Educate to Empower

Attention, Class lesson pack



Assessment

A short comprehension check, with answer key

- About 15 minutes
- 20 marks
- Concentration: how to take action on distraction

How to use this

This is a light comprehension check, not a test. It covers both lessons: questions 1 to 5 are on Lesson 1, and questions 6 to 9 are on Lesson 2. When to use it: either as homework after Lesson 2, or — better — at the start of a follow-up session about two weeks later, alongside revisiting the exit tickets. **The student paper starts on page 4. Print pages 6–8 for everyone. If you are setting the extended question as well, print page 9 too.**

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Coverage

Q	What it checks	Marks	Objective and lesson
1	Recall: the two kinds of attention	2	LO1 · Lesson 1
2	Application: sorting examples into capture and control	4	LO1 · Lesson 1
3	Recall: what mind-wandering costs you	1	LO1 · Lesson 1
4	Understanding: why the two failure modes need opposite fixes	2	LO2 · Lesson 1
5	Application: diagnosing a described state	2	LO2 · Lesson 1
6	Understanding: why “just put it down” does not work	2	LO3 · Lesson 2
7	Recall and application: signal-to-noise	3	LO3 · Lesson 2
8	Understanding: stress, body clocks and variation	2	LO4 · Lesson 2
9	Application: turning a vague intention into a plan	2	LO5 · Lesson 2
—	Self-assessment (unmarked)	—	—

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Answer key and mark scheme

Accept any answer that makes the point, in the student's own words.
These are indicative, not required wordings.

Q	Answer	Marking notes	Marks
1	Attention capture: when something grabs your attention without you choosing (movement, sudden noise, a red dot). Attention control: when you choose what to attend to and hold it there; it takes effort and gets tired.	1 mark for each kind, correctly described. Award the mark for the description even if the term is wrong.	2
2	Capture: a phone buzzing on the desk next to you; an autoplay countdown starting at the end of a video. Control: deciding to read a paragraph again because you did not understand it; keeping your eyes on the board while people talk behind you.	1 mark each, 4 available. If a student argues a case for the "wrong" box and the reasoning is sound, give the mark — the boundary is genuinely fuzzy and good reasoning is worth more than the label.	4
3	You take in less of what you are supposed to be learning / your comprehension gets worse.	Accept any statement of reduced learning or understanding. Do not accept "you get distracted" alone — that restates the question.	1
4	Because they are opposite problems. Being too switched-on needs bringing down (step away, move slowly, somewhere quieter). Being too switched-off needs bringing up (stand up, move briskly, somewhere busier). Using the wrong fix makes it worse.	1 mark for identifying that the two states need opposite responses. 1 mark for a correct example of either fix, or for saying that the wrong fix makes it worse.	2

Q	Answer	Marking notes	Marks
5	Too switched-off / under-aroused. Fix: stand up, move briskly, go somewhere with more going on, or make yourself produce something rather than just read.	1 mark for the correct diagnosis. 1 mark for a fix that would raise arousal. If they diagnose “too switched-on” but give a consistent fix, award 1 for internal consistency.	2
6	Because the pull is not a trick — it is real interest, aimed very accurately at what you already like. Nothing is being forced on you, so advice that assumes you are being forced does not match what is actually happening.	1 mark for recognising the interest is genuine. 1 mark for connecting that to why willpower-based advice fails. Do not award marks for “because it is addictive” alone — that is the misconception Lesson 2 corrects.	2
7	SIGNAL = the thing you are supposed to be doing. NOISE = everything else arriving at your eyes and ears. What matters is the gap between them. Any sensible way of widening the gap: clear the desk, close the other tabs, face a blank wall, one thing at a time, say it out loud, bigger text.	1 mark for signal, 1 for noise, 1 for any workable way of widening the gap. Award the third mark for turning the signal up OR the noise down — Lesson 2 teaches both.	3
8	Because concentration is a state that changes, not a fixed amount. Time of day, your body clock, and how stressed you are all move it. In a stressful period attentional control genuinely gets worse — and it comes back afterwards.	1 mark for concentration varying rather than being fixed. 1 mark for naming any correct cause (time of day, body clock, stress; accept sleep). Treat a note that the stress effect is temporary as the great-er-depth response; it does not earn a further mark.	2
9	Any rewrite in the form “when X, I will do Y” with a specific, checkable cue and action. E.g. “When I sit down to do my history homework tonight, I will put my phone in my bag, not on the desk.”	1 mark for a specific action. 1 mark for a specific occasion or trigger. A plan with no “when” scores 1. A plan with neither scores 0.	2
	Total		**20**

Optional extended question — for older students (ages 14–18)

“Some people say that phones should simply be banned in schools. Using what you know about the two kinds of attention, explain why banning phones might help — and why it might not be enough on its own.” (6 marks)

A strong answer will use both systems: removing the phone removes a large source of attention capture (red dots, buzzes, autoplay) that the student cannot switch off; but it does not address attention control, which is engaged by genuine interest and follows the student wherever the phone is. It may note that the research on whole-school bans is mixed, and that the experimental evidence that a phone within reach reduces available capacity during a task has not always replicated.

Award up to 2 marks for correct use of attention capture, 2 for attention control, and 2 for a reasoned conclusion that goes beyond restating both sides.

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Comprehension check

Nine short questions. About 15 minutes. 20 marks.

NAME _____ CLASS _____ MARK _____/20

1. There are two kinds of attention. Name them, and say what is different about them. [2]

2. Tick the right box for each one. [4]

	CAPTURE	CONTROL
A phone buzzing on the desk next to you	☐	☐
Deciding to read a paragraph again because you did not understand it	☐	☐
An autoplay countdown starting at the end of a video	☐	☐
Keeping your eyes on the board while people talk behind you	☐	☐

3. What happens to how much you take in, the more your mind wanders? [1]

4. **Being “too switched-on” and being “too switched-off” need opposite fixes. Why does that matter? [2]**

5. **Someone says: “I sat there for a whole lesson. I was quiet, I was looking at the teacher, and at the end I realised I had not taken in a single word.” Which state were they in, and what would help? [2]**

6. **Why does “just put your phone down” not work very well as advice? Use what you learnt about how apps hold your attention. [2]**

7. **Explain what SIGNAL and NOISE mean, and give one way to widen the gap between them. [3]**

8. **Why does your ability to concentrate change from one day to the next? Give one thing that affects it. [2]**

9. **"I am going to concentrate better on my homework." That is not a plan. Rewrite it so that it says what the person will do, and when. [2]**

And one last one — This is not marked

You wrote a plan at the end of Lesson 2. Did you actually do it?

☐ Yes, and it helped ☐ Yes, and it made no difference ☐ I tried but forgot to keep doing it

☐ No

If you would change it now, what would you change it to?

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Extended question

For older students (ages 14–18). One question, 6 marks.

NAME _____ CLASS _____ MARK _____ /6

Some people say that phones should simply be banned in schools. Using what you know about the two kinds of attention, explain why banning phones might help — and why it might not be enough on its own.

[6 marks]