

Name & Number:.....

Write an essay on the following topic:

- How did social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) change the way people interact with each other? Do you think they have positive or negative effects and why? (spreading of information, making friends, online vs. face-to-face interaction, etc.)

Every day, thousands of people are logging on to social networking websites. Some play games, some chat with friends, and some post updates about their lives, but one thing that users may not realize is the effect that social media is having on society. Websites like Facebook and Twitter affect our lives negatively, positively, and a lot more than we think. We all have our different causes for liking social media, but we don't always realize the important effects they are having on our lives.

The first effect is bullying. As these websites become more popular, the number of kids being cyberbullied increases. According to recent studies, 43% of kids in the United States have been bullied online in the past year. Cyberbullying can be threatening messages, posting embarrassing photos and information, or spreading rumours. Cyberbullying is becoming more popular because it makes it easier for people to tell lies, start drama, and say hurtful things. They hide behind a cell phone or computer screen, rather than confront someone in person. With the click of a button, a message can easily be sent to thousands of Facebook friends or Twitter followers.

There are also positive effects of social media. Social networking sites, some more than others, are often used as a kind of self expression and creativity. For example, blogging websites allow users to make their blog customizable and choose the things they share on it. Twitter allows users to change their background and customize their colors. Facebook now allows users to upload a picture of their choice to show at the top of their online profile. Aside from customizing the looks of online profiles, the content that users post on social networking sites also is a form of self expression. Certain people may always seem to have funny statuses, while another may always post quotes, while another always posts song lyrics, and another simply posts updates about their everyday life. Users of social networking sites often use their online profile as a reflection of themselves. This is one of the positive effects of social networking. It encourages creativity, self expression, and allows people to get inspired and define themselves. They use it as a way to set themselves apart from the crowd. Being different is celebrated on social networking sites, because it makes everything more interesting. Social networking is allowing some users to make friends with people they maybe wouldn't consider talking to in person, and allowing people to see some points of view they may not have considered before. It has the potential to really bring us all closer together, and gives us all a more open minded attitude about each other.

Social networking has also helped to connect us with people all around the world. Years earlier when a natural disaster or another big event would happen somewhere around the world, we would wait to find out on the news later that night. Even then, we would not see a lot of pictures and details from the incident. Now, we find out within seconds of it happening. With the tsunami in Japan, and the earthquake in Haiti, we found out right away and quickly saw the devastating damage that was done. A lot of this was due to social networking. Since social networking is worldwide, someone near the accident could tweet this to a thousand followers or so. The news would spread from person to person, letting thousands and thousands of more people know what is going on. This raises awareness, and allows us to get more help to these places quicker. Social media makes us more aware of what is going on in our world, and it helps people from different countries get to know each other and become friends. This is an opportunity that we would have never had just a few years ago. Social networking is connecting us all, and spreading kindness and knowledge worldwide. It allows us to overcome the distance put between us, and lets us unite together. This may be the most positive effect of social networking. It brings us together.

The main idea of all this is: Social media has its good effects and its bad effects. It is up to the users of social networking to decide how they want social networking to affect society. It can help us or hurt us drastically. Whether it causes us harm or brings us together is up to us and our attitude. Social networking gives us opportunities to make some new friends, and break boundaries that haven't been broken before. If we don't want the negatives to outweigh the positives, we can't abuse those chances by tearing others down or judging each other. If we use social networking to get to know each other, celebrate each other's differences, and learn from one another, we could really make a positive difference with them. If we use them just to stalk people's profile pictures and make fun of them, post embarrassing stories about each other's personal lives, or start pointless drama, they're not going to do us any good. The affect that social media has on society is entirely up to those who use it.