

Youth Culture Lesson
Finding Teachable Moments in Culture
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Going Techless

Girl Finds New Interests in Week Without Phone

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What Happened:

Deisha Brown Campbell, 13, thought that giving up technology for a short time would be simple. Sure, she and her 4-month-old phone were nearly inseparable; and she admitted, “I text more than I talk.” Still, how hard could going a week without tech be?

Answer: Harder than you think. For a week, as part of an experiment with “Nick News with Linda Ellerbee,” Deisha put away her phone, her computer time and anything else that smacked of technology—and she thought at first she might go crazy. For the first day, Deisha moped around her room, unable to figure out what to do with herself without her phone and computer. “I didn’t think she was going to make it,” says her mother. “I thought she was going to break down and beg.”

Ellerbee thought something like that might happen. “We thought, ‘What if this generation had to unplug?’” she says. “[We wanted] kids to ask themselves: [Am I] getting too lost inside the toy box?”

“I knew I was addicted, but I didn’t want to seem like it,” Deisha admitted on the show. As time went on during the week, a curious thing began to happen. She began cooking, singing and playing guitar. For someone who preferred texting to talking, “I ended up being the talkative one,” she says. “My family basically got sick of me because I was always around, talking.”

When Deisha’s mother gave Deisha her phone back at the end of the week, Deisha wouldn’t take it. “I noticed how much fun I was having without it,” she says. Instead, she’s decided to write a book.

Talk About It:

Average youth in the United States ages 8-18 spend nearly eight hours a day interacting with “entertainment media”—defined as everything from television and computers to iPods and cell phones. Teens now spend more time watching television on their smartphones than they spend talking on them.

With that in mind, how much time do you spend every day with electronic media? How do you spend most of that time: Texting? Watching TV? Playing videogames?

Have you ever spent a significant amount of time “unplugged,” during a camping trip, vacation or extended blackout? If so, what was it like? Was it hard? Did you learn

anything about yourself? Do you think sometimes technology can distract us from what's most important?

How hard do you think it'd be to give up technology for a week? For a month? Could you? Do you think it'd get easier or harder in time?

If you were to give up tech for a time, what would you miss the most? How would you communicate with your friends? How would you spend your time?

What the Bible Says:

“Now then, stand still and see this great thing the Lord is about to do before your eyes” (1 Sam. 12:16).

“When words are many, sin is not absent...” (Prov. 10:19).

“As a dream comes when there are many cares, so the speech of a fool when there are many words” (Ecc. 5:3).

“I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways” (Ps. 119:15).