

# Tell Us Whether The Reader Comments Are Constructive Or Not And Abusive Or Not

Instructions

## Overview

In this job you will be presented with headlines and links to the corresponding Globe and Mail articles (not necessarily recent) and real comments that people posted in response to the articles. Your job is to answer the following two questions on the presented comment:

1. Whether the presented comment is constructive or not.
2. How toxic is the comment?

## Functional Definitions

A *constructive* comment is the one which exchanges intelligent and informed remarks that are relevant to the article. Below we point out some characteristics of constructive and non-constructive comments.

### Comment type

#### Constructive

- Comments which intend to **create a dialogue** through remarks that are relevant to the article and **not intended to merely provoke an emotional response**
- Comments which are typically targeted to **specific** points and if necessary **supported by appropriate evidence**
- Comments which offer **solutions, new perspectives** and **insights**
- Comments which share **unique experiences** relevant

### Examples

points about issues surrounding gender disparity. That said, the enormous assumption underlying this article is that the only explanation for a gender disparity in the workplace is discrimination. There's no reason to believe that's true. If it is, can we conclude that the egregious gender disparity in the teaching profession is due to institutional discrimination against men? And can we expect lobbying to ensure that school boards establish gender equity policies to ensure half of teachers are men?

to the article

## Non constructive

- Comments which **do not have much content**
- Comments which are **not civilized**
- Comments which **merely assign a blame**
- Comments which present **emotional reactions** without objectivity
- Comments which are **sarcastic** and in which the intention is to **mock** the author or the content of the article without any evidence
- Comments which express opinions **without appropriate evidence**
- Comments which are **excessively flattering** or **demeaning** without much content

Excellent!! Maggie, I think you are the only sane person in the world!

Yawwwn.....Such a boring article!!

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We define *toxicity* on a 4-point-scale, where each point on the scale is defined in terms of the following characteristics.

### Toxicity level

### Examples

## Very toxic (scale point =4)

- Comments which use **harsh, offensive, or abusive language**
- Comments which include **personal attacks, insults, condemnation**
- Comments which are **derogatory or demeaning** and **cause embarrassment and disrespect**
- Comments which will likely make someone leave the conversation

The candidate is a buffoon, speaking of a man who will never be in a position of power.

He should rotten in hell!

## Toxic (scale point = 3)

- Comments which are **sarcastic** and show **non-constructive criticism**
- Comments which include **ridiculing** or **teasing others**
- Comments which include **disagreeing aggressively** or **joking inappropriately**

Another academic in denial -- somebody rustle up a safe space, I think somebody has a case of the vapours...

Great! Just what we need -- more bankrupting socialism delivered at the point of gun.

## Mildly toxic (scale point = 2)

- Comments which might be considered as toxic by some people or in some contexts
- Comments which **express frustration and anger**

Are we still talking about Trump's 'unfair' victory?? GIVE ME A BREAK!!

More lies and misinformation, very opinionated and a low-quality article.

## Not toxic (scale point = 1)

- Comments which do not exhibit any toxicity

In my opinion, criticizing the new generation is not going to solve any problem.

If you want to produce children, you should be prepared to pay for their care.

**Note that a positive comment does not necessarily mean it is constructive  
and a negative comment does not necessarily mean it is toxic.**

## Steps

1. If you haven't already, read the article with the given headline following the article link.
2. Read the comment.
3. Tell us whether you read the article or not. If you haven't read the article, you won't be able to complete the question. Accordingly, we display other questions only when your answer to this question is *yes*.
4. Tell us whether you think the comment is constructive or not.
5. Tell us how toxic the comment is with respect to our 4-point toxicity scale.
6. If you have any comments about the task or the definitions, please write them in *Your comments* text box.

**Thank you for your help with this project!!**

## Headline

Apple Watch: It's the precise opposite of a labour-saving device

[If you haven't already read the article with the headline above, please click here to read it.](#) (Alternatively, click [here](#) for the article.)

## Now read the following commentary on this article.

I feel about the same way you feel about your 'obsolete' ipod, Nebuly: when we bought a new car a few years ago, I realized almost immediately that (gasp!) it didn't have an audio cassette machine! This, after years of re-recording and collecting music on cassette tape--what to do? Answer: remember the good times. I do have a compact shelf-model CD/radio/cassette unit (TWIN cassette players, I might add) with small detachable speakers sitting in my home office. It is the only place I can play those cassettes, now. When that goes...well, maybe my hearing will have deteriorated to the point where it won't matter anymore...

### **Did you read the article?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

### **Is the comment constructive?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Not sure

### **How will you rate the toxicity of the comment?**

1    2    3    4  
 Not Toxic ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very Toxic

Your comments \_\_\_\_\_

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Now read the following commentary on this article.

You've got that right. Every updated iTunes deletes hundreds of songs it does not recognize. So before an update store/backup the entire collection and then drag it back. So far it still works and will transfer to my classic iPod.

**Did you read the article?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**Is the comment constructive?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Not sure

**How will you rate the toxicity of the comment?**

- 1 2 3 4  
 Not Toxic ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very Toxic  
 Your comments

Headline

Apple Watch: It's the precise opposite of a labour-saving device

[If you haven't already read the article with the headline above, please click here to read it.](#) (Alternatively, click [here](#) for the article.)

Now read the following commentary on this article.

Love my Classic and it's 800 plus 'albums'. Don't love the iTunes program.

**Did you read the article?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

### Is the comment constructive?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

### How will you rate the toxicity of the comment?

1 2 3 4

Not Toxic ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very Toxic

Your comments

### Headline

Apple Watch: It's the precise opposite of a labour-saving device

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### Now read the following commentary on this article.

Nothing wrong with using something until it wears out. Nothing at all. But the pace of technological advancement is quite compared to the Walkman era. And time stands still for no one.

### Did you read the article?

☐ Yes

☐ No

### Is the comment constructive?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

## How will you rate the toxicity of the comment?

1   2   3   4

Not Toxic ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very Toxic

Your comments

## Headline

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## Now read the following commentary on this article.

No, no line in the sand; but one person's 'necessary' is another person's 'don't need it'. I don't necessarily want to 'make do with less'; but I have what I need to do what I want. I have a camera (digital) to take pictures with; a watch to tell me what time it is; a Blackberry that lets me send and receive texts and phone calls. If I want to check e-mail, Facebook, browse the web, Google something, I have a computer. When I'm away from it, I'm at work, or doing something where a computer isn't necessary (like cooking, gardening, reading, watching a DVD). If I have a burning need to find something out Right This Very Second - well, it can usually wait until I'm near a computer. And I'm fine with all that, just as I'm fine with people who absolutely, positively can't live without something that does everything except open the garage door (and I'm sure there's an app for that). So don't judge people who don't have to have the latest iWhatever as hopeless fuddy-duddy stick-in-the-muds who'd go back to wind-up gramophones if they had a chance (that said, I do have a wind-up gramophone, which my son - born in 1997, and as wired as they come - thinks is wonderful). I edit a weekly newspaper, and use Photoshop and InDesign to put the whole thing together; a long way from the physical lay-out and paste-up I learned with, and I wouldn't go back to those days for all the hot wax in the world.

## Did you read the article?

☐ Yes

☐ No

## Is the comment constructive?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

## How will you rate the toxicity of the comment?

1 2 3 4

Not Toxic ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very Toxic

Your comments

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Validation in progress

Validation succeeded

Validation failed

Test Validators