

TOEFL Integrated writing task Sample 3

Reading passage (reading time 3 minutes)

Speaking Through Social Media

The widespread phenomenon of mass communication through cell phones and the internet has spurred enormous controversy. Many believe that people have become less able to build bonds with friends and family members. It is impossible to deny that social media is constantly changing the way that people interact with one another. With the advent of new technologies that allow for non-simultaneous and distant interaction, people all over the world are now able to build relationships in a way that was formerly not possible. Some might say that this is a negative trend, but this new development opens up for unique and effective connections.

People often feel estranged in their surroundings. There are so many hobbies and interests that people enjoy, that it can be difficult to find someone who shares the same passions. Social media is of huge benefit to these people as they are empowered with opportunity for connection to a widespread community and countless resources. Some may have always wanted to learn more about a topic without having an avenue to jump in. Social media has proved itself to be effective in educating people of all ages on a variety of subjects ranging from rollerblading to string theory.

Moreover, the internet is especially helpful for helping people find a voice. Whereas the first amendment protects our right to free speech, many people feel that they have lost their ability to be heard. Social media allows us all to find a new way to speak confidently and ensures that every person has the opportunity to be heard.

Link of the lecture:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-827804196/toefl-writing-practicr>

Question:

Describe the risks discussed in the lecture and explain how they relate to the purpose of the reading passage.

Sample Answer:

The lecture seems to discourage social networking and it discusses the risks of social networking. The lecture mainly points out the negative sides of the internet like stealing or bullying people that cause serious issues in adults and children. Then, it goes on explaining the statistics on how it decreases the level of trust in people for important matters. The lecture directly says that too much relying on the internet is making people isolated – they stay busy with themselves and they are not willing to spend much time with others. It is harmful to the

culture as well. Overall, the lecture explains the negative impacts or threats of social networking directly.

The reading passage has a completely opposing view on social networking sites. The reading passage goes on by pointing out the positive qualities of social media. The reading passage describes the helpful factor of social media and the way it encourages people to try something new and meet old friends. The way people use social media to kill their time and to explore more opportunities are also denoted in the reading passage.

To conclude, the reading passage and lecture they basically agree on almost nothing. One speaks about the positive sides and the other about the negative sides. Both materials seem to warn the users to be careful with new technology, otherwise, the lecture contradicts the reading passage.