NEWS LESSON

Do Young and Older People Really Think So Differently?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Is it easier to talk to someone your age?
2. Who learns new technology faster in your experience: younger or older people?
3. What is one thing different ages can teach each other?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**rude**	☐	A	to stop something from being seen or known
2	**wasting**	☐	B	using time or money badly
3	**genuine**	☐	C	not polite
4	**patient**	☐	D	to see two things as different and not mixed together
5	**hide**	☐	E	real, not pretend
6	**economy**	☐	F	to like one thing more than another
7	**separate**	☐	G	the money system of a country, with its jobs and businesses
8	**prefer**	☐	H	able to wait calmly without getting angry

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

Young and older people often use different habits and technology. But generation labels do not tell us everything about a person.

1 A family is trying to plan a weekend away. The grandmother picks up the phone and calls everybody, one by one. Her grandson sends a single message to the group chat and puts his phone down. Three hours later nobody has answered it. She thinks he is being rude. He thinks she is wasting an afternoon. Neither of them is trying to annoy the other. They simply have a different habit.

2 There is an easy word for this: generation. We say that young people do things one way and older people do things another way, and the argument stops there. The explanation is quick and it feels true. It can also hide a great deal.

3 Some of the difference is real. Eurostat reported in April 2026 that 89.3% of people aged 16 to 29 in the EU had used social networks during 2025. Across the wider population aged 16 to 74, the figure was 67.3%. That is a genuine gap in one everyday habit.

4 A habit is not a personality, though. The numbers show who opens an app. They say nothing about who is patient, careless, generous or hard-working. Two people of the same age can disagree about almost everything. Two people born forty years apart can want exactly the same thing. A quiet nineteen-year-old and a quiet sixty-year-old may understand each other better than either of them understands a noisy cousin of their own age.

5 Researchers find this hard to separate. Some things change simply because a person grows older. Some things change for everyone at once, like a new piece of technology or a bad year for the economy. Only a little of it really belongs to one group of people born at a similar time.

6 Forgetting that has a cost. A stereotype about age can land on anyone. In a European survey in 2023, 45% of people thought age discrimination was widespread, and 52% said age was the main thing that could count against someone applying for a job. Older workers lose out, and so do younger ones.

7 So the grandmother and the grandson have a choice. One of them can say that people of that age never listen. Or one of them can ask a better question: how would you prefer to arrange this? The second question tends to get an answer.

Sources: Eurostat, 89% of young people in the EU used social networks in 2025. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Eurostat found that 89.3% of people aged 16 to 29 in the EU had used social networks. T F NG
2. A person's habits show what kind of person they are. T F NG
3. Most young people in the EU prefer messages to phone calls. T F NG
4. In the 2023 European survey, 52% said age was the main thing that could count against someone applying for a job. T F NG
5. The grandson thinks phoning everyone is a good use of time. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

annoy	argument	careless	discrimination	generous	personality	stereotype

1. A friend who often pays for everyone's coffee is very _____ .
2. Being shy is part of a person's _____ , not just a habit.
3. Loud music late at night can _____ your neighbours.
4. Treating someone worse because of their age is age _____ .
5. A _____ about old people can hurt someone who is not like that at all.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. Eurostat _____ in April 2026 that 89.3% of young people had used social networks. (REPORT)
2. Three hours later nobody _____ it. (ANSWER)
3. Neither of them _____ to annoy the other. (TRY)
4. Some things change simply because a person _____ older. (GROW)
5. The second question _____ to get an answer. (TEND)

7 Language focus: linking words

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Ask what the link does: a reason, a result, a surprise, a condition or a contrast.

although	because	despite	however	instead	so	unless

1. The grandmother phones everyone _____ she thinks a call is more polite.
2. _____ he is very kind, he sometimes forgets to reply.
3. Nobody answered the message, _____ the family still had no plan.
4. Some older people love social networks. _____ , many young people use them far more.
5. You cannot know how a person likes to work _____ you ask them.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. A younger person wants to text and an older person wants to call. What is a fair solution?
2. What advice from an older or younger person could be useful to you?
3. How can people disagree about age without insulting each other?

9 Role-play: planning a weekend away

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the grandmother

You want to plan a family weekend away. You prefer to phone people and talk. Ask your grandson to join a call tonight. Listen to his reasons and agree on a way to plan.

Student B · the grandson

You prefer to send one message to the group chat. Explain why this works for you. Say what you don't like about long phone calls, then look for a fair solution.

Useful phrases

I'd rather talk on the phone, if that's okay.
I didn't mean to upset you.
It's quicker for me to send a message.
Let's try it your way first.
How would you prefer to arrange this?
Could we do both, a message and then a call?

Afterwards, tell the class: what did you agree, and was the compromise fair to both sides?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 C · 2 B · 3 E · 4 H · 5 A · 6 G · 7 D · 8 F

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 T · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 generous · 2 personality · 3 annoy · 4 discrimination · 5 stereotype

6 Verb forms

1 reported · 2 has answered · 3 is trying · 4 grows · 5 tends

7 Language focus

1 because · 2 Although · 3 so · 4 However · 5 unless

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