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EXPLICIT PHOTOS & CELL PHONES: INNOCENT FUN OR ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR?

Word Generation - Unit 1.23

Focus Words

accountable | disseminate | constant | appropriate | legal

Weekly Passage

Jessica Logan made a mistake. She sent her boyfriend a nude photo of herself using her cell phone. Without her consent, her boyfriend sent the message to other students in their school. These other students began calling Jessica terrible names. They harassed her day after day. The humiliation was constant. Jessica became depressed and began to skip school. Jessica's mother begged the school to take action. The school agreed to speak to one of the students, ask her to delete the photo, and tell her not to speak to Jessica again. Incidents like this can be very hurtful to students. They can make it hard for them to concentrate on school work, and can sometimes even lead students to harm themselves.

Sending sexually explicit pictures using cell phones is sometimes called "sexting." A survey last year showed that almost half the teens in the US had sent or received this kind of inappropriate picture.

Sexting can have legal consequences. Depending on a student's age, the senders and receivers can both be charged with disseminating pornography. Recently, two teens on Cape Cod in Massachusetts were charged for disseminating a photo showing a semi-nude female schoolmate. Their parents think these charges are extreme. They worry that what began as a teenage mistake will end up as a criminal charge on their sons' permanent records.

Who is responsible for addressing sexting? Should the school have been tougher with the students who were harassing Jessica? Should the parents of these students be held accountable? Should the students involved be charged as criminals, or do you think that their acts should be regarded as teenage mistakes?



Unit 1.23 - Explicit Photos & Cell Phones: Innocent fun or illegal behavior?



Focus Word Chart

Word	Meaning	Forms	Examples of Use	Notes
accountable	(adj.) – responsible for; obliged to explain (or account for) one’s actions			
appropriate	(adj.) – suitable or fitting			
constant	(adj.) – not changing; continuing without a letup			
disseminate	(v.) – to scatter, to spread, or to broadcast			
legal	(adj.) – having to do with the law			

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Problem of the Week

Many teens use their cell phones **constantly**. Sometimes, they use them for **inappropriate** activities, like sexting.

Teens may think a photo they send will only go to one person. Often, this is not the case. The person who receives the photo is free to **disseminate** it. Students who send or forward explicit photos can find themselves in legal trouble. Law enforcement officers are beginning to hold teens **accountable** for how they use cell phones.

1. One in five teens say they have sent or posted inappropriate photos of themselves. What percentage is equal to one in five?

- a) 15%
- b) 20%
- c) 30%
- d) 40%

2. Two in five teens say that when someone receives an inappropriate photo, it is common for the person to share it with other people. What percentage is equal to two in five? How do you know?

Discussion Question: One in five teens share inappropriate photos of themselves. Why do you think so many teens do this?



Unit 1.23 - Explicit Photos & Cell Phones: Innocent fun or illegal behavior? Debating the Issue

When you argue your position, be sure to provide reasons and evidence to back up your opinion. Also, feel free to take your own position if you don't agree with one of these four.

The students who disseminated Jessica's photo should be held legally accountable on pornography charges. What was intended to be private became public and led to the cruel harassment that she experienced.

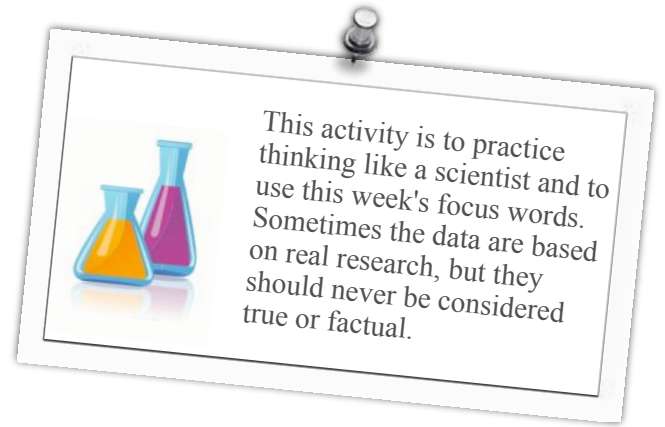
The adults should be held accountable. They could have stopped the bullying.

1 **2**
POSITIONS

3 **4**
We all should learn a lesson from Jessica's situation. No one should be held accountable, but there should be school rules about bullying that are enforced.

Jessica is the only person accountable. She sent the photo first.

Unit 1.23 - Explicit Photos & Cell Phones: Innocent fun or illegal behavior? Science Activity



Professor Kahn began noticing lots of news stories about “sexting.” Some stories slammed teens for having no personal **accountability**. Some talked about **legal** consequences. In all of the stories, this fact was a **constant**: 20% of teens are sexting. “Says who?” Professor Kahn thought. “This fact is widely **disseminated**. But where did it come from?”

Professor Kahn did some research, and discovered that the fact is based on a single study. Now, some researchers are saying that this study was wrong. Professor Kahn decided to find out for herself how many students are sexting.

Question:

What percentage of Professor Kahn’s students have sent a sext? (A sext is an **inappropriate** text message of a sexual nature.)

Hypothesis:

Fewer than twenty percent of students have sent a sext.

Materials:

- ▶ all students in one classroom
- ▶ survey

Procedure:

1. Ask all 31 students if they have ever sent a sext.
2. Tally results.

Data:

Sexting Status	Responses
I have sent a sext.	2
I have never sent a sext.	29

Conclusion:

Is the hypothesis supported or not by the data?

What evidence supports your conclusion?

How would you make this a better experiment? Do you think the students in Professor Kahn's class all answered the question honestly? If not, how might the results be biased?

