1. Task 1: Photo Analysis Warm Up
2. Task 2: Read the article "Are You Addicted to your Phone"
3. Task 3: Answer the multiple choice questions
4. Task 4: Complete the Writing Opinion Piece
1. Who are the people in the photo? Where was this photo taken, and what strikes you about this place?

2. How would you describe the expression of the people in the photo? What do you notice about what they're wearing?

3. Do you think these kinds of activities are effective in breaking internet and phone addiction? Why or why not? What approach would you suggest for dealing with the problem?
Are You Addicted to Your Phone?
Your smartphone and all those apps were designed to grab our attention. But now even some in the tech industry say the gadgets have become too addictive.

MARCH 12, 2018  By Joe Bubar

The first thing Alfredo Santos does when he wakes up each morning is check his iPhone. The rest of the day, the 16-year-old from New York City can't seem to put the device down, whether he's in class, at the dinner table, or lying in bed trying to fall asleep.

“If I can feel my phone in my pocket, I just want to take it out and check it,” says Santos, a 10th grader at New York Harbor School. “It's just tempting.”

Santos is far from alone in succumbing to the constant itch to check an Instagram feed, view a friend's latest Snapchat story, or play another round of Word Cookies. On average, Americans check their phones once every 12 minutes, according to a recent study by the tech company Asurion.

Many psychologists, teachers, and parents have long worried that teens are spending too much time on their phones. But now, even some people within the tech industry are saying that their products, which were designed to get you hooked, are too difficult to put down.

In January, two of Apple's largest investors wrote an open letter to the company, pressuring Apple to do more to combat what many people see as a growing health crisis among young people: phone addiction. Together, these investors—JANA Partners and the California State Teachers' Retirement System—own about $2 billion worth of Apple stock.

“The days of just throwing technology out there and washing your hands of the potential impact are over,” says Barry Rosenstein of JANA Partners.

Millions of Apps
There are millions of different apps available on Androids and iPhones, and they're all competing for attention. After all, the more time users spend on an app, the more companies will pay to advertise on them.

“The people designing these apps are very sophisticated,” says Adam Alter, a psychology professor at New York University and the author of the book Irresistible. “There's a lot of them, and they're doing everything they can to keep us engaged.”
Some companies even apply neuroscience to find ways to get users’ attention. At Neurons Inc., a Danish company that Facebook and others have used, researchers measure the electrical activity of people’s brains while they’re on an app to see which features bring them the most joy and keep them most engaged.

Efforts like these seem to be working—perhaps too well. According to a 2016 survey by Common Sense Media, half of teens say they feel addicted to their phones. Alfredo Santos is one of them.

“If I don’t have my phone, I can’t find anything else to do,” he says. “I don’t feel comfortable with myself. I’m like, ‘What am I going to do now?’”

**A Generation of Guinea Pigs?**

Phone addiction isn’t listed as a recognized disorder in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, the standard U.S. reference book for mental health diagnoses. However, research shows that obsessively checking your phone could have negative side effects. The more time teens spend in front of screens, the less happy they are, according to a 2018 study by Jean Twenge, a psychology professor at San Diego State University. In a 2017 study, Twenge also found that young people who use social media daily are 13 percent more likely to report high levels of depressive symptoms than those who don’t use social media daily.

And all of this technology is so new that researchers don’t yet know how it might affect the still-developing brains of teens. Says psychologist Edward Spector, “We have an entire generation of guinea pigs in an experiment.”

Some countries, especially in East Asia, treat internet addiction like an addiction to gambling or drugs. Both China and South Korea view it as a public health threat and have opened hundreds of treatment centers.

**It’s not yet clear how phone use affects teens’ developing brains.**

In China an estimated 24 million people ages 6 to 29 are internet addicts. The country’s treatment centers have earned the nickname “boot camps” because teenagers at the facilities wear camouflage uniforms and have to perform military-style drills. The boot camps, which mostly cut teens off from internet access entirely, have drawn sharp criticism for what many see as overly harsh treatment.

Some less extreme treatment facilities have popped up in the U.S. One is reSTART, a retreat center in Fall City, Washington, for teens and adults who obsessively use technology. Patients detox from technology while working with counselors to discover the root issues behind their tech dependencies.
The center’s CEO, Cosette Rae, says many of the patients there have dropped out of school because they’re so hooked on video games or the internet. Some are even malnourished because they can’t pull themselves away from their screens.

“The past couple years, we’re getting more and more kids that want to come in,” says Rae. “They’re saying, ‘Hey, I’ve tried to quit, I’ve tried to manage my use, I’ve tried to use in healthy ways and I can’t. I can’t control it at all.’”

Pressuring Facebook

There’s a growing push from within the tech industry now to address these problems. In January, Tony Fadell, a former Apple executive who helped create the iPod and iPhone, tweeted that sites like Instagram and Facebook now “have a responsibility & need to start helping us track & manage our digital addictions.”

But others say that burden should be on users, not tech companies, which are trying to make their products as appealing as possible.

“We want these products to be good and engaging and interesting—that’s why we use them in the first place,” says Nir Eyal, the author of Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products and a frequent consultant for companies looking for ways to attract consumers.

Recently, Facebook came under fire for its new Messenger app aimed at kids under 13. A group of more than 100 child advocates, medical experts, and others called on Facebook to discontinue the app, saying it poses health and developmental risks for young children. So far, Facebook is standing behind the app, which it points out has built-in parental controls.

Apple, for its part, responded to the open letter, saying that it’s developing new ways for parents to increase control over their teens’ devices.

Some experts think Apple should do more. They say the tech company is in the best position to address the addiction problem. Unlike app makers, Apple’s business model doesn’t depend on addiction; it makes most of its money by selling expensive phones and computers. Also, Apple makes the platforms on which apps live, so companies that want their apps on iPhones and iPads would have to meet Apple’s requirements.
In the meantime, some teens have taken it upon themselves to cut back on their phone usage. Linda Peng, a 17-year-old from Cedar Falls, Iowa, used to procrastinate by watching YouTube videos. Hours would pass without her realizing it.

“Now, I stay away from my phone when I need to,” she says. “I'll put it on airplane mode or simply put it on the other side of the room and do my homework.”

Answer the following questions based on the article:

1. Who made news in January by writing an open letter to Apple, asking the company to do more to combat smartphone addiction?
   A. The academy of pediatrics
   B. Two of Apple's largest investors
   C. A group of renowned psychologists
   D. A group of teens and parents

2. Which statement about phone addiction is true, based on the article?
   A. So far, the phenomenon appears to be happening only in the USA
   B. About half of U.S. teens say they feel addicted to their phones
   C. Smartphone addiction is recognized as a mental disorder
   D. All of the above

3. According to the article, recent students suggest that daily use of media leads to:
   A. Compromised immune system function
   B. Increased rates of gambling addiction
   C. An increase in symptoms of depression
   D. Elevated literacy rates

4. On average, Americans check their phones
   A. Twice a day
B. Once every 4 hours
C. Once an hour
D. Once every 12 minutes

5. Based on the article, you can infer that the longer you spend on an app on your phone or other digital device, the more the _______ will pay to advertise
   A. Consumers
   B. Companies
   C. Young adults
   D. Teenagers

6. In the article, Edward Spector says, “We have an entire generation of guinea pigs in an experiment.” His tone can best be described as:
   A. Curious
   B. Concerned
   C. Excited
   D. Enraged

7. Which of these would the group JANA Partners be most likely to argue for?
   A. The marketing of Facebook’s new Messenger app to kids as young as 8
   B. Shutting down China’s internet addiction boot camps
   C. Apple implementing parental controls on iPhones
   D. The Elimination of most smartphone parental controls

Writing:

--> Based on what you've read in the article “Are You Addicted” by Joe Bubar, determine the author’s claims about cell phones. Be sure to include a thesis, evidence from the text, and your own analysis.

(Honors: 4-5 paragraphs)