

Unit 1. Smart Use of Smartphones

Smartphones change our lives. They can (1) connect people, but they can also (2) isolate people. (3) Technology can help us (4) solve problems. However, it can also (5) create new problems. It is important to understand how to be (6) responsible when using your smartphone. Smartphones let us call or (7) text our family and friends easily. We can take photos. We can find information and (8) directions quickly.

(9) Along with the advantages of using phones, there are (10) disadvantages. We can (11) rely on our phones so much that we feel (12) lost when we don't have them.

Sometimes we don't pay (13) attention to people who are next to us and trying to (14) communicate. We can also cause accidents by talking or texting while using transportation.

In addition, many of us use our phones for (15) entertainment. We can download or stream music, movies, and TV shows anytime and anywhere. But all this entertainment also has a bad side. For example, instead of sharing the fun with others, we often listen and watch alone. We need to create a better balance between enjoying things alone and doing them together. We should sometimes turn off the technology and interact with the people around us.

Unit 2. Street Food

When people think about eating food, they (1) often think of two places, their home or (2) restaurants. But some very (3) delicious food is (4) prepared and sold on the (5) street as well. Street food is (7) cheap and delicious. You can smell, taste, and enjoy it when you travel.

In Italy, there is *arancini*, which means “little orange,” because it looks like a little orange. They are made with rice, meat, cheese, and (7) peas. They are (8) covered in bread, fried, and served warm.

In the Philippines, one (9) popular street food is *halo-halo*, which means “mix-mix.” It’s a famous cold (10) dessert that is a mix of (11) boiled sweet beans, fresh fruit, ice cream, (12) shaved ice, and sweet milk. It is usually served in a tall glass or a bowl.

Don’t miss *tang hu-lu* when you are in China. This popular (13) traditional snack (14) consists of different fruits, like oranges, strawberries, and pineapples. The fruits are covered in sugary (15) syrup. The syrup becomes hard, and then the fruit is served on a bamboo stick.

While traveling, look for street sellers when you get hungry. You will enjoy cheap and delicious food you can tell your friends about.

Unit 3. Interesting Festivals Around the World

A festival is a big event that (1) celebrates a (2) holiday or something fun, such as music or food. There are many interesting festivals around the world.

Carnival, in Brazil, is the biggest festival in the world. The (3) week-long festival happens in (4) February or March. About sixty thousand (5) foreign tourists visit Brazil for this festival. Each day (6) during the festival, over two million people fill the streets in the city of Rio de Janeiro. The samba (7) parade is one of the most popular events at Carnival. People wear special (8) costumes, sing, and dance to samba music.

The Holi Festival, in India, is a celebration of the (9) beginning of spring. People throw colorful (10) powder and water on each other. They light fires outside and dance to (11) traditional music.

La Tomatina is a food festival in Spain. It is (12) held on the last (13) Wednesday in August. About thirty thousand people come to the festival. Trucks bring lots of tomatoes for people to throw at each other. The (14) messy tomato fight continues for about two hours.

The world is full of interesting festivals, and they are a great way to learn about another (15) culture.

Unit 4. Good Luck and Bad Luck

Many cultures (1) believe that (2) certain (3) objects, things, or (4) situations bring good or bad luck with them. These (5) ideas are called superstitions. Different cultures have different superstitions. Learning about the superstitions of different cultures can teach us about those cultures.

Some (6) western people think that clovers with four leaves are (7) lucky. They say that the leaves (8) represent (9) wealth, hope, love, and luck. Four-leaf clovers are not as (10) common as three-leaf clovers, so finding a four-leaf clover is a good (11) sign.

The number seven is thought to represent (12) wholeness in some western cultures. The number seven is in many things that are whole. For example, a full rainbow has seven colors and a whole week has seven days. Some people think it's good to see this number.

People who believe in superstitions also believe that certain numbers bring bad luck. Four is an unlucky number in (13) several (14) eastern cultures. The word that means "four" sounds (15) similar to the word for "death" in some eastern languages. Talking and thinking about negative things like death is believed to bring bad luck into your life.

By understanding these superstitions, you can understand other cultures better.

Unit 5. Insects as Food

The amount of food in the world is (1) limited and there are (2) still millions of people in the world who don't have enough to eat. Insects are a traditional food in many places and some people think they could be a good way to make enough food for everyone.

Insects are (3) full of (4) protein, so they are healthy for the human body. They are small and easy to (5) transport, so they are great as a (6) snack.

Insects are found almost (7) everywhere and are easy to (8) raise. (9) Farms for insects are easier to (10) maintain than farm animals or (11) vegetables. Insect farms also take up less room and don't need as much water.

Insects can be (12) prepared in many ways. They can be fried, boiled, (13) steamed, dried, or made into a powder. Chefs around the world are now cooking with insects. The insects have different tastes. For example, some ants taste like (14) mushrooms, and others are sweet.

It may take time, but insects may become a more common (15) source of food soon. This is because they are healthy, easy to raise, and delicious.

Unit 6. World Penguin Day

Penguins are (1) interesting birds. There are a number of things that make them unique.

For example, they can't fly like most birds can. However, they are (2) terrific swimmers, and are (3) capable of swimming underwater. Penguins also don't mind cold weather like most birds do. Penguins are also larger than many other kinds of birds.

(4) Although there are many differences, there are also some (5) similarities. Like many kinds of birds, penguins (6) migrate. Since penguins usually live in (7) Antarctica, they migrate in (8) April. The reason penguins migrate at this time is to (9) escape the long hours of (10) darkness during Antarctica's winter (11) season. Winter days in Antarctica are very short, and the dark nights are very long. Penguins there do not have enough hours of light to (12) hunt for food.

Therefore, they swim hundreds of kilometers north where winter days are a little longer and they have more time to find food. They live on (13) icebergs for a few months until spring returns to Antarctica, and then they swim back.

To (14) recognize and remember these special birds that live far away, people have (15) declared April 25th to be World Penguin Day.

Unit 7. The Amazing Cockroach

Although they are (1) disgusting, cockroaches are truly amazing (2) insects. Cockroaches have been around for over 200 million years. That means they lived at the same time as dinosaurs.

Cockroaches are great survivors. Did you know they can live up to a week without their heads? These amazing animals can also last a month without eating. However, they don't usually have to because they can eat almost anything, even soap and toothpaste. This helps them to survive (3) extremely (4) harsh (5) conditions.

Cockroaches are good at avoiding dangerous situations. This bug can run almost three kilometers an hour, which is fast for an insect that cannot fly. Cockroaches are difficult to catch because they have special hairs on the (6) bottom of their bodies that (7) detect (8) movements, which lets them know when (9) danger is near.

However, cockroaches do have one (10) weakness. For some reason, they can't escape the power of (11) vacuum cleaners. The shaking movement from this machine (12) seems to (13) confuse them. (14) Instead of speeding away from vacuum cleaners, they (15) rush right into them and are sucked up. So if you see a cockroach, grab your vacuum cleaner.

Unit 8. Animal Defenses

Over time, animals have had to change to survive in their (1) surroundings. For example, a (2) giraffe has a long neck to eat from tall trees, and a (3) beaver has (4) webbed feet to help it swim. Most animals have (5) developed ways to (6) protect themselves from (7) enemies, (8) including speed, (9) camouflage, and other defenses.

Animals like the giraffe and deer use speed to save themselves. When an enemy (10) attacks, these animals run quickly in different (11) directions, and the enemy gets confused.

Other animals use camouflage to hide and protect themselves. This means their bodies can change to look the same as the (12) environment around them. An octopus can change the color and (13) texture of its skin to look almost (14) exactly like a rock. This camouflage makes the octopus look like it is part of a rock.

One of the most interesting animal defenses is the quills on a porcupine. A porcupine can (15) transform to protect itself. When a porcupine is in danger, it puts its quills up and swings its tail. The quills can stick into a nearby enemy, causing pain. The porcupine's quills are an amazing example of self-protection.

Unit 9. AI Music

Computers today are much smarter than before. The machines today have (1) artificial (2) intelligence, or AI. AI can learn things from and then copy human (3) behavior and thinking.

For example, AI can drive cars. AI can even play and win a game of chess (4) against a human (5) opponent. AI is also learning how to be creative. For example, AI can create (6) classical music. It copies human learning, and this allows it to understand the art of (7) composing music. First, the AI composer (8) listens to famous composers (9) such as Bach. Then it composes its own classical melodies. It can create and write a (10) piece of music in minutes.

One AI composer is (11) registered as a composer. It has an album and also has (12) customers. Its musical pieces can be heard in movies, TV (13) advertisements, and video games. It has (14) rights for its music just like a human composer does.

AI composers can learn to compose different types of music. Humans and AI will have to work together as a team to create music in the (15) future.

Unit 10. Sam Cooke: The King of Soul

Sam Cooke is (1) often called the King of Soul. He was a musical (2) pioneer. He is (3) remembered for his (4) distinct singing voice and his (5) contributions to music. In fact, one musical (6) biographer called Cooke “the (7) inventor of soul music.” During his short life, Cooke was an (8) influential singer, composer, and a businessman.

Sam Cooke started his singing (9) career at age six. He was in a singing group with his (10) siblings. By the age of fourteen, he became the leader of another singing group. By age thirty-three, Cooke was one of the most popular singers in the U.S. Some of his most famous songs are “A Change Is Gonna Come,” “Wonderful World,” and “Twistin’ the Night Away.”

He was one of the first black musical artists to (11) manage the business side of his musical career. He founded a record (12) label and a (13) publishing company. Cooke’s work also helped some of the world’s most famous soul artists, including Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, and James Brown.

Sadly, on December 11th, 1964, Cooke’s life was ended by a (14) tragic act of (15) violence. But millions of people still celebrate his contributions to music.

Unit 11. Jazz

Jazz music is a (1) style of music from the city of New Orleans, Louisiana. One of the most famous jazz (2) musicians of all time is Louis Armstrong. He was born into a poor family in New Orleans. He had a hard (3) childhood and spent time in a special home for (4) troubled kids. In the home, he became interested in music and learned the (5) trumpet. He was naturally talented and began playing on steamboats that sailed the Mississippi River.

At first, Armstrong was famous for his (6) fantastic trumpet playing, but later he became known for his (7) unique voice as well. Sometimes, Louis would (8) improvise. This was new to the music world. Once, in the middle of a song, he dropped his (9) lyrics on the floor, but he (10) continued singing by (11) making up (12) sounds in time to the music. This is now called “scat singing.”

It is hard to think of jazz music and not think of Louis Armstrong. People still (13) travel from around the world to New Orleans to listen to jazz (14) concerts and take part in music (15) festivals. Jazz is now famous, thanks to great musicians like Louis Armstrong.

Unit 12. Music Therapy

Do you (1) ever listen to music to make (2) yourself feel good? If so, then you (3) probably (4) already know that music is great for the body and mind. Music (5) therapy helps many people feel better. They may have a family problem or a (6) medical problem. Music can help change a bad mood. It can (7) reduce the (8) pain of (9) patients. It can also lower blood (10) pressure and help the heart (11) rate.

Music therapy is usually done by a trained therapist who has studied in an (12) approved program. People have (13) regular therapy each week or month. They listen to music as they relax or do an activity. Therapists think about the rhythm and tone of the music to make sure it is right for each (14) individual patient. In some kinds of music therapy, patients actually make their own music. In other kinds, patients dance or move around to music.

(15) Modern music therapy programs began in the 1940s. Today, music therapy helps older people stay active, and it helps kids in school study better. Listening to music can help almost anyone reduce stress and feel calm.

Unit 13. Coding Jobs

In the past, many jobs (1) required (2) labor. For example, a lot of jobs were in (3) factories. But today, (4) machines and robots are (5) replacing people's labor jobs. So people need to find new jobs. The work that needs to be done now is different than in the (6) past because digital (7) technology is more important now. Coding is a new kind of (8) skill that is needed in the future.

Coding is a way of writing (9) instructions for computers. It is needed for making web pages, apps, and computer software. There are many coding (10) languages and they are used for different (11) purposes. Some coders are familiar with many of these languages.

Coding is important for many (12) fields. Many businesses have online shops that allow customers to pay for (13) purchases online. They need coders to keep their sites safe and (14) secure.

Jobs that require coding pay well, and today half of the highest paying jobs require coding. A job in coding will be (15) stable because the number of jobs that require coding grows every year. Coding will give more people better chances. Going forward into the future, coding will create more jobs.

Unit 14. Choosing a Career

When thinking about career (1) options, there are a few important things to (2) consider.

First, think about what you (3) naturally enjoy. If you like to sing or dance, then a career in (4) entertainment could be right for you. You may like working with kids, so you could become a teacher. If you like building things, then perhaps a career in (5) architecture would suit you.

Next, think about any special skills or (6) talents you have. If you (7) handle computers well, they are used in many (8) fields. If you are good at (9) writing, there are careers in (10) journalism or (11) literature. Those who are good at science can work at a hospital. If you are (12) athletic, (13) professional athletes may be your option.

Finally, you must think about how your career could change your lifestyle. You should consider when you want to work. Most people work during the daytime, but some careers have nighttime hours. In addition, think about how much time it will take to (14) commute to work. Some companies could be (15) located far from your home.

These are just a few of the important things you should think about when planning for your career.

Unit 15. Odd Jobs

Hard work moves (1) society (2) forward. We see (3) common jobs all around us. However, some people might prefer a different kind of (4) occupation. There are many (5) unusual jobs in the world.

Video games are fun and exciting. Video game testers know this better than anyone. They play the games before they are (6) released and (7) decide how good the games are. Then they give the games a (8) ranking and they also (9) suggest ways to improve the games.

Deodorant helps people to smell good and is used by many people around the world.

People who work in (10) quality (11) assurance must check that the (12) product works well. They ask other people to put the deodorant under their arms. Later, a quality assurance worker checks to see how well the deodorant is working.

Ice cream companies need to make sure that their ice creams taste delicious. Taste testers taste many different (13) kinds of ice cream, but it's not always fun. Ice cream testers must take (14) care of their sense of smell and taste. They can't eat anything that might hurt their taste (15) buds. Would you like to work in one of these unusual jobs?

Unit 16. Changing Careers

Carlos Barrios got (1) bored with his job one day. He was an (2) accountant in Mexico City until he made a change.

Now he's a (3) scuba diver, and he's always busy. Oddly, Carlos does not dive in the (4) ocean. He dives in the (5) sewer system. Nineteen million people live in Mexico City. Some parts of its sewer system are (6) hundreds of years old. These parts get blocked easily. If there is a (7) blockage, sewer water (8) usually (9) floods out of the sewers. This dirty water can go into the (10) subway and even into homes.

When the city hears of a blockage, they call Carlos. He puts on his diving (11) suit and dives into the pipes. He swims through the mix of water, (12) garbage, and sewage. He finds the problem and (13) removes whatever is blocking the pipe. Most people would consider this job a (14) terrible one, but Carlos (15) disagrees. Over the years, he has found everything from cars to chairs in the sewers. "Without me, the sewer water could back up into the city streets, and I am never bored in this job," said Carlos. Carlos is glad he changed his career.