

The World of Teens

II – Reading Test

Name _____ No. _____ Class _____ Date _____

You are going to read a text about the impact of social media on body image.

Social media impact on body image

Every day, we are bombarded with unrealistic standards that society has created for us. There is a notion that everyone should look, act and be a certain way in order to be accepted. Every day, this underlying expectation and generalisation of beauty is continually reinforced by social media. It is indoctrinating us, youngsters around the world, into believing we are not good enough. I'm sure many people can relate to hitting that low point when we wish we could *look like that girl on Instagram* or *dress the way influencers do online*. I can't stress enough how unhealthy this is for your mental health. Constant comparison to the unattainable online image eats away at your self-confidence. Truth is, we're never going to look like social media influencers. The only way anyone looks that way is by a combination of Photoshop, edits and filters.

When you have a constant comparative narrative in your mind, the first thing it delves into is your body image. Before long, I was checking and trying all possible fad diets and miracle weight loss products to achieve the unachievable. My mind was playing cruel tricks on my body and was totally in control of it. Once I recognised the depression and anxiety this was spiralling me into, I had to make a change. I did a lot of reading and listening about my condition and had to train myself into believing something new...The way I am is enough in its entirety.

There is not one thing in this world that should take that thought away from you. It becomes a lot easier when you can distinguish for yourself that the images you see online are edited a whole lot more than you realise. That's the power of social media – people can be whoever they want to be – and unfortunately, it is often at the indirect expense of others.

I strongly feel that social media influencers have a social responsibility towards changing this. Somewhere there are young people looking at YOUR page, wishing so deeply that they were you or lived your social media life without realising that it is completely glamourised. Why not encourage, empower and assist these young people by showing real struggles and celebrating small successes. I lost a good few years by falling into this exact trap and have made it my mission to ensure others learn from my mistakes.

I still don't look like *that girl on Instagram*, but I surely don't want to anymore.

By Mia du Toit
(blogger and young activist)

<https://www.girlsglobe.org/2020/02/18/instagram-influencers-healthy-body-image/> (accessed in November 2020)

1. Match each word in column A with the synonym in column B. There are two extra synonyms.

Column A	Column B
a. underlying (line 3)	1. brainwashing
b. indoctrinating (line 4)	2. persuading
c. hitting (line 5)	3. hidden
d. spiralling (line 13)	4. escalating
	5. attacking
	6. reaching

2. What do the following words refer to? There are two extra options.

Column A	Column B
a. it (line 3)	1. comparative narrative
b. it (line 10)	2. beauty
c. it (line 13)	3. her body
	4. social media
	5. her mind

3. Choose the correct option (a, b or c) to complete the sentences.

3.1 According to the text social media reinforce...

- a. your self-confidence.
- b. unrealistic beauty ideals.
- c. unhealthy habits of influencers.

3.2 You are never going to look like influencers do because...

- a. they play tricks on their body.
- b. they follow all possible diets.
- c. their image is not real.

3.3 Social media influencers should encourage young people to...

- a. live a similar social media life.
- b. glamourise their online life.
- c. see a more realistic side of life.

3.4 The main goal of the text is to show...

- a. how influencers can set up deceptive beauty ideals.
- b. how young people can be more self-confident.
- c. how beauty ideals set by social media can be achieved.