

Essay Writing sample:

Fifty years ago children used to play games out in the street with their friends in their leisure time. There were a lot of games such as *hide-and-peek and hopscotch*. At home, they had their toys to play with. In school, they used pencils, notebooks, chalks and chalkboards for writing. For family entertainment, their parents took them to movies, theme parks or the zoo. Today, however, all this has changed a lot. There are no more street games or toys. Children play virtual games on their computers or tablets. Instead of communicating with friends outside, they use their smart phones to share texts, photos, selfies and videos. In many schools, tablets and smart boards have replaced the old ways. And movies, animals, theme park activities are all in their computers, tablets, smart phones, or TVs. Thus, screens are everywhere at almost every moment of children's lives. Although this is how new technologies have been transforming our lives towards the better, some child development experts argue that this *screen-dominated* lifestyle is not always good for children. In fact, present-day children's close and frequent contact with screens – let's call it *screen addiction* – has mainly three negative effects on their development: they may have physical problems, become asocial, and cannot be creative.

To begin with, screen addiction harms children physically. Eyes are affected negatively due to long hours of exposure to that strong light from the screen. This may lead to serious eye-sight problems. In addition, sitting for a long time in front of a computer causes problems in neck, arm, hand, back and leg muscles. Similarly, spending too much time sharing messages or data on phones and tablets also results in damages to neck, shoulder, even finger muscles. Apart from these, when children spend all those hours inactively, that is, without going out with friends, running, cycling, or moving their body in many ways, they may have serious problems related to obesity, heart or kidneys. Secondly, children who spend a lot of time in front of a screen become asocial. Whether it is a TV or a tablet, it steals too much of their time with other people. In fact, such children rarely want to go out, meet friends, or do anything outside. This leads to inappropriate behaviour, unacceptable manners, lack of confidence, or other problems whenever they find themselves in a social environment. Finally, screens kill creativity. Creativity is a process which is composed of mental and physical skills. The mind thinks of a plan or design, sends commands to parts of the body, and receiving these messages, the parts needed for that particular creation, that is, the eyes, ears, arms, hands, fingers, legs or feet work together, bring out the product, and complete the process. This may be building a LEGO structure, making a kite, composing a song on the piano, finding a new trick with the feet in football, or designing a project to help animals in the neighbourhood. With too much focusing on the screen, which brings them everything in a ready-made form, plus the limited amount of bodily movement, these children cannot develop their mental and physical skills freely. Of course, this results in lack of creative thinking and action.

To sum up, despite the colour and action and the limitless possibilities the screen lays before children, it causes physical problems, asocial characters, and lack of creative skills mentally and physically. Therefore, like in every other technological innovation, which has both benefits and drawbacks when used by children, the use of devices with a screen should also be restricted and controlled up to a certain age. (601 words)