NEWS BREAK

Article: 3 signs that your food or activity tracker use has become unhealthy

Section: EXPLORE, F2

Sunday’s News Break selects an article from Sunday, September 15, 2019, of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a small group or larger, class discussion.

*Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Objectives:

Students will discuss if they wear fitness trackers, and whether it motivates or discourages them. They’ll talk about how many family members own one and their relationship with their devices. Can devices like these become addictive? They’ll discuss pros/cons of fitness-based trackers. Students will also discuss if they think some people tie their self-worth to the statistics on their activity trackers. They’ll talk about fitness trackers and if they view them as healthy or unhealthy; how is the best way one would create balance when wearing one?
Pre-Reading Discussion:

- What do you think the article will be about?
- Are there clues in the picture?
- What can you infer?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using context clues? A context clue is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

“But the numbers on the monitor changed the game. Glancing at them throughout the class killed my euphoria and made me feel like a loser who couldn’t keep up. Instead of the post-class afterglow, I found myself defeated, plagued by self-criticism.”

Write your guess and then look up the definition and write it below your guess. How close did you come to the correct definition?

Euphoria Guess:

Euphoria Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. My experience illustrates a truth about food and fitness apps and trackers: As researchers and clinicians are discovering, the devices can have very __________ results.
2. On the plus side, studies show they can be effective at what?
3. A study published in the Journal of Consumer Research found that, at least in the short term, while tracking an activity such as walking or reading increases the amount accomplished, it can significantly reduce what?

4. Researchers have also found a more imminent danger. What is it?

5. A recent study in BMC Psychology which examined the emotional impact of wearable activity trackers found that the devices offer, by and large, a ________________ experience with little risk for most people.

6. What are the three main points the author states you should be aware of, in knowing whether your device tracker might be doing more harm than good in your life?

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions:

- Do you wear a fitness tracker? Why did you choose to buy/wear one? Does it motivate or discourage you? Maybe it does both?
- How do you feel when you can’t wear your device? Are you frustrated that you can’t track your numbers and steps?
- How many people in your family have one? What is their relationship with their tracker? Do they wear it every day?
- What are the pros/cons of the fitness tracker?

For some, food and activity trackers can become a source of anxiety if users tie their statistics to their self-worth.

- Do you think some people do tie their self-worth to the statistics on their activity trackers? Why or why not?
- Could this practice of wearing a fitness monitor become addicting? Why or why not?

Trackers compel us to focus on numbers rather than the intrinsic pleasures of being active and eating well. “Someone might say, I’m not wearing my tracker today so it isn’t worth it to take a walk. . . . There are better ways to achieve the same outcome and really improve your relationship with food and fitness.”

- What is your personal opinion on fitness trackers? Are they healthy? Unhealthy? How is the best way one would create balance?

She suggests shifting the emphasis from numerical goals to finding activities you truly enjoy, eating mindfully and practicing self-compassion.

- Do you agree or disagree with this statement?
Sure, for most people, doing laps around your living room to reach your step goal beats being glued to the sofa, but doesn’t it sound infinitely more joyful and sustainable to forget about the numbers, crank up the music and dance around the living room instead?

- Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

News Break is posted to the Web on Monday. Please share this NIE News Break program with other teachers. To sign-up for the print replica for your class, please register on-line or call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655.

Copyright © 2019 The Seattle Times Company