

# Screenagers

*by*  
*Jim and Jane Jeffries*

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### **DEDICATION**

*Special thanks to Sue Maenner and the Augusta High School drama troupe for performing this work at the Wisconsin High School Forensics Association One-Act Festival in 2011.*

The Playwrights, Jim and Jane Jeffries  
*To God be the glory; to us be the blame*

### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

In this fast-paced, technology-saturated world, has communication really improved all that much? If you think about it, the term *cell phone* is ironic. What is supposed to keep us connected with other people is isolating us in a cell of technology. And in the world of teenagers, can one really survive *without* a computer or cell phone? From breaking up on Facebook, to in-class research, to real-time dating advice this play delves into the world of teens to see how they navigate with (or - gasp! - without) technology. *Screenagers* is a humorous look at how technology is shaping the way we socialize, communicate, and—hang on, I've got a call coming in.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(10 m, 9 w, 2 flexible)*

### **Male roles:**

**JAKE:** Likes the Shakespeare Insult Generator.

**KYLE:** Likes playing games on his calculator; studies Shakespeare via Wikipedia.

**ERICK:** In a relationship with Julie but dumps her on Facebook.

**MAX:** On a first date with Sara.

**JIM:** Cyrano to Max.

**SAM:** Plugged in to his technology a lot; late for class.

**MARK THE MUGGER:** A troubled teen.

**DAD:** Tyler's dad who thinks his son needs an intervention.

**TYLER:** Restricted from cell phone and Facebook—for a whole week!—for texting while driving.

**JOHN:** Likes Carly (we think) if he could get beyond the apps.

### **Female roles:**

**DANA:** The birthday girl.

**JULIE:** In a relationship with Erick; gets dumped on Facebook, and it doesn't go well.

**MOLLY:** Sydney's friend; likes texting the teacher her answers.

**SARA:** On a first date with Max.

**SYDNEY:** Cyrano to Sara.

**BRITA:** Lonely teenage girl who likes old movies.

**GRANDMOTHER:** A spunky old lady; Dana's grandmother.

**CARLY:** Likes John; thinks Cat Head Theatre will help her learn Shakespeare.

**BECKY:** Tyler's girlfriend (or "good friend," if his dad asks).

### **Flexible roles:**

**TEACHER:** A high school English teacher.

**WAITER:** A server at the fancy restaurant Le Bernadin.

*(DOUBLING: Dad may double as Mugger, Teacher or Waiter.  
Grandmother may double as Teacher.)*

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**SETTING:** Minimalist stage with modular blocks.

**PROPS:** Numerous cellphones, laptops, ipads, and other electronic devices, including earbuds, are needed for the teens. A big purse for Grandmother. Wrapped bandages for Tyler's hands. Paper and pen for Teacher. Order pad or towel over arm for Waiter. Menus. Purse for Sara.

## Scene 1

*(AT RISE: Stage is dark, and a cell phone starts ringing--the plainer the ringtone the better. Another cell phone rings while the first is still ringing. This one is a little crazier. Cell phones progress ringing in faster succession with increasingly crazy ringtones. LIGHTS come up. Some STUDENTS are on cubes or sitting working on laptops; others are walking around with headphones in; some are texting; some are talking on cell phones as they walk or sit. A boyfriend and girlfriend walk across the stage sharing ear buds; boy is significantly taller, so he bends down as they walk.)*

**SARA:** *(Walking and talking in her cell phone.)* So, can you make it tonight? I plan on coming late, but I'll be there. K. Just text me. *(Snaps or slides phone shut and moves on.)*

**MAX:** *(On cell phone, he holds it to his chest and talks to JAKE.)* Jake, you want to play Nazi Zombies with Evan?

**JAKE:** *(In the middle of texting, he doesn't look up.)* Yeah, fine.

**MAX:** What time do you want to meet?

**JAKE:** *(In the middle of texting, he doesn't look up.)* Yeah, fine.

**MAX:** *(Back on cell phone.)* He says nine. Okay, gotta go. I'll text you. Well, I'm out of here. Hey, Jake, see you at nine! *(Exits quickly.)*

**JAKE:** *(In the middle of texting, he doesn't look up.)* Yeah, fine.

*(ALL actors freeze; DANA looks up from her laptop and speaks to audience.)*

**DANA:** It's my birthday today! The big 16! Four birthday wishes on my wall so far. *(Looks down at laptop.)* Make that nine! I love this! Let me see if I got any response to my party e-vite for tonight. *(Exits reading her laptop.)*

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**ERICK:** *(Looks up from his laptop.)* Just updated my status. "In a relationship," and I tagged Julie in it. We're Facebook official. Like. *(Looks down at laptop.)* Nine people like it so far! *(Freezes.)*

**BRITA:** *(Looks up from her laptop.)* Looks like another day sitting at home watching old movies and making candles. Am I the only teenager who likes old movies? *(Sighs and talks to audience.)* Why doesn't anyone respond to my posts? *(Looks back to laptop and types.)* Anyone want to watch *The African Queen* and pour some hot wax?

*(ACTORS unfreeze and keep busy with technology.)*

**MOLLY:** Did you get your paper done for class?

**SYDNEY:** No, I may have to go home sick.

**MOLLY:** You feeling bad?

**SYDNEY:** Not yet.

*(CARLY, listening to cell phone with earpiece, crosses toward SL. MUGGER enters from SR as GRANDMOTHER enters from SL. Mugger tries to take Grandmother's purse; she fights back.)*

**GRANDMOTHER:** Someone help me!

**CARLY:** Hey, stop that!

*(MUGGER pauses and looks at CARLY.)*

**CARLY:** *(Cont'd.)* If you don't stop, I'll scream.

**GRANDMOTHER:** Oh, thank you, dearie!

**CARLY:** *(Gives GRANDMOTHER an exasperated look and points to her earpiece.)* Hello? Phone. *(Back to cell phone.)* Sorry. Some old lady interrupted. As I was saying ... *(Beat.)* What do you mean you have another call?

*(The MUGGER goes back to pulling the purse as the GRANDMOTHER fights. Grandmother starts beating Mugger with purse. CARLY crosses two steps SL, then stops in anger.)*

## **End of Freeview**

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