Language Land Learning Those who know nothing of a foreign language know nothing of their own. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe German writer



Why Bilinguals Are Smarter

Before You Read



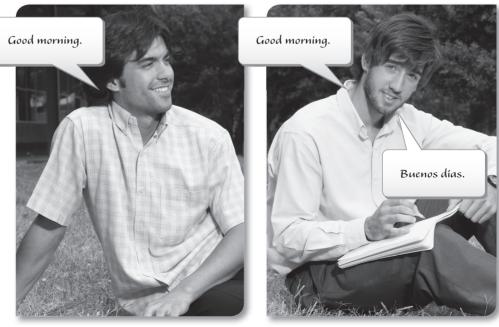
Strategy

Getting Meaning from Context and Word Structure

Try to guess the meaning of new or unfamiliar words as you read by looking at their *context*, what comes before and after the word. For example, look at the title of the reading. "Why Bilinguals Are Smarter." If you don't know the meaning of the word *bilinguals*, read what comes after it: the very first sentence of the article on page 7. Then choose the correct answer to this question: What is the meaning of *bilinguals*?

- a. people who speak a difficult language
- b. people who speak only one language
- c. people who speak two languages
- d. people who speak three languages

Another clue to the meaning of *bilinguals* is in the *structure* of the word itself. It begins with the prefix *bi*-, which also comes at the beginning of words like *bicycle*, *bisect*, *bilateral*, *binoculars*. What does the prefix *bi*- mean? How does it help to understand *bilinguals*?



▲ Smart

▲ Smarter?

1	Getting Meaning from Context and Word Structure Choose the correct meaning for the italicized words in the following excerpts (sections) taken from the reading selection. Use the <i>hints</i> about the context and word structure to help you. (The letter of the paragraph in which each excerpt can be found is given in brackets.)			
1.	1. Speaking two languages has benefits in an increasingly <i>globalized</i> world. (Hint: What smaller word do you see inside of the word <i>globalized</i> ?) [A]			
	A broken apart and fragmented			
	B connected and	international		
	© divided into ma	any nations		
	D filled with bord	ders and conflicts		
2.			ain, improving <i>cogniti</i> art of the sentence for	
	(A) emotional	B mental	© physical	D social
3.	and even <i>shielding</i> (Hint: Your clue here		(loss of cognitive ability).) [A]	ty) in old age.
	(A) destroying	B preparing	© protecting	Shortening
4.	4. Researchers long considered a second language to be an <i>interference</i> , cognitively speaking, that hindered (prevented) a child's intellectual development. (Hint : Look at the context of the whole paragraph and notice that this word refers to an older view of bilingualism, very different from the one described so far.) [B]			
	(A) advantage	B example	© introduction	obstacle
5. Bilinguals seem to be more adept than <i>monolinguals</i> at solving certain kind mental puzzles. (Hint : Now that you know what <i>bilingual</i> means, the context help you get the meaning of this word; also consider the structure and think other words starting with <i>mono</i> -, such as <i>monopoly, monologue</i> or <i>monotone</i> .) [I			ans, the context can ture and think of	
	(A) people who spe			
	B people who spe	_		
© people who speak many languages				
	D people who have	ve trouble with lang	guages	
6. In a 2004 study preschoolers were asked to <i>sort</i> blue circles and presented on a computer screen (Hint : If you keep on reading, you this word repeated two more times in context and the meaning wind clear.) [D]			ıg, you will see	
	A describe in wor	rds .		
	B divide into grow	ups		
	© make pictures of			
	D point at quickly			

- 7. The key difference between bilinguals and monolinguals may be more basic: a heightened ability to *monitor* the environment. (Hint: Keep reading past this sentence to find the meaning.) [H]
 - A keep track of
 - B not pay attention to
 - © see two sides in
 - D try to change
- **8.** But who would have imagined that the words... and the sentences... might be leaving such a deep *imprint*? (Hint: Look at the word itself.) [K]
 - (A) cut
 - B emotion
 - © mark
 - D problem



Strategy

Skimming for Main Ideas

Skimming is a useful way to get an overview of a reading selection. To skim, move your eyes quickly through the whole reading, making sure to look at headings and illustrations, if there are any. Try to see what ideas or themes are mentioned. Do not stop for details or worry about words you don't understand. Keep going like a fast-moving train from beginning to end. Afterward, you will have a general impression of the contents. Then, read the selection again for better comprehension.

- 2 Skimming for Main Ideas Take two minutes and skim the reading. Then look at the list of ideas or themes that follows. Put a check (✓) in front of the ones that are discussed in the reading.
- □ some advantages of being bilingual
- □ some disadvantages of being bilingual
- □ views about how the brain deals with the interference of a second language
- ☐ laws that restrict the use of a second language in some countries
- ☐ how bilingualism improves the eyesight and hearing of preschool children
- □ studies by psychologists of children sorting objects by shape and color
- □ how a second language improves the ability for *inhibition*
- ☐ the influence of the bilingual experience on older people

Introduction

Many, but not all, Canadians and Americans speak only one language, even though Canada has two official languages, English and French, and the United States has regions in which a high percentage of the population is Spanish-speaking. Recently there has been a great deal of interest in the effects of learning a second language on children and even on adult learners. How many languages do you know? How many would you like to know? Why?



С

Why Bilinguals Are Smarter

SPEAKING two languages rather than just one has obvious practical benefits in an increasingly globalized world. But in recent years, scientists have begun to show that the advantages of bilingualism are even more fundamental than being able to converse with a wider range of people. Being bilingual, it turns out, makes you smarter. It can have a profound effect on your brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age.

This view of bilingualism is remarkably different from the understanding of bilingualism through much of the 20th century. Researchers, educators, and policy makers long considered a second language to be an interference, cognitively speaking, that hindered a child's academic and intellectual development.

They were not wrong about the interference: there is ample evidence that in a bilingual's brain both language systems are active even when he is using only one language, thus creating situations in which one system obstructs the other. But this interference, researchers are finding out, isn't so much a handicap as a blessing in disguise. It forces the brain to resolve internal conflict, giving the mind a workout that strengthens its cognitive muscles.

Bilinguals, for instance, seem to be more adept than monolinguals at solving certain kinds of mental puzzles. In a 2004 study by the psychologists Ellen Bialystok and Michelle Martin-Rhee, bilingual and monolingual preschoolers were asked to sort blue circles and red squares presented on a computer screen into two digital bins—one marked with a blue square and the other marked with a red circle.

In the first task, the children had to sort the shapes by color, placing blue circles in the bin marked with the blue square and red squares in the bin marked with the red circle. Both groups did this with comparable ease. Next, the children were asked to sort by shape, which was more challenging because it required placing the images in a bin marked with a conflicting color. The bilinguals were quicker at performing this task.

The collective evidence from a number of such studies suggests that the bilingual experience improves the brain's so-called executive function—a command system that directs the attention processes that we use for planning, solving problems, and performing various other mentally demanding tasks. These processes include ignoring distractions to stay focused, switching attention willfully from one thing to another, and holding information in mind—like remembering a sequence of directions while driving.

Why does the tussle between two simultaneously active language systems improve these aspects of cognition? Until recently, researchers thought the bilingual advantage stemmed primarily from an ability for *inhibition* that was honed by the exercise of suppressing one language system: this suppression, it was thought, would help train the bilingual mind to ignore distractions in other contexts. But that explanation increasingly appears to be inadequate, since studies have shown that bilinguals perform better than monolinguals even at tasks that do not require inhibition, like threading a line through an ascending series of numbers scattered randomly on a page.

The key difference between bilinguals and monolinguals may be more basic: a heightened ability to monitor the environment. "Bilinguals have to switch languages quite often—you may talk to your father in one language and to your mother in another language," says Albert Costa, a researcher at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Spain. "It requires keeping track of changes around you in the same way that we monitor our surroundings when driving." In a study comparing German-Italian bilinguals with Italian monolinguals on monitoring tasks, Mr. Costa and his colleagues found that the bilingual subjects not only performed better, but they also did so with less activity in parts of the brain involved in monitoring, indicating that they were more efficient at it.

The bilingual experience appears to influence the brain from infancy to old age (and there is reason to believe that it may also apply to those who learn a second language later in life).

Bilingualism's effects also extend into the twilight years. In a recent study of 44 elderly Spanish-English bilinguals, scientists led by the neuropsychologist Tamar Gollan of the University of California, San Diego, found that individuals with a higher degree of bilingualism were more resistant than others to the onset of dementia and other symptoms of Alzheimer's disease: the higher the degree of bilingualism, the later the age of onset.

Nobody ever doubted the power of language. But who would have imagined that the words we hear and the sentences we speak might be leaving such a deep imprint?

Source: The New York Times (Yudhijit Bhattacharjee, who is a staff writer at Science)



Strategy

Scanning for Specific Information: Expressions and Set Phrases

Scanning is different from skimming. You skim for general ideas. You scan for *specific facts or details*. To scan, move your eyes quickly over the reading until you come to the specific piece of information that you want. Do not be distracted by ideas or other items. Stay focused. When you find what you want, use it. Then go to the next fact or detail that you are looking for.

Scanning for Specific Information: Expressions and Set Phrases Expressions, or set phrases, are groups of words that have a special meaning when used together. Scan the reading for the expressions described below. (In this exercise, the items are given in the order of their appearance in the article.) Example a two-word expression to describe people or things and meaning a greater variety: a <u>wider</u> <u>range</u> of people. 1. a three-word expression beginning with a b and meaning something positive that at first seemed to be negative: a _ **2.** a two-word expression that means *as an example*: ___ 3. a three-word expression describing how an action is done without difficulty by two **4.** a two-word expression beginning with *st* and meaning *to remain at attention* and ignore distractions: __ **5**. a two-word expression beginning with *tw* and referring to the *later part of* life when people are older and getting near to the end: the _ **6.** a three-word expression indicating the *beginning of the mental illness caused by* aging: the _

- 4 Testing Your Comprehension Mark each of these sentences with *T* for True or *F* for False. Correct the false statements to make them true. Remember to read the article (or parts of it) again if necessary. If you can do this exercise with ease, you have read well enough for your present purpose.
- 1. _____ In recent years, scientists have discovered that bilingualism generally improves a person's cognitive skills, but only those related to language.
- 2. _____ In the 20th century, most educators thought that speaking two languages was an interference that had a negative effect on a child's development.
- 3. _____ Nowadays, researchers believe that bilingualism is indeed an interference in the mind, but this conflict in the brain is a good thing.
- 4. _____ However, psychologists have shown that monolinguals are much better at solving certain kinds of mental puzzles than bilinguals.
- **5**. Recent evidence suggests that speaking only one language improves the brain's command system and helps a person to stay focused on a task.
- 6. _____ A big advantage that bilinguals have over monolinguals is a better ability to monitor changes in their environment.
- 7. _____ A disadvantage that bilinguals have is that they are more likely than monolinguals to suffer from dementia in old age.



▲ A bilingual sign in Canada

5 Focusing on Words from the Academic Word List Read the following excerpt taken from the reading in Part 1. Fill in each blank with a word from the box. Do not look back at the reading right away; instead, first see if you can remember the vocabulary. One word will be used twice.

aspects	function	processes	require	tasks
focused	ignore	randomly	series	

F	The collective evidence from a number of such studies suggests		
	that the bilingual experience improves the brain's so-called executive		
	that we use for planning, solving problems, and		
	performing various other mentally demanding These	5	
	processes include ignoring distractions to stay, switching		
	attention willfully from one thing to another, and holding information in		
	mind—like remembering a sequence of directions while driving.		
G	Why does the tussle between two simultaneously active language systems		
	improve these of cognition? Until recently, researchers	10	
	thought the bilingual advantage stemmed primarily from an ability for		
	inhibition that was honed by the exercise of suppressing one language		
	system: this suppression, it was thought, would help train the bilingual mind		
	to distractions in other contexts. But that explanation		
	increasingly appears to be inadequate, since studies have shown that	15	
	bilinguals perform better than monolinguals even at		
	that do not inhibition, like threading a line through an		
	ascending of numbers scattered on		
	a page.		



- 6 Guided Academic Conversation Work with a partner. Take turns asking and answering the following questions. After you finish, compare your answers with those of another pair of students.
- 1. Do you think most people in the world are monolingual? Or are they bilingual, trilingual, or multilingual? What about your family? What language or languages do you speak with your relatives? With your friends? As a child, what languages were spoken in your home? In your school?
- 2. Every person ought to speak at least two languages, no exceptions. True or false?
- **3.** In your opinion, which is the best language for business? Why? Which is the best language for science? For romance? For songs? Explain. To your ear, which language has the most beautiful sound?



▲ What is the best language for romance?

- **4.** Do people move differently and use their hands in different ways, depending on which language they are speaking? Do their faces look different? Can you describe these differences?
- **5.** Some people say that when we speak a different language we become a different person. True or false? Explain.
- **6.** Do you sometimes think in English? When, where, and why? Do you think that you will some day dream in English (but hopefully not in this class)? Why or why not?

F®CUS ON TESTING



Analyzing Summary Statements

On reading comprehension tests, you may be given several statements and asked to select the one that best summarizes a selection. In order to do this, first read the statements and see if any of them do not match the information in the reading. If so, eliminate it. Next, look at the other statements and decide which one best expresses the main idea of the reading selection. This statement must be *short* (one sentence) but *complete*. It should not just state a secondary idea or summarize small details of the selection. If there are subheads in the selection, they can help to remind you of the important ideas that should be included in a summary statement.

Practice

Choose the statement below that best summarizes the article *Why Bilignuals Are Smarter*. Then explain your answer.

- A Being bilingual slows down the development of the mind's cognitive abilities, leading to the increase in individuals with early forms of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.
- B Bilinguals have stronger cognitive skills than monolinguals, leading to a delay in the onset of dementia and improving the brain's executive function, which directs the processes humans use in planning, problem solving, and other activities.
- © Knowing a second language interferes with how bilinguals interact and communicate with others in their primary language, causing them to have trouble solving difficult problems and monitoring their immediate environment.

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▲ People who know more than one language have better opportunities to navigate worldwide situations.

Speaking Up in Class, Silently, Using Social Media

Before You Read



Strategy

Understanding the Use of Strong Verbs in Context

Strong verbs are verbs that express an action in a more exact, picturesque, or powerful way than common verbs. Using strong verbs can improve your writing and speaking by making them more interesting. For example, we can use a common verb and say, *The thief went away when the police arrived*. This is correct, but not very interesting. However, if we use a stronger verb, for example, *The thief bolted when the police arrived*, the sentence gains interest. It brings a picture to our mind and suggests details: the thief ran away very fast and was probably afraid. In another example, we can say, *The crowd shouted their welcome to the popular singer on stage*. But it is more interesting with a stronger verb, for example, *The crowd roared their welcome to the popular singer on stage*.

D	Scanning for Strong Verbs in Context The article about the use of socia
	media in the classroom contains many strong verbs. In the following sentences, use your scanning skills and replace each common verb in italics with the strong verb used in the article. (If needed, review the Strategy box about scanning on page 9.)
1.	Wasn't it just the other day that teachers (took away)
	cell phones and principals (spoke) about oversharing? [A]
2.	Now, Erin Olson is among a small but growing cadre of educators trying
	to (use) Twitter-like technology to (improve)
	classroom discussion. [B]
3.	Instead of being a distraction the chatter (repeated) and
	(entered) into the main discourse [E]
4.	said Mrs. Olson, who (kept track of) the stream and tried
	to (bring) it into the lesson. [E]

5.	She and others say social media can (attract) students who
	rarely raise a hand to (speak up) [E]
6.	The real-time digital streams allow students to comment, (ask)
	questions, and (drop) inhibitions about (giving)
	opinions. [G]
7.	Nicholas Provenzano, an English teacher, said that in a class of 30, only about
	12 usually (joined) the conversation, but that eight more
	might (enter) on a backchannel. [H]
8.	"The word on the street about laptops in class," Dr. Bruff added, "is that
	students use them to (get distracted), checking e-mail or
	shopping." [J]
9.	its own backchannel system, Hot Seat, lets students post comments,
	which can be read on laptops or smartphones or (shown) on
	a large screen. [L]
10.	Sandra Sydnor-Bousso, a professor of hospitality and tourism management, said
	Hot Seat did not (work) well with her style of walking
	around class to encourage a dialogue. [O]
11.	The 11th graders in Mrs. Olson's class said the backchannel had (increased)
	their appreciation of one another. [Q]



▲ Is communication with cell phones acceptable in classes?

media words and phrases used in selection 2 did not exist ten years ago or were not in common usage. Social media has expanded a lot because it is wildly popular and sometimes it is hard to keep up with all the new vocabulary. Match each of the following terms taken from the article to its definition. If you are not sure, scan the article for the word and use its structure and context to infer its definition. a. backchannel 1. _____ a small portable computer for personal use 2. _____ sending (posting) information that is too personal or **b.** cell phone not appropriate **c.** cyberspace 3. _____ an online site where documents can be deposited, **d.** laptop stored, or distributed, as if in a storage room e. medium ___ an online conversation, using a network of f. microblogging computers, that takes place at the same time as a lecture, class, or show g. oversharing __ a web-based or mobile technology used for interactive h. platform communication; the singular form of media i. smartphone **6.** _____ sending text messages related to a business project j. texting on-task or class topic that is being discussed **k.** Twitter 7. _____ the practice of posting small bits of content—words, I. virtual room photos, videos, etc.—on the Internet. ___ an online networking service that helps its users to network by sending and receiving text messages of 140 characters or less, known as tweets

(also known as a mobile) is a device that makes and receives calls over a great distance without wires by

a kind of software or technology that allows users to connect or facilitate the communication of materials

enabling a person to check email, store music and

generated by the users themselves

11. _____ a cell phone with advanced computing powers

photos, and perform other tasks.

12. _____ the online world of computer networks and,

especially, of the Internet

a radio link

2 Matching Specialized Terms to Their Definitions Many of the social

Introduction

How times have changed! In many schools and universities, a new kind of classroom is gaining popularity. As in the past, there are students, a teacher, and books; but now there is an additional element, a strange assortment of cutting-edge technology: social media. Cyberspace has entered the classroom! The following article presents the varied reactions of students and teachers to this development that may (or may not) transform forever the process of learning.



C

D

F

G

Н

Speaking Up in Class, Silently, Using Social Media

Wasn't it just the other day that teachers confiscated cell phones and principals warned about oversharing on MySpace?

Now, Erin Olson, an English teacher in Sioux Rapids, Iowa, is among a small but growing cadre of educators trying to exploit Twitter-like technology to enhance classroom discussion. Last Friday, as some of her 11th graders read aloud from a poem called "To the Lady," which ponders why bystanders do not intervene to stop injustice, others kept up a running commentary on their laptops.

The poet "says that people cried out and tried but nothing was done," one student typed, her words posted in cyberspace.

"She is giving raw proof," another student offered, "that we are slaves to our society."

Instead of being a distraction—an electronic version of note-passing—the chatter echoed and fed into the main discourse, said Mrs. Olson, who monitored the stream and tried to absorb it into the lesson. She and others say social media, once kept outside the school door, can entice students who rarely raise a hand to express themselves via a medium they find as natural as breathing.

"When we have class discussions, I don't really feel the need to speak up or anything," said one of her students, Justin Lansink, 17. "When you type something down, it's a lot easier to say what I feel."

With Twitter and other microblogging platforms, teachers from elementary schools to universities are setting up what is known as a "backchannel" in their classes. The real-time digital streams allow students to comment, pose questions (answered either by one another or the teacher) and shed inhibitions about voicing opinions. Perhaps most importantly, if they are texting on-task, they are less likely to be texting about something else.

Nicholas Provenzano, an English teacher at Grosse Pointe South High School, outside Detroit, said that in a class of 30, only about 12 usually carried the conversation, but that eight more might pipe up on a backchannel. "Another eight kids entering a discussion is huge," he noted.

Skeptics—and at this stage they far outnumber enthusiasts—fear introducing backchannels into classrooms will distract students and teachers, and lead to off-topic, inappropriate or even bullying remarks. A national survey released last month found that 2 percent of college faculty members had used Twitter in class, and nearly half thought that doing so would negatively affect learning. When Derek Bruff, a math lecturer and assistant director of the Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt University, suggests fellow professors try backchannels, "Most look at me like I'm coming from another planet," he said.

"The word on the street about laptops in class," Dr. Bruff added, "is that students use them to tune out, checking e-mail or shopping." He said professors could reduce such activity by giving students something class-related to do on their mobile devices.

Besides Twitter, teachers have turned to other platforms for backchannels, some with more structure and privacy. Most are free on the Web and—so far—free of advertising. Google Moderator lets a class type questions and vote for the ones they would most like answered. Today's Meet, used by Mrs. Olson, sets up a virtual "room."

Purdue University, in Indiana, developed its own backchannel system, Hot Seat, two years ago, at a cost of \$84,000. It lets students post comments and questions, which can be read on laptops or smartphones or projected on a large screen. Sugato Chakravarty, who lectures about personal finance, pauses to answer those that have been "voted up" by his audience.

Before Hot Seat, "I could never get people to speak up," Professor Chakravarty said. "Everybody's intimidated."

"It's clear to me," he added, "that absent this kind of social media interaction, there are things students think about that normally they'd never say."

But the technology has been slow to win over faculty. It was used in just 12 courses this spring. Sandra Sydnor-Bousso, a professor of hospitality and tourism management, said Hot Seat did not mesh well with her style of walking around class to encourage a dialogue. "The last thing I want to do is to give them yet another way to distract themselves."

In high schools and elementary schools, teachers try to exercise tight control over backchannels, often reviewing a transcript after class for inappropriate remarks. Even schools that encourage students to use mobile devices prohibit gossip during class.

The 11th graders in Mrs. Olson's class said the backchannel had widened their appreciation of one another. "Everybody is heard in our class," said Leah Postman, 17.

Janae Smith, also 17, said, "It's made me see my peers as more intelligent, seeing their thought process and begin to understand them on a deeper level."

Source: The New York Times (Tripp Gabriel)

After You Read



Strategy

Completing a Summary

A *summary* is a short presentation of the main ideas of a larger work, such as an article, lecture, or book. It is longer than a *summary statement* (See the *Focus on Testing* in Part 1 of this chapter), but of course it is much shorter than the work it is based upon. Filling in the blanks in a summary can help you to understand key vocabulary terms, to review the meaning of the selection as a whole, and to examine a sample of what a summary is.

3 Completing a Summary Fill in the blanks with the words from the list below to complete the summary of Speaking Up in Class, Silently, Using Social Media.

backchannel cadre confiscate devices digital distract distracted enhance inappropriate interactions monitor laptops negative peers questions skeptics texting

A Summary of Speaking Up in Class, Silently, Using Social Media

А	Not so long ago, it was common f	For teachers to cell
	phones and other	that students brought to class. Now,
	however, a small but growing	of educators believes
	that social media technology can	classroom discussion.
	Some even set up a	that allows students to comment 5
	and pose	

В	These teachers the stream and	
	bring it into the lesson. They feel that students are not	
	when they are on-task (about ideas related to the	
	discussion). On the other hand, many other teachers are	10
	who worry that having in class will	
	students and lead to gossip and comments with a	
	effect on learning. In contrast, the students themselves	
	are generally enthusiastic when it comes to social media	
	because they feel it allows them to express themselves more freely and to	15
	understand their at a deeper level.	



- 4 Guided Academic Conversation Work with a partner and take turns asking each other about social media and classroom learning, using the questions below. Are your opinions similar to those of your partner or different? Afterwards, be prepared to tell the class something you have learned about your partner.
- 1. What's your opinion of using Twitter or cell phones in the classroom? Is it a good or bad idea? Why?
- 2. What other kinds of social media are being used now in classrooms? Which ones have you used? In general, are you a skeptic or an enthusiast when it comes to learning through social media? Explain.
- **3.** What social media do you use on a regular basis? When and where do you use them? How often? Is life better now with social media or is it worse? Why?
- **4.** How do you like your classes to be structured? Which of the following elements would you like to have included in a course: lectures by the teacher, note-taking, debates, pair work or group work with other classmates, short oral presentations by students, movies and videos, social media, essays written in class, homework assignments, games, and competitions? Which of these elements would you *not* like to have included? Explain.
- **5.** Describe the best class you have ever been in. Why did you like it?



What Do You Think? Read the paragraph below and in small groups discuss the questions that follow.

Social Media Revolutions

Besides being a way to find and keep in touch with friends and relatives, Facebook, Twitter, smartphones, and email have become useful for other pursuits. For instance, in the Arab Spring democracy movements in the Middle East in 2011–2012, leaders organized anti-government demonstrations over social media. In Greece and Spain, rallies were arranged over Facebook to demonstrate against European Union austerity measures. In the United States, the Occupy Movement used social media to rally against corporations and banks that they held responsible for recession and job loss. Politicians, businesses, movie-makers, television producers, and restaurants all use social media as a quick way to advertise their ideas or products. Social media has definitely revolutionized the way we communicate.

- 1. How does social media facilitate political movements?
- **2.** Do you think your use of social media is private? Can something you say or write be used against you? In what circumstances?
- **3.** Do you think it's OK for potential employers to have access to your Facebook pages? Why or why not?



▲ Social media can be instrumental in organizing political demonstrations.

Tying It All Together

1 The Great Debate Consider the following debate topic:

Topic: Backchanneling and most other types of social media should have no place in high school or university classrooms.

Do you agree or disagree? Everyone who agrees should go and stand on the side of the classroom away from the door; all of those who disagree should go and stand on the opposite side. The debate begins. In order to return to your seat you must give one good sentence with a reason supporting your point of view or else you can explain why you disagree with a reason that was just given by someone else. After everyone is sitting down once again, a vote should be taken to decide which point of view wins today. Hooray for democracy!



2 Making Connections Do some research on the Internet and take notes on one of the following topics. Share your results with the class or in a small group.

Bilingual Countries What countries have two official languages? Choose one and tell where it is located and why it is bilingual. Are the two languages similar or very different? Are most of the people in the country bilingual or monolingual, or does it depend on which region they live in? In your opinion, does bilingualism in this country cause conflicts and difficulties, or does it make the culture richer and more interesting?

The Preservation of Languages Which languages in the world are in danger of extinction (disappearance, termination)? Which groups or cultures are trying to preserve their native languages? Choose one and describe what the situation is like. Why do people want to keep their language alive? Why is it in danger of extinction? What is being done to preserve it?

The Future of Social Media How many people in the world today use social media? What are the most common forms? Are some types of social media used more in one part of the world and others in a different part? Are there some countries that do not permit certain types of social media or that try to control it and censor (regulate) it? Are they successful in their efforts? Describe and explain. In your opinion, will social media continue to grow or will it lose its popularity and become extinct (finished, disappeared)?



▲ Using social media in the classroom can enhance student participation.

Responding in Writing

F®CUS

Writing Tip: A Summary Statement is Short and Inclusive

Learning how to write a summary statement—a single sentence giving the essence of a piece of writing—is a useful skill. There will be occasions when you have limited time and want to explain something briefly. As is mentioned in the Focus on Testing section in this chapter, a good summary statement is *short* (one sentence) and *inclusive* (relatively complete, referring to different parts, not just to one).

To write a summary statement of a paragraph, put down the main idea and the most important details in one sentence. Try to express this in your own words, as clearly and simply as possible, not in the same words that were written. Use the most important details from the whole paragraph, not just from the beginning or the end.

- Writing a Summary Statement Follow the steps below to write a summary statement of a paragraph. Later in the course, you may be asked to summarize (write a short version of) a longer piece of writing.
 - Step 1: Look at the first paragraph of the reading from Part 1, copied below.

 SPEAKING two languages rather than just one has obvious practical benefits in an increasingly globalized world. But in recent years, scientists have begun to show that the advantages of bilingualism are even more fundamental than being able to converse with a wider range of people.

 Being bilingual, it turns out, makes you smarter. It can have a profound effect on your brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age.
- 1. How many sentences does the paragraph above have?
- 2. Remember that a summary statement must *distill* (reduce, bring down, compress) this paragraph into one good sentence. It should express the main idea and important details briefly in clear simple words.
- **3.** Read the three statements below. Put a check (✓) next to the best summary statement. (Remember that it should be *short* and *inclusive*.)
 - a. A bilingual person has the obvious practical benefit of speaking with different groups in this increasingly globalized world, and in recent years scientists have shown that bilingual people are smarter.
 - b. Being able to speak two languages rather than just one has the evident advantage of permitting conversation with a larger group of people, but also it is now shown that a bilingual individual has a greater intelligence and more cognitive skills and will be more protected against losing mental powers when older.
 - c. _____ It's clear that bilingualism is beneficial because it allows a person to speak with more people, but recently scientists have shown that being bilingual actually improves a person's brain even into old age.

- **4.** Why are the other two statements not as good?
 - **Step 2:** Now, farther on in the same reading (Selection 1) there is another paragraph, copied below. How many sentences does it have? ______ Read it carefully and try to find the main idea.

The key difference between bilinguals and monolinguals may be more basic: a heightened ability to monitor the environment. "Bilinguals have to switch languages quite often—you may talk to your father in one language and to your mother in another language," says Albert Costa, a researcher at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Spain. "It requires keeping track of changes around you in the same way that we monitor our surroundings when driving." In a study comparing German-Italian bilinguals with Italian monolinguals on monitoring tasks, Mr. Costa and his colleagues found that the bilingual subjects not only performed better, but they also did so with less activity in parts of the brain involved in monitoring, indicating that they were more efficient at it.

- **Step 3:** Write a one-sentence summary statement of this paragraph. Include the main idea in different words from those used in the text and also some important details from the whole paragraph. Make sure to express what is said, *not your own opinions*. Writing about your opinions is a different type of writing that will be studied in a later chapter.)
- Step 4: Check over your summary statement. Is it one sentence long? Is it inclusive? Do you have the correct spelling of the words and good punctuation? Make sure that your statement expresses the main idea of the author, not your own personal opinion. Also, make sure that your statement is in your own words, not just a copy of phrases taken directly from the paragraph. (By the way, don't be discouraged if your statement isn't perfect. It is not easy to write a good summary statement, even in your own native language. It is a challenge.)
- **Step 5**: Work with two or three other students to revise your writing. Everyone reads his or her statement aloud. Then all of you discuss the statements and vote on which one is the best: short but inclusive, correctly written in words that are not copied directly from the text, clear, and interesting. Congratulations to the winner. He or she should take a bow!

Self-Assessment Log

Read the lists below. Check (\(\sqrt{)}\) the strategies and vocabulary that you learned in this chapter. Look through the chapter or ask your instructor about the strategies and words that you do not understand.

Reading and Vocabulary-Building Strategies

- $\hfill\Box$ Getting meaning from context and word structure
- ☐ Skimming for main ideas
- ☐ Scanning for specific information: Expressions and set phrases
- ☐ Understanding the use of strong verbs in context
- ☐ Completing a summary

Target Vocabulary

Nouns		Verbs	Adjectives
■ aspects*	laptop	confiscate	bilingual
backchannel	■ medium*	distract	cognitive
biped	microblogging	enhance*	digital
cadre	monolinguals	■ focused*	globalized
cell phone	platform	■ ignore*	■ inappropriate*
cyberspace	peers	monitor*	
dementia	processes*	oversharing	Adverb
devices*	series*	■ require*	■ randomly*
■ function*	skeptics	sort	
imprint	smartphone	texting	
inhibition	■ tasks*	on-task	
■ interactions*	■ Twitter		
interference	■ virtual room*		

^{*} These words are from the Academic Word List. For more information on this list, see http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist