

Franklin Jr./Sr High School Reading Article

Walking While Looking Down at a Cellphone: Bad Idea

Reading Strategy for the Article: Students will take turns reading aloud. Mark the text and write in the margins

1090L

Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND WRITE NOTES in the margin box. This requires reading of the article more than once.

Step 1: Skim the article using these symbols as you read:

(+) agree, (-) disagree, (*) important, (!) surprising, (?) wondering

Step 2: Number the paragraphs. **Read** the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer's strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.

Step 3: A final quick read noting anything you may have missed during the first two reads.

Your margin notes will be assessed by your teacher along with your answers to the questions.

Walking While Looking at Cell: Bad Idea

WASHINGTON — Distracted walkers are walking in front of cars and into trees. Staring down at cellphones, they fall off curbs and bridges, and even walk into wet cement.

They have gotten cuts and bruises and head injuries. Some have even been killed.

Many cities and states are designing and promoting walkable neighborhoods, partly to attract more young people. At the same time, some are also giving tickets to distracted walkers and lowering speed limits to make streets safer for pedestrians.

Pedestrian injuries caused by cellphone use are up 35 percent since 2010, according to numbers from hospital emergency rooms.

Our "Behavior Is Changing"

Every year, thousands of pedestrians are injured as they walk in cities. Some researchers say 1 out of 10 of those injuries are caused by a distracting mobile device such as a phone or portable music player.

Utah and New Jersey have given tickets to people who text in dangerous walking situations. New York City now has lower speed limits, in part to make traffic less dangerous for distracted walkers.

"We have to design streets for the way people actually behave, and behavior is changing," said Noah Budnick of NYC-based Transportation Alternatives. "If you're looking at a phone when you're walking around, that shouldn't mean death. So we have to design forgiving streets."

New York City's new speed limits are 20 miles per hour (mph) in Central Park and 25 mph in the rest of the city unless otherwise posted. The city has also been blocking off more streets to make safer pedestrian plazas where cars are not allowed.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx has given \$1.6 million to Louisville, Kentucky,

*Notes on my thoughts,
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New York City, and Philadelphia for walker-safety programs.

"We've got to encourage people to have an awareness that this problem is a real problem," Foxx said.

Sidewalks Are Already Crowded

In 2012, 78,000 pedestrians were injured. It is the highest number since 2001, according to the National Highway Traffic Administration.

Also in 2012, 4,700 walkers were killed. That number has been increasing since 2009. It fell for several years before that.

Some areas are focusing on stopping people who use cellphones while walking. Distracted walkers in Utah can get a \$50 fine. In New Jersey, police gave tickets to people using phones while walking into traffic.

Philadelphia took a different approach. They made a joke of it. On April Fools' Day 2012, the city painted "e-lanes" on sidewalks. These lanes were reserved for people staring at their phones.

"We know that many, many people are using the sidewalks, looking at their iPhones and other electronic devices and they're quite distracted by those devices and bumping into people," Mayor Michael Nutter said in a video, as a distracted walker bumped into him.

But many pedestrians interviewed by the city thought the lanes were serious — and a good idea.

"It'll keep most of those bozos out of my way," one cellphone user said.

"I'm a severe texter and walker, so I don't know if I can quit on my own," another said.

Safety Programs

Minnesota, Utah, North Carolina, South Carolina and Washington state have also begun pedestrian safety programs to reduce traffic deaths.

San Francisco has pledged to spend \$50 million on its Walk First program. The city will examine "high injury corridors" to determine why those areas are so dangerous.

The plan also suggests raised crosswalks and traffic islands for pedestrians.

Distracted driving is also causing more pedestrian deaths, researchers say. A driver and a walker each staring at their cellphone is a dangerous combination.

In a survey last year by Liberty Mutual Insurance, half of pedestrians admitted to talking on the phone while walking across the street. One out of 4 said they text or email while crossing the street, even though they realize it is dangerous.

Texting And Walking Can Be Deadly

University of Buffalo researcher Dr. Dietrich Jehle estimates that 1 in 10 pedestrian injuries is now related to distracted walking. He believes distracted walking causes more accidents than distracted driving. Jehle studied the issue while working as an emergency room doctor.

Texting is the most dangerous thing to do while walking, he said — more dangerous than listening to music or talking on the phone.

A 2011 study found that texting makes walking extremely difficult. People in walking simulations had a 61 percent error rate while texting.

"While talking on the phone is a distraction, texting is much more dangerous because you can't see the path in front of you," Jehle said.

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Comprehension Questions— you may answer in phrases.

1. Cite three pieces of evidence that cell phones are dangerous for walkers.
2. What does “ped” mean as used in the words pedestrian, pedal, and millipede?
2. How are Utah and New Jersey addressing this problem?
3. What changes has New York City put into place to protect pedestrians?
4. Describe the April Fools Joke that citizen in Philadelphia took seriously. Do you think that if the “joke” became “reality” that it would be helpful?

Answer the following questions in one or more complete sentences.

1. **Explain how you think communities should address the problem of walkers distracted by texting. List 4 ideas that could help reduce injuries. Then Share With Your Homeroom.**

Idea 1

Idea 2

Idea 3

Idea 4