

# Y Do U Txt?

Read a bar graph to see teens' top reasons for texting.

**D**o you love to send text messages from your cell phone or mobile device? If so, you are among more than 138 million Americans who text on a regular basis. People ages 13 to 17 are the most frequent texters, sending on average more than 1,700 messages a month! Four out of 10 teens say they are so skilled at texting, they can do it while blindfolded. (That image made us LOL!)

We asked Joe Porus, vice president of technology research for the company Harris Interactive, why teen texting is so popular. "It's a form of entertainment," Porus told *MATH*. "They've even invented their own language for it." (A sideways heart, <3, means "love," for example.)

We also spoke with some teens who love to text. "Texting is my lifeline!" said Megan Greenway, an 8th-grader at Berkshire Junior/Senior High School in Burton, Ohio. "Sending a text is faster and cheaper than making a call." Stirling Eastman, 14, from Heatherwood Middle

School in Mill Creek, Washington, told us that he sends 100 texts a day. "When I can't think of anything to say, I send a smiley face!" he explained.

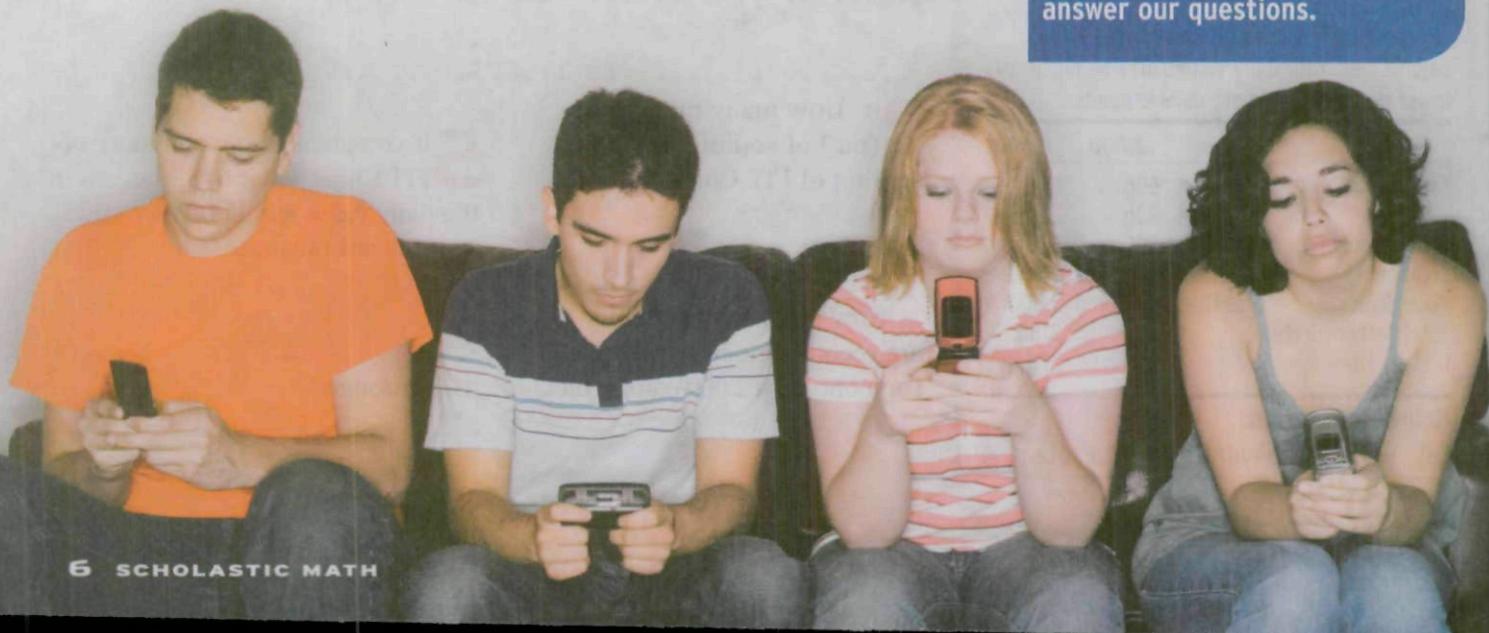
Of course, there are some negative aspects of texting to consider. Schools have had problems with students texting during class. Texts have been used for bullying. Costs can really add up when a person doesn't have an unlimited texting plan. Texting while driving is very unsafe, often resulting in accidents. And many worry that texting is replacing actual conversations.

For now, though, the texting trend shows no signs of slowing. Read our *bar graph* to see what teens across the country like most about texting. GL/HF: That's text lingo for good luck and have fun!

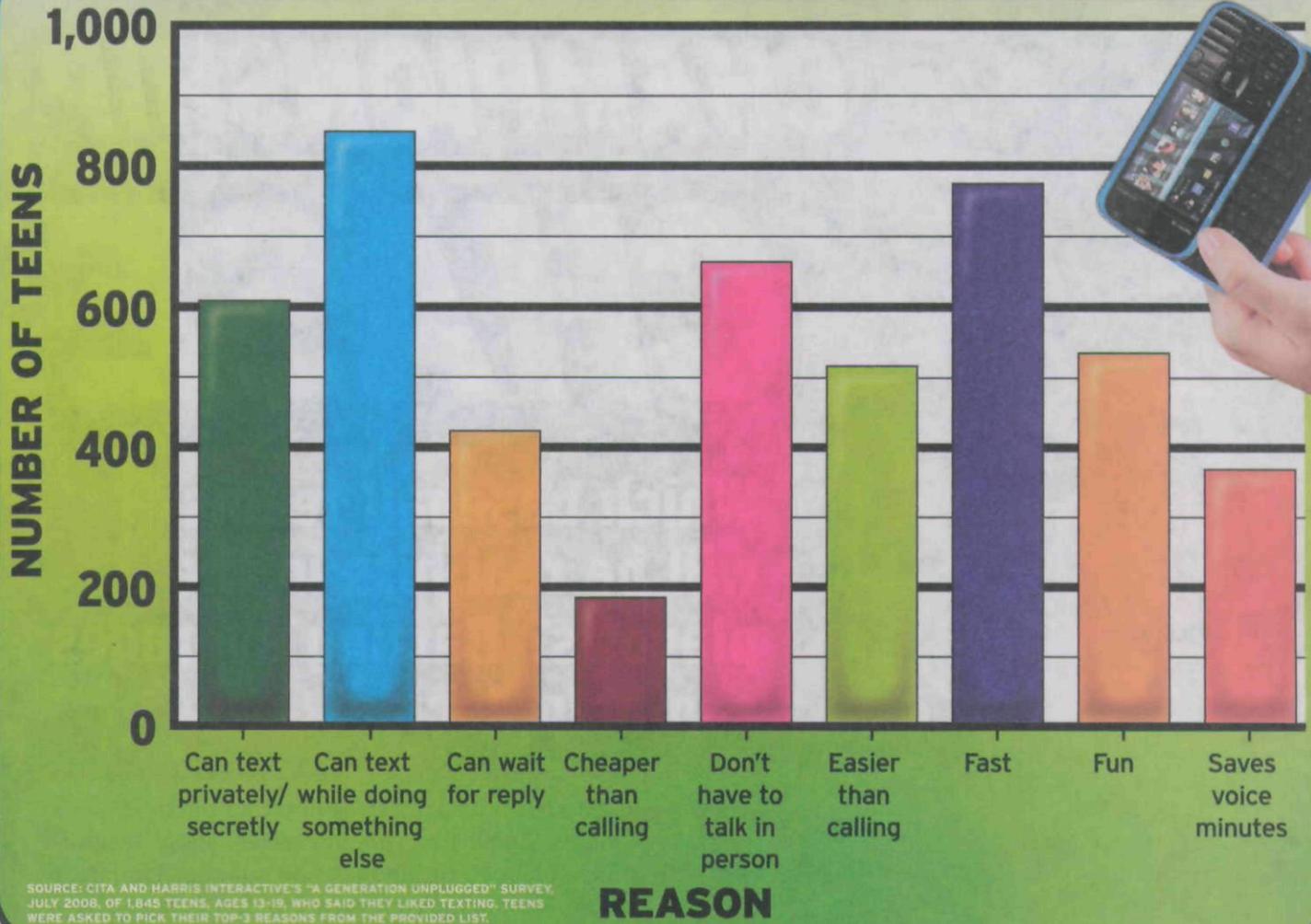
—by Libby Golden

## WHAT TO DO

Our bar graph is based on a national survey of teens, conducted by Harris Interactive. It shows what teens like most about texting. Use the graph to answer our questions.



# WHAT TEENS WHO ENJOY TEXTING LIKE MOST ABOUT IT



**1** Which reason did the third-greatest number of teens choose?

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**2** About how many teens surveyed said they like texting because it's private/secret?

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**3** About 425 teens chose what reason?

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**4** About how many more teens surveyed chose "Fast" than chose "Saves voice minutes"?

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**5** Harris Interactive surveyed 1,845 teens on this question, but many more than 1,845 answers are represented on the graph. What is the reason for this difference? To find out, look at the graph's *source*. (Read all of that information.)

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**6** What conclusion can you draw from the graph?

- (A) Teens prefer talking on the phone to texting.
- (B) Girls like texting more than boys do.
- (C) In general, the convenience of texting is more important to teens than the cost savings.

## TALK ABOUT IT

Have a class discussion about the pros and cons of texting compared with having actual conversations.

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