

Screens & Stress Answer Key

1. Main Concern (News Article)

The article suggests that social media increases teen anxiety, loneliness, poor sleep, and insecurity due to comparison and pressure to gain attention.

2. Key Findings (Study)

Moderate use is not strongly linked to mental health problems and can provide support, but heavy use (6+ hours) is connected to depression and poor sleep.

3. Difference in Perspective

The news article takes a more negative, cautionary tone, emphasizing risks, while the study provides a nuanced view; highlighting both neutral/positive effects and risks of overuse.

4. Overlap in Evidence

Both agree that excessive social media use is linked to poor sleep and negative mental health outcomes.

5. Balanced View Paragraph (Sample)

While the news article highlights concerns that social media harms teens by fueling insecurity and poor sleep, the psychology study shows a more balanced picture. It finds that moderate use is not necessarily harmful and can even provide support, but heavy use is linked to depression and disrupted sleep. Taken together, the sources suggest that the effect of social media depends largely on **how much and how it is used**, rather than social media being universally harmful.

Teacher Notes

- This activity builds **synthesis skills**, asking students to reconcile multiple sources into a single perspective.
- Encourage students to distinguish between **tone** (negative in the article, balanced in the study) and **evidence** (survey vs. longitudinal research).
- Extension: Have students research and add a **third source** (e.g., personal anecdote, another study, or editorial) to test how well they can integrate multiple viewpoints.