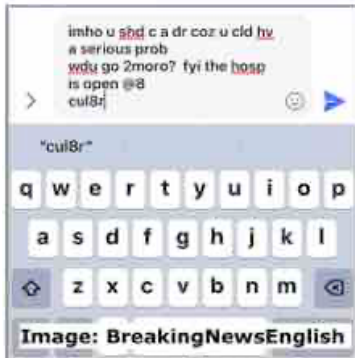


Text abbreviations make you look less sincere

18th November 2024



A new study suggests that people who abbreviate their text messages might seem insincere. In addition, they might be less likely to receive replies. Researchers from Stanford University in the USA and the University of Toronto in Canada

analyzed 5,000 text messages to gauge the impact of abbreviations. Test participants had to rate their perceived sincerity of messages with and without abbreviations. They also evaluated their likelihood of responding. The researchers said: "Abbreviations make senders seem less sincere and recipients less likely to write back." They added: "Abbreviations signal a lower level of effort from the sender."

Abbreviations in text messages and social media comments have evolved into a distinct genre of writing. The first text message was sent in 1992. Since then, a system of abbreviated text has developed that is largely understood and widely used. Many abbreviations are now in dictionaries. Truncated terms like "fyi," "cul8r," and "imho" are commonplace in text messages. Of course, these mean "for your information," "see you later," and "in my humble opinion". Researcher David Fang said: "We thought texters might like abbreviations because they would convey an informal sense of closeness, so we were surprised that abbreviations elicited negative perceptions about people who use them."

Sources: [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [scitechdaily.com](https://www.scitechdaily.com) / [apa.org](https://www.apa.org)

Writing

We must all stop using abbreviations in text messages. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

study / abbreviation / text messages / impact / sincerity / likelihood / write / effort / social media / genre of writing / dictionaries / opinion / texters / closeness / sense

True / False

- 1) The article says people who use abbreviations are insecure. T / F
- 2) Researchers analyzed 50,000 text messages. T / F
- 3) People who use abbreviations are less likely to get a reply. T / F
- 4) Researchers say abbreviation indicate less effort from the writer. T / F
- 5) The writing in text messages is now a distinct genre of writing. T / F
- 6) The first ever text message was sent in the 1970s. T / F
- 7) Text message abbreviations are yet to be put in dictionaries. T / F
- 8) Researchers said they thought texters would like abbreviations. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. abbreviate | a. probability |
| 2. replies | b. communicate |
| 3. gauge | c. developed |
| 4. likelihood | d. answers |
| 5. signal | e. separate |
| 6. evolved | f. adverse |
| 7. distinct | g. shorten |
| 8. humble | h. show |
| 9. convey | i. respectful |
| 10. negative | j. measure |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of the new genre of abbreviation-based writing?
- c) What do you think of social media?
- d) Do you ever not understand the abbreviations in texts?
- e) How will abbreviations change the future of writing?
- f) What are the dangers of using abbreviations?
- g) Do abbreviations show a degree of closeness between people?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. they might be less likely | a. sincerity |
| 2. gauge the impact | b. widely used |
| 3. participants had to rate their perceived | c. to receive replies |
| 4. They also evaluated their likelihood | d. informal sense of closeness |
| 5. Abbreviations signal a lower | e. of abbreviations |
| 6. social media comments have | f. of responding |
| 7. a distinct | g. perceptions about people |
| 8. largely understood and | h. genre of writing |
| 9. they would convey an | i. evolved |
| 10. abbreviations elicited negative | j. level of effort |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of abbreviations?
- How often do you abbreviate text in messages?
- Are there any abbreviations you love or hate?
- Do you think text with abbreviations is less sincere?
- Are you less likely to reply if someone uses abbreviations?
- How often do you send text messages?
- Do you prefer texting or writing?
- Should we discourage the use of abbreviations?

Spelling

- text messages might seem ierienscn
- nlaeyzad 5,000 text messages
- ugeag the impact
- rate their epcveirde sincerity
- their ollkodehij of responding
- senrieitcp less likely to write back
- social media comments have dovlvee
- a distinct neegr of writing
- a system of abebetrvdia text
- untecatdr terms like "fyi"
- yonvec an informal sense of closeness
- abbreviations tileeidc negative perceptions

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. j	4. a	5. h
6. c	7. e	8. i	9. b	10. f

Role Play

Role A – To-do Lists

You think to-do lists are the most important things we write. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): social media posts, essays or text messages.

Role B – Social Media Posts

You think social media posts are the most important things we write. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): to-do lists, essays or text messages.

Role C – Essays

You think essays are the most important things we write. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): social media posts, to-do lists or text messages.

Role D – Text Messages

You think text messages are the most important things we write. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): social media posts, essays or to-do lists.

Speaking – Writing

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important reasons for writing at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| • To-do lists | • Essays |
| • Letters | • Text messages |
| • Homework | • Internet searches |
| • Reports | • Social media posts |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	T	4	T	5	T	6	F	7	F	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.