check body temperature and perspiration levels. Many such devices are strapped on like watches, so users can wear them all day to track activity, eating, and even sleep habits. Some include chest straps or shoe sensors. Manufacturers often provide free, customizable fitness plans that are integrated into the software.

Fitness devices can be linked to smartphones so wearers can input data, such as what they ate for lunch, quickly and easily. These devices offer gentle reminders to their wearers to move more and eat more healthfully. Some even provide virtual coaching during exercise sessions, such as monitoring heart rate and telling users to slow down or speed up. At the session's end, the virtual coach will offer praise for a job well done.

Most wearers find fitness devices to be very motivating and fun to use. And, as a result, the devices do help people become more aware of their habits. For example, when every step is logged, people are more likely to take the stairs than to ride the elevator. They work harder when they have personal goals to meet because they like to see positive results recorded on the devices. Some even enjoy sharing their progress on social media for virtual congratulations.

According to a recent study, 73 percent of users think that they are healthier as a result of using fitness technology. Research supports this, revealing that the use of wearable devices, smartphone apps, fitness websites, and active video games—such as virtual tennis, dancing, and boxing—are effective in increasing overall activity.

Naysayers may discount technology as a detractor of health. But in fact, technology provides tools people can use to get in the best shape of their lives.

ITEM 4: EXTENDED WRITING-RESPONSE

WRITING TASK

Currently, there is much debate about whether the dominance of technology in our everyday lives is an advantage or disadvantage for our health.

Consider the claims on BOTH sides of the debate. Then write an **argumentative essay** in your own words supporting either side.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your **argumentative essay**.

Writer's Checklist

Be sure to:

- Introduce your claim.
- Support your claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, including facts and details, from the passages.
- Acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims.
- Organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
- Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to connect your ideas and to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a conclusion that supports the argument presented.
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

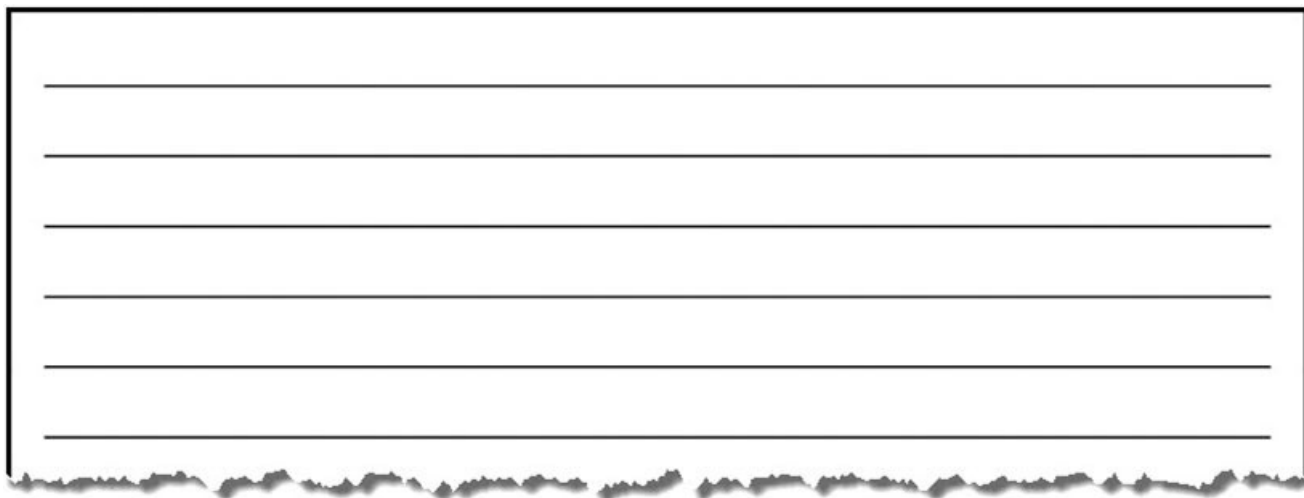
Now write your argumentative essay on your answer document. Refer to the Writer's Checklist as you write and proofread your essay.

NINTH GRADE LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

4. Writing Task (Write your essay here.)

Be sure to:

- Introduce your claim.
- Support your claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, including facts and details, from the passages.
- Acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims.
- Organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
- Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to connect your ideas and to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a conclusion that supports the argument presented.
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.



Scoring Guide

Item 4 Information

Standards:

ELAGSE9-10W1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

ELAGSE9-10L1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

ELAGSE9-10L2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Item Depth of Knowledge: 4

Extended Thinking
Student conducts an investigation, needs time to think and process multiple conditions of the problem or task.