



*Hidden Discoveries Reading Passage Competition:*

*Finding Knowledge from Treasures within Readings*

## Sample Full Document 1

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*This paper is written from assumption that the writer opposes the installment of iPods in the education system. This paper does not reflect the belief of Hidden Discoveries, its owner, or anything affiliated to it.*

Categories of this paper: [Technology, Media and Culture](#)

I, Pods

When the movie *I, Robot* first came out starring Will Smith, many people considered the movie as an entertaining flick and disregarded the concept of cerebral robot as shown in the movie. But, in reality, people have begun to rely more and more on machines even with domestic tasks. In many colleges and universities, students strolling with iPods to classes, gym, or other places around the campuses are familiar sights in United States and some other countries. Unfortunately, for some students, these iPods have become not just tools to hold favorites TV shows from prime time but also, compulsory parts of their classes against their wills.

In past couple years, some colleges distributed iPods to their incoming freshmen. Several universities explained this initiative as a step to enhance the quality of education and to improve the access to students for announcements like class cancellations. Similarly, Stanford University seeks to develop an application within iPods to provide campus map and directory to its students (Glater 2008). In reality, many institutions used iPods to attract students by appearing “cool” (Glater 2008). Hence, a common entertaining device has now become one of free gifts donated by colleges to its students. But, is that all of iPods’ effects to students?

Many institutions that supported this idea have required iPods as the part of their curriculum. In some cases, the professors mandated iPods in their curriculum by requiring them

Ji Woong Park  
Hidden Discoveries Reading Passage Competition Sample

to produce podcasts instead of research papers (Fuson 2006). Furthermore, because some professors recommend study guides by private companies as supplements for courses, Pearson company has created some of their study guides for MP3 players and iPod players through the audiobook purveyor company. These new “Listen and Learn” portable study guides come in both English and Spanish and include concise questions and author’s own words to listeners (Trachtenberg, 2005). Also, the students in these institutions utilized iPods to record lectures, create oral notes for themselves, and build electronic flashcards (Moore 2005).

Podcasts certainly have indubitably positive feedbacks on many of users. For instance, in Arlington, Jamestown Elementary School enriched its fifth graders’ learning by rendering them to develop their own podcasts. According to their elementary teachers, the podcasts both significantly increased motivation and comprehension that some students were able to make jokes out of intricate concepts for fifth graders like Constitution (Shen 2005). By the same token, when Duke University handed out iPods, its students turned these gadgets into active tools for class work by recording their own voices (Glater 2008). For some selected classes, students discovered another positive aspect of iPods by recording interviews as well. These positive uses represented the importance of iPods where students could make information from lectures to be ubiquitous by taking these devices to gym, library, and other places in the campus (Moore 2005).

One extreme supporter of iPods explained the benefits of iPods and other gadgets in a more abstract manner. He emphasized that in many pragmatic situations, skills learned by physical work stay longer in people’s brain than the names and dates memorized for exams. Moreover, he underscored the idea that people nowadays live with technology, and assimilating iPods and other electronic devices into classroom was no different than having more difficult

Ji Woong Park  
Hidden Discoveries Reading Passage Competition Sample

“open-book tests” (MacWorld, 2002). Other less extreme fans stressed the importance of iPods but nevertheless acknowledged that podcasts and other iPod-related benefits could not replace the class as a whole (Fuson 2006).

So, if iPods can produce such positive results on its users, why are there controversies over its usage in education? Also, if everything mentioned about iPods can occur with everyone, why do not all universities and colleges use them, excluding the financial reason?

The most direct victims of integration of iPods into classroom are professors. Many professors hurt by iPods because if they do not successfully make classes more interesting, their students would simply be occupied by their compendium of distractions, including cell phones and now, iPods from their own schools (Glater 2008). Whereas some professors voluntarily embraced iPods in their classrooms, other professors like Robert S. Summers at Cornell Law School strongly defied them. Summers recently proscribed laptops in his classroom, and when he heard about these new distractions named iPods, he wanted to abolish them in his classroom as well if he could (Glater 2008). In addition, introduction of iPods to college courses can create problem of isolation since more students will study through listening to their recorded materials in iPods and less likely to converse with other fellow students for more thoughtful discussions (Moore 2005).

The dark saga of iPods in education was shown more clearly in issue regarding cheating. Some students hid the devices under their clothes to surreptitiously hear their classroom notes as the part of lyrics in the songs (Boone 2007). Although the high schools focused on this issue more than colleges and universities, iPods yielded another equally significant problem for college professors: copyright law. Because the institutions gave the iPods to their students, they could not

Ji Woong Park  
Hidden Discoveries Reading Passage Competition Sample

prevent them from selling materials recorded from lectures because these materials, which came out of professors' mouths, were not copyrighted (Moore 2005). No student has been caught for selling and making profits but clearly, this issue needs to be addressed for future.

Since iPods have become very mundane, the powerful attraction toward students through iPods started to diminish. As a result, Duke University decided to purchase Flips, video recording devices, instead. Similarly, communications professor named Michael Scully in Roger Williams University included Flip as a requirement for his class. Last but not least, some professors in other institutions attempted to stay with technology for their students by creating their own Facebook and Myspace accounts (BusinessWeek 2008). So, iPods may not really be those tools for better education anymore. For these professors and institutions, iPods were temporary devices to attract students until new and updated ones replaced them.

Unfortunately for the students, iPods can even produce health problems as well. Known as an "iPod thumb," the users can injure their thumb by repeatedly using the scroll wheel device in iPods. Carl Irwin, who is the part of British Chiropractic Association, explained this injury known as one of repetitive stress injury (RSI), "The action needed to move the wheel on an iPod is totally unnatural and effectively separates the joints in the thumb every time you use it" (Sheppard 2005). Apple declined to comment about the danger from this accusation. This thumb problem persists not only in iPod but also with Blackberry and Playstation 2 as well (Sheppard 2005).

Despite the health problem, iPods cannot be criticized for voluntary usages. There is a strong distinction between voluntarily using iPods for entertainment and forcing them for education. But, it appears clear that the benefits of integrating iPods into curriculum are

Ji Woong Park  
Hidden Discoveries Reading Passage Competition Sample

marginal, and the truth intention of institutions is to stimulate astonishing effects on incoming students. Hence, iPods should just remain as an effective device to listen to favorite songs but they must stay out of classroom and let professors teach as they have been in past.

Ji Woong Park  
Hidden Discoveries Reading Passage Competition Sample

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*Reference is in Chicago Manual of Style; minor differences may exist depending on colleges/universities and professors if one were to compare with classroom rules.*