Warm-Up: Cleaning and Digital Life

Discuss with a partner:

- Do you often clean in the spring? What kind of cleaning do you do at this time of year?
- Do you enjoy cleaning or tidying? Why / why not?
- How many apps do you have on your phone?
- When was the last time you deleted something?

Word Formation (Use of English Style)

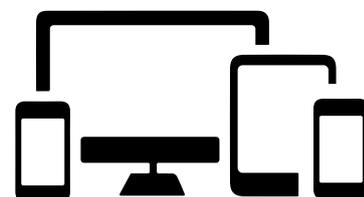**Complete the text with the correct form of the word in brackets**.

Digital Habits in the Modern World

In today's digital society, many people struggle with constant distractions, caused by smartphones and online platforms. These tools are designed to maximise user (2) _____ (ENGAGE), often encouraging frequent checking and (1) _____ (LONG) use.

As a result, some individuals develop a strong (3) _____ (DEPEND) on their devices, leading to reduced (4) _____ (PRODUCT) and difficulty concentrating. This is often made worse by information (5) _____ (LOAD), where the brain is exposed to more content than it can effectively process.

In response, digital minimalism promotes a more (6) _____ (INTENT) approach to technology. By reducing unnecessary apps and limiting (7) _____ (NOTIFY), users can regain control of their (8) _____ (ATTEND) and improve their overall well-being.

Talk to each other. What does this text say about digital habits in the modern world?

Key Expressions in Action

doomscrolling • screen time • digital detox • constant checking	

A. Complete

1. I often start _____ without realising it.
2. My daily _____ is higher than I'd like.
3. I have a habit of _____ my phone.
4. A full _____ would be difficult for me

B. Speaking

Are these sentences **True** or **False** for you? Talk about them

Pre-Writing: Spring Cleaning

A. Brainstorm

Write 5 typical actions that you might do during spring cleaning:

B. Transform the idea

How could you make this cleaning **digital**? Complete:

- Removing � _____
- Organising ➤ _____
- Limiting ➤ _____

Reading Input: Read the texts carefully.

Text 1

The concept of digital spring cleaning reflects a growing recognition that digital environments are not neutral. Many platforms are carefully designed to capture and retain user attention, often through subtle behavioural cues. As a result, what appears to be voluntary engagement may, in reality, be shaped by external influences.

From this perspective, digital spring cleaning is not simply a matter of deleting applications or reducing screen time. Instead, it involves developing a deeper understanding of how digital systems operate. Without this awareness, attempts to reduce usage may only lead to temporary changes, as users remain vulnerable to the same underlying mechanisms

Text 2

Digital spring cleaning can also be viewed as a practical strategy for improving everyday life. While it may be impossible to fully escape the demands of digital communication, small changes can still produce noticeable benefits. Adjusting notification settings, organising digital spaces and setting limits on usage can help individuals focus more effectively.

Rather than aiming for complete control, this approach emphasises balance. It recognises that technology plays an essential role in modern life, but suggests that more conscious use can reduce unnecessary stress. In this sense, digital spring cleaning is less about transformation and more about gradual improvement

C2 Writing – Step by Step

Step 1: Introduction

Goal: introduce topic + both perspectives

Introducing the topic

- *Both texts engage with the increasingly relevant issue of...*
- *In an era characterised by...*
- *The pervasive influence .... has prompted...*

Write:

Step 2: Synthesis

Combine ideas — NOT Text 1 vs Text 2 separately

Synthesising ideas

- *While the first text claims..., the second adopts a more pragmatic stance by...*
- *The texts converge on the idea that..., although they differ in their emphasis on...*
- *Taken together, the texts suggest that...*

Write:

Step 3: Evaluation

Analyse strengths and limitations

Evaluating

- *This line of reasoning is persuasive to the extent that...*
- *However, it arguably underestimates...*
- *A potential shortcoming of this perspective lies in...*
- *This argument is somewhat reductive, as it fails to account for...*

Write:

Step 4: Your Ideas

Add real-life examples / insight

Adding your own ideas

- *In practical terms,...*
- *This is particularly evident in contexts where...*
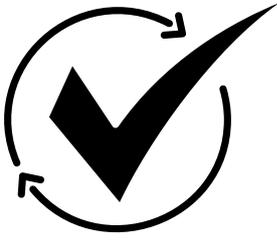- *It could be argued that a more nuanced approach would involve...*

Write:

Step 5: Conclusion

Balanced final thought

Concluding

- *Ultimately, a balanced perspective would acknowledge that...*
- *What emerges is not a need for rejection, but for...*
- *The most viable approach lies in...*

Write:

Cool Down

Your Digital Reset

Choose 2:

☐ reduce screen time
☐ stop doomscrolling
☐ organise apps
☐ turn off notifications

Final Task

Write your full essay (240–280 words)

Title: Digital Spring Cleaning

Write:

This week I will:

Reflection:

Will this be easy or difficult? Why?

Answer Key

Word Formation

1. **prolonged**
2. **engagement**
3. **dependency**
4. **productivity**
5. **overload**
6. **intentional**
7. **notifications**
8. **attention**.

Key Expressions

1 doomscrolling
2 screen time
3 constant checking
4 digital detox

Pre-Writing: Sample Answer

Removing ➜ deleting unused apps, old files and unnecessary emails

Organising ➜ arranging files into folders, cleaning up your inbox and structuring your apps

Limiting ➜ reducing screen time, turning off notifications and setting boundaries for app use

C2 Writing – Step by Step (With Model Examples)

Step 1: Introduction

Goal: Introduce the topic + refer to both texts

 Model Example

Both texts engage with the issue of how individuals manage their use of digital technology in an increasingly connected world. While they approach the concept of digital spring cleaning from different perspectives, both highlight the need for more conscious digital habits.

Step 2: Synthesis (KEY SKILL)

Goal: Combine ideas (NOT Text 1 vs Text 2 separately)

Model Example

While the first text emphasises the need to understand how digital platforms shape user behaviour, the second focuses on practical strategies such as limiting notifications and organising digital spaces. Taken together, the texts suggest that improving digital habits requires both awareness and action.

Step 3: Evaluation

Goal: Analyse strengths and limitations

Model Example:

The first argument is convincing to the extent that it highlights the hidden influence of digital design on user behaviour. However, it arguably overlooks the fact that individuals can still make meaningful changes through simple actions. By contrast, the second text offers practical solutions, although it may underestimate how difficult it is to resist these digital systems.

Step 4: Your Ideas

Goal: Add examples / real-world relevance

Model Example

In practice, many people find that small changes, such as turning off notifications, significantly improve their ability to focus. From personal experience, even short periods without constant checking can lead to greater productivity. A more balanced approach would therefore combine awareness of digital influence with realistic behavioural changes.

Step 5: Conclusion

Goal: Final, balanced statement

Model Example

Ultimately, digital spring cleaning is most effective when it combines both critical awareness and practical action, allowing individuals to develop a more balanced and sustainable relationship with technology.

BAND 5 SAMPLE ESSAY

Digital Spring Cleaning

Both texts engage with the increasingly relevant issue of how individuals manage their relationship with digital technology. While they approach the concept of digital spring cleaning from different angles, they ultimately highlight the need for more conscious engagement with digital environments.

The first text presents the idea that digital behaviour is not entirely self-directed, suggesting that online platforms are deliberately structured to capture user attention. As a result, simply reducing screen time may be insufficient unless individuals develop a deeper awareness of these underlying mechanisms. By contrast, the second text adopts a more pragmatic stance, arguing that small, manageable changes—such as limiting notifications or organising digital spaces—can lead to tangible improvements in daily life.

Taken together, the texts suggest that while complete control over technology may be unrealistic, some degree of intentional use is both possible and beneficial. The first argument is particularly compelling in highlighting the hidden influence of design; however, it arguably underestimates the value of simple behavioural changes. Conversely, the second text offers realistic solutions, although it may overlook the extent to which habits are shaped by external factors.

In practical terms, a more effective approach would combine both perspectives. Developing awareness of digital systems, while also implementing small but consistent changes, allows individuals to regain a degree of control without rejecting technology altogether.

Ultimately, digital spring cleaning is less about elimination and more about developing a balanced and sustainable relationship with technology.