

Should Phones Be Banned at Concerts?

Or do phones help us remember and share the experience?

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 990L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to read two essays that argue opposing sides of a debate, to trace and evaluate each author's argument, and to then decide which argument is stronger

Featured Skill: analyzing arguments

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.4, R.6, R.8, W.1, SL.1, SL.3

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.

Should Phones Be Banned at Concerts?

YES: Phones ruin concerts for everyone. BY EMMA ORLOV

Field Music Hall holds new rules: No phones at concerts! Security will collect phones in this lobby before the start of the show. Is this totally unfair? So completely necessary? Two teens weigh in.

NO: Phones help us remember and share the experience. BY KEVIN YOUNG

The decision to ban phones at Field Music Hall concerts is unfair, and the venue should reconsider its new rule.

Thanks to the cameras on our phones, concerts don't have to end when the lights come up. After a show, we can watch that epic BTS dance sequence or that spectacular Taylor Swift note change as many times as we want. Then better! We can share those once-in-a-lifetime moments with others.

But not if our phones are banned.

Shared Experiences

Concert tickets are expensive and often hard to get. When fans lucky enough to attend a show just about clip it, it's more people get to share in the experience. Why would a venue stand in the way of that?

Plus, filming and sharing at concerts supports artists. For lesser-known musicians, a clip of them belting out a note or nailing a guitar solo can go viral and help them get noticed. Banning phones would put an end to all that free publicity.

Taking away phones could also pose a safety issue, especially for young fans like me. What if there were an emergency and I needed to reach an adult fast? Or what if I lost my friends in the crowd? How would I find them?

Scavenger Hunt

Directions: Use each word, complete the following steps:

1. Circle the central claim.
2. Underline the author's reasons.
3. Put check marks in two places of supporting evidence.
4. Box the counterclaim(s).
5. Put a double star next to the rebuttal(s).

Now analyze the author's argument!

Your Teaching Package

Find your full suite of support materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- Article read-aloud
- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice
- Argument Terms Glossary
- Scavenger Hunt*
- Essay Kit
- Anchor Chart: Transitions and Argument Essay Checklist
- Persuasive Appeals: Ethos, Pathos, Logos
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (10 minutes)

Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *ensure, immersive, incessantly, intent, publicity*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link directly to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

2. Read and Discuss (45 minutes)

- For students' first read, have them follow along as they listen to the **audio read-aloud**, located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.
 - Have students silently reread the article to themselves.
 - Poll the class: "What do you think? Should phones be banned at concerts? No matter what you personally think about phone use at concerts, who do you think makes the better argument: Emma or Kevin?" Tally the results on the board.
 - Now trace and evaluate the arguments in each essay:
1. **Read the directions in the Scavenger Hunt box on page 17 or at the bottom of the digital story page. If you need to review the bolded academic vocabulary in the box, here are definitions and examples:**
 - **central claim:** the big idea that the author supports in their argument; their position, belief, or viewpoint
Example: School should start later.
 - **reasons:** the grounds on which a central claim is based; the individual reasons that support or prove the central claim
Example: Middle school-aged kids need more sleep.

- **supporting evidence:** facts, statistics, and examples that show why a reason should be believed; evidence and reasons that support and “hold up” a claim
Example: A study by the Sleep Institute found that 47 percent of kids aren’t getting enough sleep.
- **counterclaim:** an acknowledgment of a concern or disagreement from those with opposing viewpoints
Example: Some may argue that starting school later won’t help kids get more sleep, that they’ll just go to bed later.
- **rebuttal:** an author’s direct response to an opposing viewpoint or claim (the “comeback” to a counterclaim)
Example: Some may argue that starting school later won’t help kids get more sleep, that they’ll just go to bed later. ←[counterclaim] While that may be true in some cases, a 2018 study that looked at two schools in Seattle found that students’ sleep increased an average of 34 minutes each night after start times were moved nearly an hour later. ←[rebuttal]

For more argument terms support, see our **Argument Terms Glossary**, found in the Resource Library at Scope Online.

2. Project Emma’s essay and do a think-aloud that models each step in the Scavenger Hunt.

Students can mark along in their magazines with you, or fill in the **Scavenger Hunt** graphic organizer found at Scope Online. This activity is offered on two levels; the lower-level version has students identify central claims, reasons, and supporting evidence only.

- Identify Emma’s **central claim**. (*What does Emma think?*)
 - First, ask students: “Based on her essay, how would Emma respond to the question in the headline: Should phones be banned at concerts?” (Emma would say, “Yes! Phones should definitely be banned at concerts.”)
 - Think aloud: “I’m going to circle a line that expresses this big idea: ‘Field Music Hall’s phone ban is a smart idea that will make going to concerts way more fun.’”
- Underline Emma’s **reasons**. (*Why does she think that?*)
 - Think aloud: “I just circled Emma’s central claim—that is, what Emma thinks. Now I’m going to underline her reasons—or *why* she thinks what she thinks: ‘The fact is, when the entire audience is on their phones, taking and posting photos and videos, performances become less immersive and less personal for everyone’ and ‘Being on your phone can even affect your memory of the concert . . .’”

- Put check marks on two pieces of **supporting evidence**. (*How does she know?*)
 - Think aloud: “Can I find information Emma provides to back up her reasons?” Then draw students’ attention to the following two pieces of evidence: (1) “Experts say that constantly using a phone during a concert divides your attention, which can leave you feeling disconnected from the performance. If your mind is on your phone—thinking about how many likes you’ll get on that perfect photo you just posted—you’re not focusing on the show itself” and (2) “‘If your intent is ‘I’m going to share this on social media,’ it’s going to pull you out of the concert experience,’ says Henkel. ‘And your memories of it won’t be as clear and vivid.’”
 - Star the **counterclaim**. (*What does the other side say?*)
 - Think aloud: “Where does Emma acknowledge a concern or concerns from the opposing viewpoint? I’m going to star ‘Now, it’s true that photos and videos give us something to look back on’ and ‘Of course, some will argue that phone bans present a safety issue.’”
 - Put a double star next to her **rebuttal**. (*What is her response to the other side?*)
 - Think aloud: “Does Emma have a comeback for the viewpoint that photos and videos give us something to look back on? Yes. She says, ‘So why not take a few photos outside the venue and leave it at that?’”
 - Think aloud: “Does Emma have a comeback for the viewpoint that phone bans present a safety issue? Yes. She says, ‘But if you need to contact someone, like a parent, you can always access your phone in the lobby.’”
3. Have students complete the Scavenger Hunt for Kevin’s essay. They can work independently or in pairs, optionally using the Scavenger Hunt graphic organizer available at Scope Online. Then share out responses as a class. Sample responses:
- **Central claim:** “The decision to ban phones at Field Music Hall concerts is unfair, and the venue should reconsider its new rule.”
 - **Reasons:** “When fans lucky enough to attend a show post short clips of it, more people get to share in the experience”; “Plus, filming and sharing at concerts supports artists”; “Taking away phones could also pose a safety issue, especially for young fans like me”; “Despite what some people argue, taking photos and videos at a concert can enhance your experience . . .”
 - **Supporting evidence:** “For lesser-known musicians, a clip of them belting out a note or nailing a guitar solo can go viral and help them get noticed. Banning phones would put an end to all that free publicity”; “What if there were an emergency and I needed to reach an adult fast? Or what if I lost my friends in the crowd? How would I find them?”; “According to Kristin Diehl, a marketing professor at the University of

Southern California, taking photos can make you more engaged by focusing your attention on what you are watching.”

- **Counterclaim:** “I understand that some concertgoers get annoyed when people are on their phones incessantly.”
- **Rebuttal:** “As a compromise, Field Music Hall could create a phone-free zone, where people could choose to ditch their phones and enjoy the show from a designated area. Those outside that space could still use them. That way everyone would be happy—and the decision of whether or not we have our phones during a concert wouldn’t be the venue’s.”
- Discuss: Which evidence do you find most convincing in each essay? Least convincing? What do Emma and Kevin agree about? Are there any important reasons you think they left out of their arguments? *Answers will vary.*

3. Write About It: What Do You Think?

(45 minutes)

- Have students respond to the following questions in writing:

Who makes the stronger argument?

What do you think about whether phones should be banned at concerts?