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Abstract

Technology can be considered one of the greatest inventions of all time. It allows us to do things at record speed and obtain information from various sources in the matter of minutes. Technology allows us to be in contact not only easily, but now connected with hundreds of people. Though filled with pros, technology has many cons. Some may even say as the advancement of technology evolves, we as human beings regress. Before being consumed by technology such as cellular phones and computers I remember a time where things were done the "old fashion" way. School projects required several trips to the public library. Pen and paper was the modern day iPad, and communicating with someone far away was not as easy or quick, as it is now. As much as I love technology, I am glad to have grown up during a time where I was able to enjoy and appreciate the value of literacy. I appreciate the hands-on experiences that seem to be slowly stripping away and turning into virtual hands-on experiences.

My parents immigrated to the United States in hopes of a better future for themselves and their children. Though aware of the challenges they faced, it was quite difficult living in New York City mainly because they were unable to speak English. Learning English, for them was a necessity and they had to learn. Finally, my parents learned how to speak, read, and write in English. This was not an easy task, during this learning experience my parents understood the importance of literacy, and language, and they did their best to ensure my siblings and I understood the importance as well. When I was a child I had a vivid imagination, I would create stories with almost anything I came across. Unable to write yet, my mother always handed me paper and crayons so I can draw the colorful stories that came to mind. Finally, at the age of 7 years old, I began to read and write.

Although my reading skills weren’t too good, the idea and thought of reading was really exciting. I began reading everything I came across, juice labels, snacks in the supermarket, and the signs on the streets. Reading was not the only task that perked my interest, but also writing. I was so excited when I was learning to write, because I was now able to write actual stories for all the stories I created. I was excited about writing, however I was mesmerized when I saw my older sister writing in script, and I began imitating and creating my own version of script until I finally learned how to correctly write in cursive.

As I got older, I realized reading and writing became somewhat of a talent show. The way you read or write determined many things about a person. For instance, if you were in school, you were expected to read at grade level. Your teacher would call on you to read out loud in class. During these moments, one would put all their efforts forward so they won't make a mistake. Unable to properly read aloud would result in snickers and laughs by the other students in class. Some students were able to read out loud with no hesitation and other students weren’t too enthusiastic about reading in front of the classroom. Reading in your room, alone, was extremely different than reading aloud in the presence of other people. In one scenario you had the ability to read at your own pace alone with no one judging you on your competence level, and the other, you are in a room of other people listening and waiting for your mistake.

My mother had the concept that television wasn’t the most effective way for a child to learn or express their creativity. She would always bring me to the library and request a book report after every book I’d read. Although my parents weren’t big fans on television, they were key on education. Television played a minor role in my life; every day before school my mom would allow me to watch PBS kids, which was considered the “educational channel” for children of young age. This tool helped me learn to read and write the alphabet due to the pictures, colors, and animation that was going on.

Growing up there were many technological gadgets that were popular. Game consoles such as PlayStation, Xbox and Gameboys were in high demands. These gadgets were advertised everywhere. Every child wanted either a game console or a handheld, they would’ve done anything to receive a gadget. If I wanted a Gameboy I would’ve had to do well in school to receive this technological gift. Due to the fact that many of my peers had recent consoles and I didn’t, it made everything seem as I was the only person living in the stone-age with my old device. I would constantly ask my mom for a new gadget.

There are some funny things on technology that I’ve come across. Technology is always changing, corporation are always bringing out new gadget out every year to force customers into buying phones, games, or even cars. One example especially, would be the iPhone, made by Apple. I won’t disagree that Apple makes one of the greatest devices but they are constantly changing their phone every year.

Technology is becoming so demanding that Apple has the ability to control your phone forcing you to get the latest IPhone. For example, customers who had the iPhone 4 or 5 would soon be force to get the latest iPhone because Apple releases a software update, which enables you to update your iPhone. If you do not update your phones there’s a chance all your apps would not be able to work. We have come to the realization that technology is ruling our world as well as social media.

Everyone wants to be up to date; where ever you go people has Facebook, Snap Chat, Instagram and more. One of the first social media I signed up with was Sconex. This site was made for high school students and you would be able to befriend another student from other high schools. Social media controls everything we do and it consumes us as human beings. We don’t communicate intellectually and effectively anymore. While I was at work, I met an executive banker who was fed up with his IPhone and decided to downgrade to an old Nokia phone. I asked him why he would leave his iPhone for an out-of-date Nokia phone. His response came to no surprise to me. He explained, he was tired of the constant attachment he had to his smartphone. He was constantly in contact with people, checking emails, and on the Internet. He said he felt chained to his phone. He also disclosed that the interns at his branch are incompetent. They do not know how to effectively communicate or write with a degree of sophistication. He was fed up with reading sentences and words that made no sense to him.

Technology, which is embedded into our everyday lives is becoming almost impossible to get away from. Living in such advanced times; literacy has not lost its value. We are expected to know how to read, write, and speak correctly. Though we have technology capable of writing everything that we say, to actually know how to competently read and write is still valued in society. I, like my parents would like to pass on the art of drawing on paper with a box full of crayons to my children. I would like their hands to get dirty with their art, rather than printing out a picture they did on their devices. That maybe a fleeting hope, and may never happen, however I will still reveal the importance of literacy, and that can be thought through the use of technology.