Gathering

READING	What is an argument?
	Points to look for in a writer's argument
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT	Synonyms
	Simple and progressive verb forms
WRITING	Formality

Discussion point

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1 Which social networking sites do you use? How long do you spend on them each week?
2 How has social networking changed the lives of young people today, compared to the previous generation of young people? Is it a change for the better?
3 Why do you need friends? Are online friends true friends?

Vocabulary preview

Number the expressions in the box to match the meaning of the <u>underlined</u> words in the sentences below.

___ people you know   ___ evidence based on observation   ___ different
___ develops   ___ someone who is interested only in him/herself
___ connections   ___ Children who are changing into young adults
___ help to develop   ___ always linked to people via technology
___ ability to understand how someone feels

1   Most of the people at the party were <u>acquaintances</u> rather than friends.
2   There is no <u>empirical evidence</u> that supports this idea.
3   The people I speak to online come from <u>diverse</u> backgrounds.
4   Technology <u>evolves</u> very quickly.
5   He's a <u>narcissist</u> who never asks about anyone else.
6   <u>Ties</u> between the two families have strengthened in recent years.
7   <u>Adolescents</u> are often unfairly criticized for bad behavior.
8   We need to <u>nurture</u> our young people so they become responsible adults.
9   We live in a <u>hyper-connected</u> society these days.
10   When I told him my bad news, he didn't show much <u>empathy</u>.

READING   Are online "friends" a threat to development?

Before you read

Discuss these questions with a partner.
1   What are the advantages and disadvantages of young people using social networking sites?
2   Do you think the advantages outweigh the disadvantages? Why or why not?

Global reading

1   **You are going to read an excerpt from a child psychology book by Dr. Kristel Sharpe about the impact of social networking on a young person's emotional development. Can you guess what areas of impact she is going to mention?**

2   **Read *Are online "friends" a threat to development?* on pp. 10–11 to see if your ideas in exercise 1 are correct.**

> **IDENTIFYING THE WRITER'S POSITION**
>
> When a text contains different views, it is important to identify the writer's argument compared to other people's arguments.
>
> To identify who the arguments belong to, look for names of people or groups of people. ***Turkle** also suggests that people are no longer comfortable being alone.*
>
> To identify if the writer agrees or disagrees with an argument, look for:
> * Positive or negative adjectives or adverbs—e.g., *not credible*, *interestingly*
> * Opinion language such as *agree, disagree, true, untrue, believe, view*
> * Linking phrases and signposts such as *however, therefore, although, in fact*

3 **Which two statements describe the writer's position on social networking? What information in the text helped you identify the position?**

   1 Young people are losing their face-to-face friends.

   2 There are advantages to having online friends.

   3 People announce too much information online.

   4 Social networking is changing young people's personalities.

Critical thinking skill

WHAT EXACTLY IS AN ARGUMENT?

An argument is a statement of opinion supported by reasons or evidence. Without reasons or evidence, a statement is not an argument. Therefore, reasons and evidence must be identified within a text.

Friendships play an important role in our personal growth <u>*because they help us to build trust*</u>. (**statement** + <u>reason</u> = argument)

1 **Read *Are online "friends" a threat to development?* again. Find and underline the points below. The paragraph numbers are in parentheses.**

   1 The effect of new technology on our friendships is often discussed. (2)

   2 Social networking does not cause people to lose offline friends. (3)

   3 Young people can talk to a wider range of people online. (3)

   4 Social networking can be advantageous for teenagers' emotional health. (4)

   5 Social networking is causing young people to display different behavior. (5)

   6 Friendships are not easy to manage. (6)

   7 People are trying to have more control over their friendships. (6)

   8 People are no longer comfortable being alone. (7)

2 **Match points 1–8 to the evidence/reason a–f. Some points match more than once.**

   a A study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project   ___

   b A university study where people did not use social networks for a day   ___

   c Evidence from Larry D. Rosen   ___

   d No reason or evidence given   ___

   e Research by Sherry Turkle   ___

   f Research by Michigan State University   ___

3 **Which two points (1–8) in exercise 1 are not arguments? Why?**

Developing critical thinking

Discuss these questions in a group.

1 Is social networking is good for our emotional health? Is it changing our characters? Give reasons for your opinions.

2 What can young people, parents, schools, and the government do to reduce the problems of social networking?

ARE ONLINE "FRIENDS"

a threat to development?

An excerpt from *Nurturing a Child's Emotional Development* by psychologist Dr. Kristel Sharpe. 🇺🇸

1 In chapter two, I discussed how vital childhood friendships are for a person's emotional development. They help us to build trust with people outside of the family and learn how to compromise, to share, and to manage conflict. When growing up, our friends provide the support we need to allow us to experiment with who we are. They give us feedback which helps to shape the behavior we adopt, and the people we ultimately become.

2 The impact of technology on the nature of our friendships has been a much-debated topic since the meteoric rise of social networks. Advances in mobile ttechnology and social networking websites mean we spend more time online than ever before. After all, if Facebook were a country, it would be the third largest in the world by population (*The Economist*, 2010). According to the Nielson Group (2010), it is not uncommon for people around the world to spend one in every four and a half minutes of their time sharing information online. It is therefore not surprising that so many psychologists, sociologists, and others are eager to give their thoughts on how this is impacting negatively on our society. It is only now, however, that we are starting to see the kind of empirical evidence necessary to differentiate fact from fiction.

3 The biggest criticism leveled at social networking is that our young people are losing their offline friends to online friends who are unable to provide the same deep connection and emotional support and satisfaction. In fact there is a lot of research that shows these criticisms are generally unfounded.

Research by Allen et al. (2010) discovered that it is socially adjusted adolescents who are more likely to have a social networking profile than those who are not. One study carried out by the Pew Internet and American Life Project (2009) found that people are not substituting offline friends with online companions but are using them to support their offline relationships. They also found that social networks allow us to have discussions with a much more diverse set of people than in the real world, so we share knowledge with people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

4 It is certainly true that our definition of friendship is evolving. An acquaintance we saw twice a year is now a friend we regularly talk to online. Yes, this relationship tie is weaker than one with a person in the real world, but there is evidence that young people still have a lot to gain from it. A study conducted by Michigan State University (2010) concluded that our virtual friendships provide social benefits and improve our psychological well-being. Our weaker ties contribute to this in particular. So, teenagers do not appear to be losing their face-to-face friends and the additional connections provided by social networking have proven to be beneficial.

5 But there is one element of social networking that is deeply worrying and that is the fact that we find ourselves in a hyper-connected world: one where people access social media, day and night, excited to make announcements about the tiniest details

of their lives. Research is starting to show that this culture is negatively affecting not our friendships but our character. Professor Larry D. Rosen, in his book *iDisorder*, presents evidence that social networking is turning us into narcissists. He says that young people who overuse social networking sites can become vain, aggressive, and display anti-social behavior in their offline lives. He says that sitting behind a screen makes them harsher and more mean-spirited. But perhaps an even more disturbing effect is that one of our most basic emotions seems to be disappearing—empathy. This is the emotion that bonds us together; it allows us to see the world from our friends' point of view. Without it, we are far less able to connect and form meaningful adult relationships. And yet a study has found that college students are actually 40% less empathetic than college students 30 years ago, with the largest decline occurring from the year 2000. In the 2010 study, fewer students described themselves as "soft-hearted" and more claimed they are not affected when friends have bad fortune (O'Brien, 2010).

6 Sherry Turkle, a professor of social sciences at MIT, has made a fascinating observation about the impact of being plugged into your smartphone. Through her years of research, she has noticed that these devices permit us to have complete control over our friendships. Young people decide who they communicate with, when, and how. Friendships are unpredictable and difficult to deal with but social networks are allowing people to tidy them up and

manage them. If we do not want to be friends any more, a lengthy, awkward conversation is no longer needed. We simply click a button and unfriend them.

7 Turkle also suggests that people are no longer comfortable being alone. This is something confirmed by a study where 200 university students were asked to go without social media for 24 hours. Many admitted an addiction to their online social network; most complained that they felt cut off from family and friends. And yet being alone is a time, Turkle argues, when we self-reflect and get in touch with who we really are. It is only when we do this that we can make meaningful friendships with others. She believes, as is the title of her 2011 book, that we are simply "Alone Together."

8 These potential changes in our characters are rather disconcerting so it is clear that we need to place our focus here when nurturing a child's development. Our young people may still have good offline relationships and may only use social networking for fostering face-to-face friendships. However, if they continue to develop the narcissistic tendencies outlined above, along with a reduction in empathy, a fear of the unpredictability of friendships, and an inability to self-reflect, our young people could well be in trouble. It is therefore here that I would like to move on to making suggestions about ways to encourage our young people to avoid the pitfalls of social networking so they can develop the kinds of friendships that are required to grow into well-adjusted and happy adults.

As these are now embedded within the units, we have changed the heading from 'unit 1' etc to 'academic keywords' as style - is this OK? DESIGN

ACADEMIC KEYWORDS

character	(n)	/ˈkerəktər/
conflict	(n)	/ˈkɑnˌflɪkt/
differentiate	(v)	/ˌdɪfəˈrenʃiˌeɪt/

Language development

SYNONYMS

Writers regularly use synonyms in their writing to avoid the repetition of words.

Some synonyms mean exactly the same thing:

*Some people choose to spend a lot of time with **relations**, whereas others prefer not to see **relatives** so frequently.*

Some synonyms don't have exactly the same meaning:

*For people who can no longer get out to see **friends**, pets can be very good **companions**.*

Some synonyms have a different level of formality:

*Some young people choose to **spend time** in virtual chat rooms. / They often **hang out** at the mall.*

1 Match synonyms 1–10 with a–j. Find them in the text *Are online "friends" a threat to development?* To help you, use the paragraph number in parentheses.

1	manage (1)	a	provide (1)
2	allow (1)	b	discovered (3)
3	give (1)	c	adolescents (3)
4	eager (2)	d	tie (4)
5	impacting (2)	e	conducted (4)
6	connection (3)	f	affecting (5)
7	carried out (3)	g	excited (5)
8	found (3)	h	deal with (6)
9	teenagers (4)	i	permit (6)
10	nurturing (8)	j	fostering (8)

2 Rewrite the sentences using synonyms of the underlined words/ expressions.

1 Few <u>teenagers</u> are <u>concerned</u> about the negative <u>effects</u> of our hyper-connected <u>world</u>.
2 It is not <u>unusual</u> for young people to form <u>online</u> <u>connections</u> with people they have never met in person.
3 Social networking <u>lets</u> us <u>make friendships</u> with more <u>varied</u> groups of people.
4 It is <u>untrue</u> that there has been a <u>decrease</u> in the number of <u>real-life</u> friends people have.
5 Parts of our <u>personality seem</u> to be <u>changing</u> as a result of new technology.
6 Many people feel <u>isolated</u> when they cannot <u>contact</u> their friends.

3 Identify repeated words in the text below. Replace them with suitable synonyms.

The human brain is constantly changing, and neuroscientist Gary Small believes it is changing further because of new technologies. He believes that our ability to multitask is improving. He says that our ability to make decisions is improving. He also says that technology is improving our decision-making abilities. One study carried out with people aged between 55 and 76 using the Internet showed that the brains of the people who could already use the Internet showed much greater activity than those of the people who could not already use it.

SIMPLE AND PROGRESSIVE VERB FORMS

Simple verb forms tell us that an action or state occurs. They can include an action or state which is complete, habitual, or factual. Progressive verb forms emphasize duration or describe an incomplete, ongoing action or state.

Compare verb forms:

Present perfect simple	Connections provided by social networking **have proven** to be beneficial.
Present perfect progressive	Most young people **have been using** technology since they were small.
Past perfect simple Past perfect progressive	Young people who **had spent** a lot of time online found their exam results suffered.
	One young person admitted he **had been chatting** to friends online all night.
Future perfect simple Future progressive	A new kind of social networking **will have become** popular before the end of the decade.
	Young people all over the world **will be chatting** online to their friends this evening.

Verbs describing states are not used in the progressive form. These include verbs of perception, preferences, and mental states, e.g., *feel, hear, dislike, mind, believe, doubt.*

1 **Work with a partner. Discuss the pairs of example sentences in the box above. Why is a simple or progressive verb form used in each one?**

2 **Match the correct verb forms *a* and *b* with the sentences.**

   1 The number of students using a smartphone in class _____ by 10%.

     a has increased   **b** has been increasing

   2 Over the next year, teachers _____ more technology into their teaching.

     a will have incorporated   **b** will be incorporating

   3 Because the students _____ the topic in their lesson, they understood it clearly.

     a had discussed   **b** had been discussing

3 **Circle the best verb forms in this article.**

AMIR IS A SHY college student who has few friends and rarely speaks in class, but online he is outgoing, funny, and popular. In recent months, researchers around the world [1] **have carried out / have been carrying** out studies to find out whether social networking can help or hinder the social lives of people like Amir. So far, the research [2] **has shown / has been showing** that social networking and online learning environments are able to help shy people, especially those with low social skills, to form connections. But it is not yet known whether social networking [3] **has helped / has been helping** them to connect better with the real world or [4] **has taken / has been taking** them even further away from it.

4 **Work with a partner. Discuss why you chose each verb form.**

WRITING Writing an email

You are going to learn about different levels of formality in writing and how language changes. You are then going to rewrite an informal email so that it has the appropriate level of formality and tone for the reader, a college professor.

Writing skill

FORMALITY

When writing a text, it is important to think carefully about who will read it as this will determine the level of formality. We can show formality through the tone, the language used, punctuation, and the use of noun phrases (*There was a rapid increase in numbers.*) and verb phrases (*Numbers increased rapidly.*).

Formal/Academic	Neutral	Informal
Formal tone	Tone polite but friendly	Tone similar to speaking
Greater use of passive voice	Passive and active voice	Active voice
More noun phrases	More verb phrases	More verb phrases
No use of slang, idioms, phrasal verbs	Some use of phrasal verbs; no slang or idioms	Use of slang, idioms, phrasal verbs
No use of contractions or abbreviations	Use of contractions and some abbreviations	Use of contractions and abbreviations

1 **Read the texts and decide on the level of formality of each. What relationship do you think the writer has with the reader? Underline the features noted in the table above that give you this information.**

1 It is said that an increase in online communication will further have an impact on family life, both positively and negatively, although research has yet to show exactly what these effects will be.

2 I would be extremely grateful if you could supply further details of the nature of the problem you have with the product you purchased as soon as possible to allow a quick solution to be found.

3 So, as I was saying, it's gonna be great to finally meet up and talk through this project f2f. Hopefully we'll be able to get it up and running asap.

4 Would it be possible for us to get together at some stage during the week to discuss the research in greater detail? I know that you're very busy so I'd be happy to meet at a time convenient for you.

2 **Rewrite the email extracts below so that they are more appropriate for the reader listed in parentheses.**

1 (friend)
Would it be at all possible for you to contact me as soon as you can? I have a problem that I am unable to manage and require your assistance.

2 (your new college professor)
I'm really worried that I can't do my assignment in time and you'll fail it. Can I have an extension?

3 (a friend of a friend you have never met)
I'm Ahmed's friend. Can you help me with my research? Ahmed suggested it.

4 (a college professor you know well)
Here's my finished assignment. Enjoy it. Bye.

WRITING TASK

You are going to write an email to your college professor requesting a meeting to discuss an assignment you are having trouble with. You have been in the college professor's class for six months and have spoken to each other face-to-face several times.

Read an email between friends setting up a meeting. Underline the language that sets the informal tone of the message.

|	
Audience:	a college professor
Context:	an email request for a meeting
Purpose:	apply an appropriate level of formality to a real-life task

Hi Joelle,

How are you? How was your weekend? Mine was hectic as usual!

Are you free later this week to get together and chat about the psychology project? I've been struggling with it and need a bit of help cos the deadline's fast approaching. I'm worried that if I don't get a move on, I'll end up rushing it. I really want to get a good grade for this one so need to put some work in.

How about tomorrow night? I've got an appointment in the afternoon but I'll be done by 6pm. Does 7pm sound okay? I can come to you if it's easier. I could even bring pizza if you like. Let me know asap.

Hopefully see you soon,

Allie
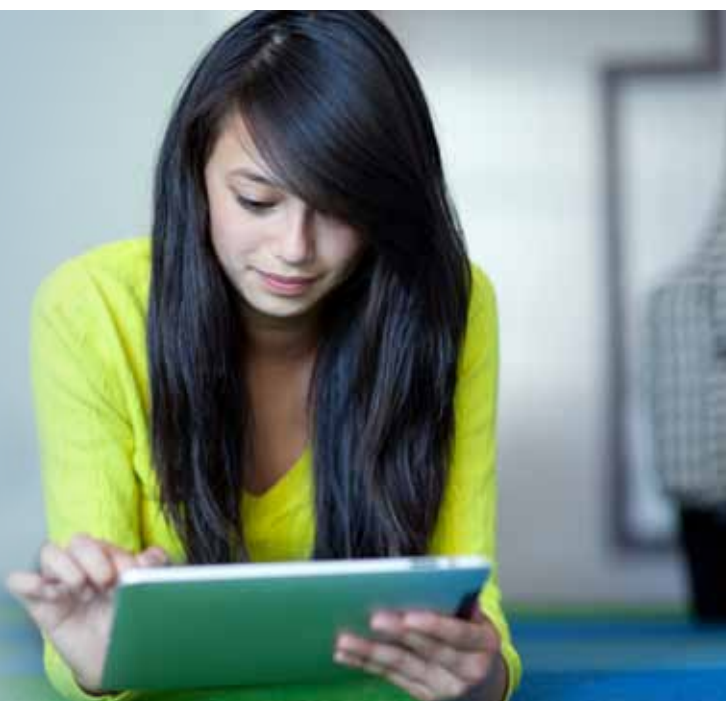
BRAINSTORM

How would you need to change the email above to make it appropriate for a college professor? Think about the following: tone, language, punctuation.

PLAN

Decide what information you should include in your email to your college professor. Decide how the email should be organized and the tone that you should use as this will determine the language and punctuation you use.

WRITE

Write your email in around 100 words. Make sure you use an appropriate tone. Check that you use any simple or continuous verb forms correctly and use synonyms where necessary to avoid repetition and create a cohesive text. Begin and end your email with appropriate expressions.

SHARE

Exchange your email with a partner. Read the checklist below and give feedback to your partner.
- Is the tone of the email appropriate to the reader?
- Does your partner begin and end the email appropriately?
- Does your partner use appropriate verb forms?
- Has your partner used synonyms where appropriate?

REWRITE AND EDIT

Consider your partner's comments and rewrite your email.

STUDY SKILLS Process writing and peer checking

Getting started

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. When you write a text for your teacher, what do you usually do before you write? Why?
2. What procedure do you follow while you write? Why?
3. What do you do after you finish writing? Do you and your classmates ever check each other's work? Why or why not?

Scenario

Read the scenario and think about what Saif did right and what he could have done more effectively.

Consider it

Read the tips about process writing and peer checking. Which strategies do you already use? Which strategies do you think would be useful for you to try? Why?

1. **Brainstorm and select.** First, brainstorm ideas on the topic. Then, select those that you would like to include and discard the others. Research will help you to choose. Think about what you would like your text to achieve.
2. **Organize your writing.** A plan helps a piece of writing to be more structured and easy to read. Organize your ideas so they are in a logical order, for example using a mind map or a flowchart.
3. **Write the first draft.** Follow your plan so that your essay is well structured and you include all your points at the appropriate time.
4. **Revise your work.** Check that you have met your aim, that your ideas are organized effectively, and that you use a range of language with accuracy.
5. **Participate in peer checking.** A classmate who reads your writing will often notice things you have not. Asking a classmate to give you a summary of your text will also help you to know if you have achieved your aim.
6. **Give constructive feedback.** If a classmate asks you to give feedback on a piece of writing, start by telling him/her what you liked about it. Be positive wherever you can. When discussing parts of the writing that were unsuccessful, use softer language such as *Perhaps you could…/I'd suggest…/I think it'd be a good idea for you to…* It is much easier to accept criticism presented in this way.
7. **Write the second draft.** Address the problems that you and your classmate identified. With fresh eyes, read it through one final time.

Over to you

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Why do you think taking a process approach to writing can be effective?
2. What strategies do you use to help you to check your work? Why?
3. What experiences have you had with peer checking? What did you learn from them?

Saif was asked by his teacher to write an essay giving an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet for communication. He read the question very carefully and did some research on the topic so that he could support his arguments with research. He wrote his essay in two hours and emailed it to his teacher with a friendly message.

Before handing in his essay, Saif's classmate Abdullah asked Saif to read his essay and give him feedback. Saif was happy to read it and told Abdullah that there were many mistakes and he needed more reasons to support his arguments.

When Saif received feedback on his essay from his teacher, he learned that his essay had a good balance of arguments with supporting points, but that it was not organized in a logical way and so it had been difficult to understand in many places. While he used good vocabulary, there were some spelling issues.