MODULE 7.
THE MOBILE REUSE DEBATE

MODULE
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LESSON OBJECTIVE

In this module students will examine the increasing volume of mobile phones being used and the exportation of obsolete mobile phones to developing countries. They will consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of this issue and gain an understanding of the impact of mobile phone use and disposal on different communities around the world.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT DESCRIPTION

YEAR 7 ENGLISH

- Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, selecting aspects of subject matter and particular language, visual, and audio features to convey information and ideas (ACELY1725)

- Edit for meaning by removing repetition, refining ideas, reordering sentences and adding or substituting words for impact (ACELY1726)

YEAR 8 ENGLISH

- Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that raise issues, report events and advance opinions, using deliberate language and textual choices, and including digital elements as appropriate (ACELY1736)

- Experiment with text structures and language features to refine and clarify ideas to improve the effectiveness of students' own texts (ACELY1810)

- Use a range of software, including word processing programs, to create, edit and publish texts imaginatively (ACELY1738)

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YEAR 7 GEOGRAPHY

- Apply geographical concepts to draw conclusions based on the analysis of the data and information collected (ACHGS052)

- •Reflect on their learning to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge, taking account of environmental, economic and social considerations, and predict the expected outcomes of their proposal (ACHGS054)

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YEAR 8 GEOGRAPHY

- Develop geographically significant questions and plan an inquiry using appropriate geographical methodologies and concepts (ACHGS055)

- Collect, select and record relevant geographical data and information, using ethical protocols, from appropriate primary and secondary sources (ACHGS056)

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LESSON OUTLINE

1. Watch The Story of Electronics video and/or The Secret Life of Mobile Phones. These videos raise some important issues in relation to the life-cycle of electronics products and their impact on our society. It is advised that teacher's watch the video prior to student participation. Discuss the following issues raised in the videos:

    The Story of Electronics

- What is Moore's Law?
- How often do we replace our old electronics products?
- How do we dispose of obsolete electronic devices?
- What happens when the electronics are exported overseas?
- What three solutions does the video raise?
    - Design /Innovation
    - Exports of toxic materials
    - Choose/Buy green products

The Secret Life of Mobile Phones

- How often do people replace their mobile phone?

- What happens to disused phones?

- Why are people not recycling their phones?

- What happens to the phones when they are sent to be recycled?

- What countries are old mobile phones being sent to?

- What are the moral issues of sending mobile phones overseas?

- What are some of the benefits of recycling?

- What is a closed loop pattern of material use?

2. Introduce the term e-waste or electronic waste which refers to used electronics products including mobile phones. E-waste like mobile phones can be shipped to other countries for reuse or disassembly. Discuss how in some countries, people are earning a living by taking apart electronic devices, exposing themselves to toxic chemicals in the process, and degrading their environment as they do not have the environmental and safety regulations or standards that we have in Australia.

3. The Mobile Reuse Debate. A debate helps students to think through a complex issue and reconsider their opinions. There are two options for planning the debate:

    a. Students can debate the topic and present an affirmative or negative opinion towards the debate question - Are developing countries the toxic dumping ground for discarded mobile phones?

    b. Students can represent different characters in the debate and use the debate cards to argue various positions. See the Worksheet: Mobile Phone Debate Cards.

4. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group their debate position or character. Students will need to research the topic and consider a range of issues including:

    a. lower environmental standards in developing countries,

    b. international conventions and legal requirements of exporting,

    c. occupational health and safety issues, and

    d. the materials value of mobile phones.

5. Preparing for a debate. Students need to read through their research and work out the points they are going to make, provide examples and detailed explanations. They will also need to pre-empt counter arguments and prepare for rebuttal. They should be given plenty of time to practise speaking in smaller groups. Encourage students to give a reason for their opinions. Ensure students know there is no right or wrong answer.

6. Stage the debate. The teacher can act as the moderator or assign a student to the position of introducing the opposing teams of the debate and keeping time of each debate speaker. A student moderator should be able to speak clearly and keep everyone on task in a respectful manner. The moderator formally introduces the debate topic.

7. Debate rules will need to be outlined to ensure that students respect the opinions of others. Ideas for debate rules:

    a. Be polite and courteous.

    b. Listen attentively.

    c. Be respectful and supportive of peers.

    d. Avoid inappropriate noises.

e. Speak only when recognized by the moderator.

f. Speak clearly, slowly, and loud enough to be heard by the audience.

g. Speak with passion and excitement.

8. Debate Reflection. It is important for students to express their reactions to the debate. Record your debate and upload it to the MusterKids Zone on the MobileMuster website.

RESOURCES

1. Interactive whiteboard (IWB)

2. The Story of Electronics (7:46)

3. The Secret Life of Mobile Phones (4.50)

4. Worksheet: Mobile Phone Debate Cards

SUPPORT MATERIAL

• Moore's Law http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moore's_law

• The Basel Convention http://www.basel.int/ provides details about the treaty attempting to limit the trade of hazardous waste, as well as ratification information.

• United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (2013) Guidance document on the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life mobile phones

• For further information on how mobile phones are transforming lives in developing countries visit: http://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/lifestories/

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Research the Basel Convention, a United Nations treaty intended to limit the trade of hazardous waste. Prepare a presentation explaining how it limits trade, as well as which countries did or did not support this piece of legislation.