

## Digital detox: Going cold turkey with no wi-fi in the Lake District

Level: Elementary

### 1 Warmer

a. Discuss in pairs.

- What do you use your phone for?
- Do you sometimes leave your phone at home?
- Do you sometimes switch your phone off?
- How much time a day do you spend on your phone?

### 2 Key words

a. Write the words from the wordpools next to the definitions below. Then find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

scenery

remote

disconnect

disbelief

cottage

1. a small house, usually in a village or the countryside \_\_\_\_\_
2. the feeling of not believing someone or something, especially something shocking  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. far away from other cities, towns or people \_\_\_\_\_
4. natural things such as trees, hills and lakes \_\_\_\_\_
5. stop using the internet or your smartphone \_\_\_\_\_

complain

convince

embrace

imaginative

tap

6. the pipe in your kitchen or bathroom that water comes out from \_\_\_\_\_
7. say how unhappy you are about something \_\_\_\_\_
8. using your imagination \_\_\_\_\_
9. make someone believe that something is true \_\_\_\_\_
10. completely accept something new \_\_\_\_\_

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**b. Use some of the key words above to complete these sentences.**

1. There's no hot water coming out of the bathroom \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You have to \_\_\_\_\_ the boss that you are the right person for the job.
3. My grandparents were from a \_\_\_\_\_ village in China.
4. Liz looked at me in \_\_\_\_\_ when I told her what had happened.
5. You have to be very \_\_\_\_\_ to write stories.

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- 1 “Where’s the TV?” my children ask. The door of our holiday cottage in the Lake District opens and we see a tiny lounge. There’s no TV, only a simple fireplace, a bookcase with maps and nature books, and two armchairs.
- 2 “Can we go on the iPad?” is the next question. We say “No, we didn’t bring it.” There is disbelief on my children’s faces when I say that there’s no internet, no computer, no phone signal, and that we’re not going to look at screens this week.
- 3 We came to the remote cottage for the beautiful scenery and quiet, not for a digital detox. But no wi-fi is a huge bonus.
- 4 My children are only six and eight, and they do not have their own mobiles or tablets, but the shows they like are online. They want to go on on YouTube, and love sending emojis from my phone to their friends. They do most of their homework online. The digital world is everywhere. It feels important to put a complete stop to it for a week.
- 5 I’m not the only one with this feeling. Many holiday companies now offer digital detoxes. Zooming, digital home-schooling and streaming TV shows makes it seem like we live our whole lives online. Many of us feel screen-sick and want to disconnect.
- 6 Our holiday cottage is basic. There’s no bathroom, only an outside toilet, and a shower bag that you fill from the kitchen tap (there is hot water and electricity).
- 7 After their first shock, the kids find it surprisingly easy to live without videos. We take our novels and colouring books into the wild garden, and we eat on a picnic bench under the tree. We go hiking, and my daughter discovers wild swimming. At night we watch for bats.
- 8 After a few days, the children stop complaining that there are no screens and instead they play imaginative games, or we play card games and take a walk to get ice-cream.
- 9 It might be harder to convince older children and teenagers that a week with no wi-fi is a good thing, but many have embraced mindfulness, yoga and veganism – so why not this?
- 10 We use our phones for so many things in life. Perhaps we should all try to live without them for a while.

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### 3 Understanding the article

a. Are these sentences True or False according to the article? Correct any that are false.

1. The author has two teenage children.
2. Their holiday cottage in the Lake District did not have wi-fi.
3. The whole family wanted to have a week without the internet.
4. Her children have their own mobiles and tablets.
5. The author's children need computer access to do their homework.
6. Her children soon loved being in the countryside without internet access.
7. The author says that it would probably be more difficult to convince teenagers to enjoy a week without internet access, but she thinks that it is possible.
8. She believes that it is good for us all to spend a week without our phones.

### 4 Key language

a. Match the words to make word pairs from the article. Then find and highlight them in the article.

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. holiday   | a. bench     |
| 2. phone     | b. schooling |
| 3. beautiful | c. sick      |
| 4. digital   | d. scenery   |
| 5. huge      | e. signal    |
| 6. home-     | f. bonus     |
| 7. screen-   | g. cottage   |
| 8. picnic    | h. detox     |

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**b. Use the word pairs to complete these sentences.**

1. Don't call me while I'm shopping; there's no \_\_\_\_\_ in the supermarket.
2. I've been working at the computer all day. I'm starting to feel \_\_\_\_\_.
3. All the managers got a \_\_\_\_\_ at the end of the year.
4. It's such a nice day. Let's take our lunch to the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. This summer we're staying in a \_\_\_\_\_ near a lake.
6. During Covid many parents found \_\_\_\_\_ difficult.
7. I try to do a \_\_\_\_\_ one day a week.
8. The Lake District in the north of England is famous for its \_\_\_\_\_ such as lakes and mountains.

**c. Choose four that you would like to use and write sentences of your own for each one.**

### 5 Discussion

**a. Discuss in pairs or groups.**

- How do you feel when you cannot use or find your phone?  
*I panic      I feel disconnected      I like the peace      It's not a problem*  
*I worry      I feel there's something missing*
- At what age should children get their own phone, tablet or laptop?
- At what age is it ok for them to use their parents' phones?

### 6 In your own words

**a. Imagine you manage a digital detox holiday spot. What do you offer? Write a short positive description for a travel website. Give information about:**

- your accommodation (e.g., single/double rooms, tents, cottages)
- the facilities (e.g., pool, garden, sauna)
- the scenery around the centre
- the meals
- workshops and activities (e.g., guided walks, yoga)
- any other interesting information.