

Technology Necessary for Learning

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The United States is at a crucial turning point. As years roll by, the old industrial world in which America was founded on is left behind to be replaced by a technology-driven work place. Now, innovation and wit outperform where muscle and machine were the definition of job security; when the sweat off your back and a handshake were all you needed in life to prove your worth. In today's society, much more is required for success with an importance placed upon education in technology.

Learning and experiencing technology begins at an early age in America. Computers, television, and video games all become a normality growing up in our nation. Although the majority of Americans seem to appreciate the technological advances in science, medicine, education, and so forth, it is surprising to learn this is untrue. Many take for granted simple things such as an educational



system where children can learn for free and better themselves to better their community. Instead, would-be great students learn nothing more than how to kill zombies on level three. In 2002 alone, Nintendo invested more than 140 million dollars in research and development. The U.S. Federal Government spent less than half as much on research and innovation in education. Why are students more interested in video games than vital skills and potential job opportunities? It is because children are negatively exposed to a great futuristic power.

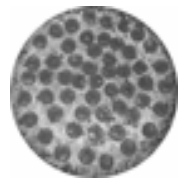
Throughout history, the evolution of tools has misled educators. In David Thomburg's book, *Edutrends 2010: Restructuring, Technology, and the Future of Education*, he gives specific citations concerning developments in educational tools. In 1907, the National Teacher's Association stated, "Students today depend too much on ink. They don't know how to use a pen knife to sharpen a pencil. Pen and ink will never replace the pencil." In 1941, the PTA Gazette declared, "Students today

depend on these expensive fountain pens. They can no longer write with a straight pen and nib. We parents must not allow them to wallow in such luxury to the detriment of learning how to cope in the real business world which is not so extravagant." Continuing to expect changes against the norm of society at its present, William Halal, professor emeritus at George Washington University and author of *Technology's Promise: Expert Knowledge on the Coming Transformation of Society*, predicts that "starting around the year 2018, we'll have optical computers that operate at the speed of light, sending thousands of message streams down a single channel." With a past that could not have been more wrong, the future looks bright for technology in education; if the instruments are to be allowed, that is.

As an alternative to completely outlawing "nuisance items," why not try setting up ground rules for such technology instead of the now teacher-vs.-student mentality. Most cell phones are made

with calendars and alarms that can aid with organizational skills. iPod's are portable hard drives with plenty of storage space for students' work. Both devices have internet access through wifi or applications within the software that could serve as search engines, email access, etc. There will always be that one student, though, to break the rules and ruin such readily available academic tools. To avoid this disruptive situation, involve the students rather than dismiss their opinions. Negotiation and compromise could go a long way with the student body in achieving respect, trust and sense of responsibility among all.

Students cannot perform without learning, teach without being taught, or plan without reviewing. Technological advancements, happening every second around the world, will provide future generations with better learning experiences. The only real problem is whether or not apathetic young generations will use the advancing technology that is at their disposal in beneficial ways.



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