

Practice Preparation Document

Enriched English as a Second Language – Content of a Feature Article

The following pages include quotations, dates, statistics, some excerpts of science papers, and a complete article.

The official preparation document from the Ministry of Education will be longer than this one. Make sure to plan your time accordingly.

Use the guiding question to orient your preparation as you read and annotate.



Guiding Question

Is technology helping us become a better society?

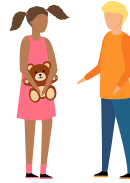




Famous quotes on technology

"Technology is anything that wasn't around when you were born."

– Alan Kay



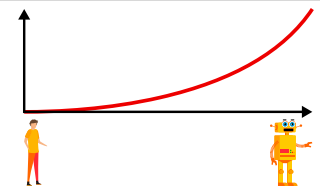
"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

–Arthur C. Clarke



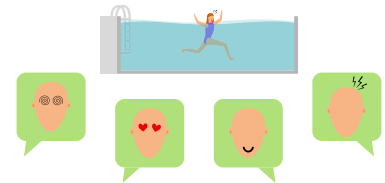
"It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity"

– Albert Einstein



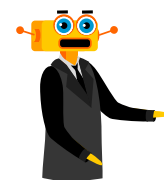
"The great myth of our times is that technology is communication."

– Libby Larsen



"The real danger is not that computers will begin to think like men, but that men will begin to think like computers."

–Sydney Harris



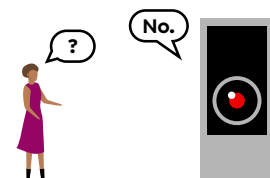
"Technology made large populations possible; large populations now make technology indispensable."

– Joseph Krutch



"If we continue to develop our technology without wisdom or prudence, our servant may prove to be our executioner."

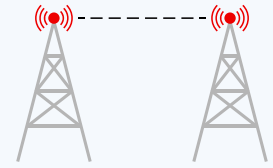
–Omar Bradley



Technology Timeline

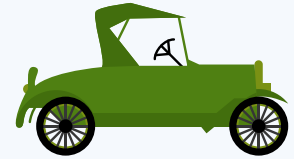
1901

First radio transmissions received by Guglielmo Marconi across the Atlantic Ocean.



1908

Henry Ford's Ford T is first sold. Opening the way to mass-produced cars.



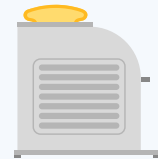
1913

The modern zipper brought new opportunity for fashion designers.



1919

The Pop Up Toaster changed the way we see our breakfasts.



1928

Penicillin is discovered by Alexander Flemming and gave doctors a way to battle simple infections that usually led to deaths.



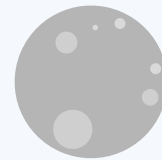
1946

The microwave oven is invented by Percy Spencer bringing faster cooking options.



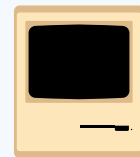
1969

Apollo 11 Moon landing paved the way to more space exploration programs.



1984

Apple releases the Macintosh giving us an easier approach to computing.



1995

Ebay and Amazon are launched, paving the way for online marketplaces.



2005

Google Maps is helping millions of people not get lost anymore.



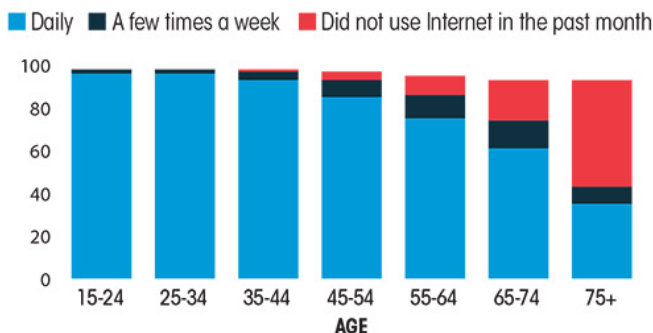
THE INTERNET AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY



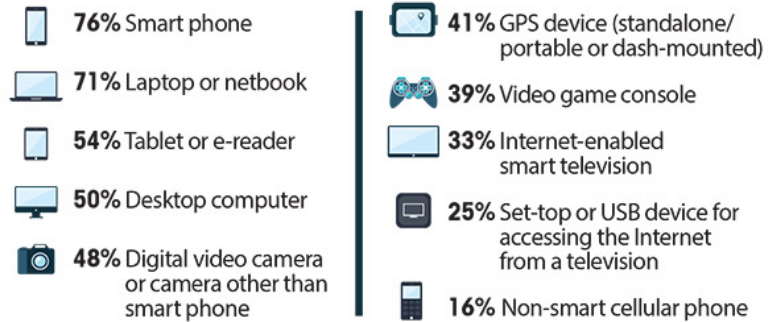
How do Canadians perceive technology?



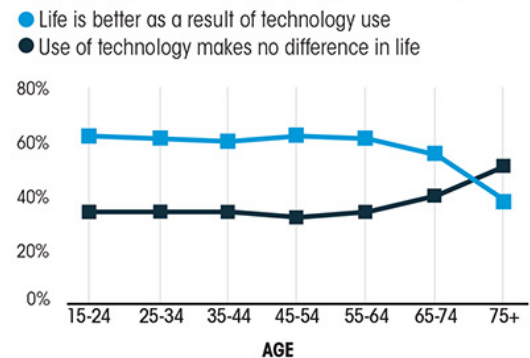
Nearly all Canadians under the age of 45 use the Internet every day.



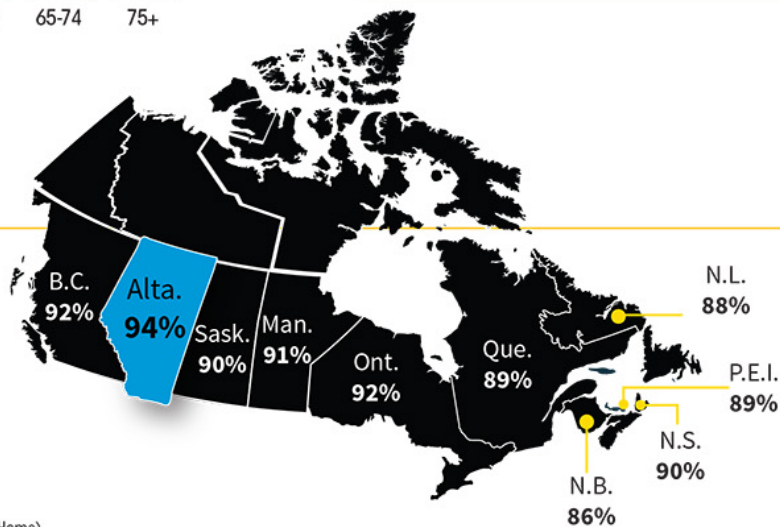
Top 10 devices owned.



Is life better because of technology?



Alberta has the highest percentage of Internet users.



Source: 2016 General Social Survey (Canadians at Work and Home).



Statistics Canada
Statistique Canada

www.statcan.gc.ca

Canada

Is Society Moving in the Right Direction With Technology Rapidly Taking Over The World?¹

Andrea Loubier

Mailbird's Co-founder and Advisor

Jun 1, 2021, 08:41 am EDT

Over the last centuries, society witnessed technological advancements gradually making everyday lives easier, more convenient, and – well, more interesting. In the 21st century, however, technology made a true quantum leap, with augmented reality, blockchain, artificial intelligence, and 3D printing being just a few examples of the most recent inventions.

Though we are getting used to advancements of any kind, is the development of technology really good for society?

Some Areas in Which Technology Has Changed Our Lives

Advancements in technology have already tapped into every area of life, with its impact particularly notable in these segments:

Lifestyle

From working remotely to ordering food delivery or booking a hotel room online, most people now rely on the Internet as an irreplaceable part of their lives. Advancements in technology have completely re-shaped the everyday routine of a Modern Human.

Health

Telehealth, EHR, 3D medical imaging, smart wearable devices that track heart rate and blood oxygen level are just a few examples of technological advancements introduced in health care over the last few decades.

Privacy

In the digital world, privacy is more important than ever. While the rates of cybercrimes increase, which by the way is also a recent tech innovation, such advancements as cryptography and antivirus software strike a blow, saving users' privacy online.

The Attitude of the Youth

A huge part of the modern generation literally can not imagine their lives without technology: they use smart devices at home and school, google anything they want to know, wear smartwatches, have video calls, and own robots and self-driving cars.

¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrealoubier/2021/06/01/is-society-moving-in-the-right-direction-with-technology-rapidly-taking-over-the-world/?sh=4f01b4497c09>

Business

Such innovations as cloud computing, Big Data, Data Science, AI/ML completely reshaped the modern business landscape. The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated digital transformations, prompting most businesses to switch to remote mode.

“[...] it’s easy to become desensitized to the importance of innovations and advancements for the overall progress of society.”

Human Behaviour

With the mass adoption of mobile smart devices, people virtualized most of their day-to-day tasks. There is a dedicated mobile app for everything: booking a ride, tracking eating and sleeping habits, and even checking how we’ll look when we get old.

It is indisputable that thanks to technology, we get a chance to live a life our predecessors could not even dream about. But do all tech advancements improve our lives? Or, maybe, the impact of tech innovations is quite ambiguous.

Positive Impact of Technology

When all areas of human activity get rapidly digitized, it’s easy to become desensitized to the importance of innovations and advancements for the overall progress of society. But technology helps us immensely, for instance:

Now that the agricultural processes are mechanized and automated, farmers may grow and harvest more crops.

With advancements in transportation, people can travel long distances with speed and comfort – by air, land, or water.

Communication, enriched with online channels, video calling, and 5G technologies, has reached new heights, connecting people from all corners of the globe.

Radio, television, electronic media are indispensable means of news and information for people in any country worldwide.

Education has recently become more accessible to all people, irrespective of their geographical location, thanks to modern technological advancements, such as online classrooms, electronic curricula, digital learning management systems among others.

For instance, you can make use of productivity and time-tracking apps available for smartphones or PCs when feeling a lack of concentration or self-discipline. Similarly, if you are concerned with your health and lifestyle, you can choose from a wide range of wearable devices and fitness apps.

Most of the digital tools can be downloaded free of charge, which makes it even easier to use them.

Negative Impact of Technology

On the downside, some technological developments prove to be a curse rather than a blessing. Here are a few examples:

Excessive use of gadgets, lack of offline communication, and social media abuse were proven to cause negative effects on mental health.

In online communication, people are often hog-tied to express non-verbal cues, which results in misunderstandings and offenses.

Relationships of those people who spend more time communicating online, compared to offline, may become tense and more fragile over time.

Younger people, more prone to digital world addictions, sometimes lose the skills and desire to communicate with their peers face-to-face, in the real world.

Video-gaming addicts often do not leave their homes for weeks and lead sedentary lifestyles, which eventually ruin their health.

Teenagers spend too much time scrolling through Instagram and TikTok feeds bringing severe mental health problems to them as they tend to compare themselves to the dummy perfect images of others they see online.

How to Reduce Negative Effects of Technology

Excessive use of technology can do more harm than good, and we should bear this in mind before we rush into digitizing our lives.

It is important to monitor the use of tech in every aspect of daily routine and, while it is not too late, limit the time spent in front of the smartphone screen.

Also, it's a good idea to use all-in-one apps to manage a complex of tasks (e.g., having all your email accounts and messengers integrated in one place) rather than switching between a dozen of smaller apps for each activity.

As an alternative to playing a video game or scrolling through social media, find a paper book that would interest you and spend time outdoors regularly. Instead of watching another Netflix episode in front of a TV set, talk to your family or take up gardening.

Spending more time outdoors, without electronic devices, promotes life-work balance and is generally good for a healthy lifestyle.

Technological Advancements of The Modern Day

Though it may be tough to predict which advancements technology would bring next, some innovations are already changing our beliefs about the world around us.

For instance, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). Something that people would have considered magic just a few decades ago is now gaining popularity in business, gaming, and team building.

Wearable screens and gesture-based computing, other recent innovations, are predicted to soon substitute the usual PC and phone screens.

Robots, another buzzword in today's business world, have already replaced humans in some workplaces – robotic arms work at assembly or packing lines. Flying cars will soon address the issue of limited ground space and long traffic jams.

Well, people of Earth are even projected to use technological innovations to colonize other planets in the foreseeable future. The sky is no longer the limit!

Conclusion

Technology improves all aspects of human lives, making them easier and diverse. Though technological advancements are generally seen as a positive change, some people perceive them in a negative light.

Overindulgence in the use of digital apps and smart devices, overreliance on online tools may sometimes lead to tragic effects. Yet, if technological developments are used wisely, they bring nothing but good to society.

Clearly, technology by itself is neither good nor bad. It is only the way and extent to which we use it that matters.

Andrea Loubier

Modern technology is transforming the experience of growing up of adolescents. It brings the good and bad to the adolescents. At its best as conclusively remarked by Honey (2005), technology can facilitate deep exploration and integration of information, high-level thinking and profound engagement by allowing students to design, explore, experiment, access information and model complex phenomenon. [...] Using media as both a source of information and a means of communication are an integral part of curricula in many developing countries. Competence in technology usage is therefore key to adolescents' academic achievement in schools. With ever-expanding technology, there is an unprecedented need to understand the recipe for success, which involves the learner, the teacher, the content and the environment in which technology is used.

Excerpt from author Magwa Simuforosa in the *International Journal of Education and Research* Vol. 1 No. 9 September 2013

The pandemic has heightened our self-awareness of inequity through its disproportionate impact on individuals and disenfranchised communities. While research exists on how digital access can improve life chances, the pandemic has thrown social inclusion in sharp relief. Future research now has a discontinuity to study the distributional consequences of innovation and the adoption of new technologies: who benefits from innovation? Who is excluded from wealth creation, and what are its implications for wellbeing? The pandemic may have provided a fillip to businesses pursuing sustainable outcomes. Breathable air, cleaner oceans, and stories of wildlife reclaiming areas fallen to human habitation during Covid lockdown have sensitized our collective conscience to the need for innovations in technologies and business models to combat climate change and promote sustainable development (George et al., 2020). As we examine the effects of the pandemic, we need to be aware that its effects on populations are not the same.

Excerpt from authors Gerard George, Karim R. Lakhani and Phanish Puranam for the Singapore Management University; Harvard University; and INSEAD in the *Journal of Management Studies* 57:8 December 2020