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Back to the Future

Technology has been a big factor in our generation, Gen Z, affecting us in a beneficial way but also in negative ways. There are many different opinions about whether technology is improving us or making things worse. Two authors I've read, journalist Nicolas Carr and editor and writer Kevin Kelly, offer their point of views on this topic. In his essay "*Is Google Making Us Stupid?*" Carr argues that technology, especially the internet, is messing with our ability to focus and think deeply. Meanwhile, Kevin Kelly takes a more optimistic approach in "*Technophilia*", claiming that technology's impact on us is just part of who we are. I tend to agree with Kelly because I've grown up with all this technology around me and it has played a big role in my life, allowing me to stay connected with today's world. That has made me become more reliant on the use of technology.

Carr doesn't hold back in expressing his concern about the effects of technology, especially the internet. Carr thinks that with all the information we can access so quickly, we've lost the ability to really focus on anything for long periods of time. Instead of reading deeply or engaging in critical thinking, we're skimming through text and jumping from one thing to the next. He quotes, "The ability to interpret text, to make the rich mental connections that form when we read deeply," is slipping away (CITE). When I read that, it really hit me, especially after hearing my classmate Noah's perspective. He also agrees with Carr's concerns, pointing out that the

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more information we have access to, the less effort we put into understanding it. Instead of taking the time to focus on processing the information we're distracted by our phones and social media. Noah also mentioned how this constant switching between tasks is making it harder to focus for long periods of time, something Carr would definitely agree with.

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Kelly's view on technology is a little different. He believes that our deep attachment to technology isn't a bad thing. In "*Technophilia*", he talks about how humans and the tools that they have around them grow together. He believes technology is a tool that has become more integrated into our lives, it helps us become better, faster, and more efficient. Kelly's argument is that this connection to technology isn't something to be afraid of, it's just a part of who we are becoming. My other classmate Nick takes this a little more cautiously. He relates to Kelly's point about how deeply connected we are to our devices, he uses the example of when we lose or misplace our phones how crazy we go for those few minutes. He compares it to losing a limb, which Kelly mentions in his article. But while Kelly sees this as a sign of technology's natural place in our lives, Nick is more aware of the potential downsides. He talks about how when he loses his phone it almost feels like something's missing in his life. When we realize how much we rely on them for almost everything, the constant attachment to our phones, he points out, can be a bit unsettling.

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The way Nick talks about how attached he is to his phone really brings Kelly's idea to life that technology isn't just something we use anymore, it's becoming part of us. It's almost like our phones have turned into an extension of who we are, and when they're suddenly not there, it feels like something's missing like a piece of us got taken away. Kelly would say that this attachment is inevitable; it's simply the way we are evolving. However, Nick brings up a valid concern here that our growing dependence on technology can sometimes lead to a mix of

emotions when we are separated from it. We're so connected with our devices that we forget we're more than just the things we own.

But I think Noah is right, pointing out not just the benefit of technology but also the downside of all this. He brings up a really important point: our constant dependence on technology, especially the way we expect instant answers, is slowly chipping away at our ability to think critically. We don't really dig into things the way we used to. Instead, we settle for quick, surface-level info and move on, which is exactly the kind of thing Carr is worried about. The ability to focus and really understand what we're learning is slipping away, and Noah also recognizes that in his own experiences.

Something both Carr and Kelly bring up is how technology messes with our ability to really focus. Carr, in particular, pushes the idea that multitasking isn't even real; we're not actually doing a bunch of things at once, we're just jumping back and forth between tasks, which totally messes with our concentration. That really jumped out for me when I read what Nick shared. He talked about how trying to juggle too much like texting while driving or working with a bunch of distractions just throws him off. It makes it hard to think clearly in the moment, and it leaves him feeling like he's all over the place. For Carr, this is the result of living in a world where we're constantly being hammered with information, and our brains just can't keep up. Kelly, on the other hand, thinks that technology actually makes multitasking easier. He believes that it's a trait to have the ability to be able to handle multiple tasks at once, and technology just helps us do it more effectively and efficiently. He sees it as a tool that can enhance our abilities. While I think Kelly is onto something in terms of how technology can help us keep updated with the speed of the world, I agree with Nick and Noah that the constant distractions caused by technology can make it hard to stay focused.

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Both Carr and Kelly raise important points about where all this technology is taking us. Carr's pretty concerned that if we keep leaning on technology for everything, we could end up losing some of the qualities that make us human like deep thinking and real, meaningful connection with others. Kelly, on the other hand, has a more hopeful outlook. He sees the potential, but even he admits we need to slow down sometimes and really think about what we're creating, and whether we're ready for the consequences that might come with it. For Noah and Nick the growth we have with technology is something for us to pay attention to. Because while they both recognize the benefits of technology like staying connected with others and accessing information quickly, they're also aware of the downside that comes with it. Nick summed it up well when he pointed out that technology can make us feel empty or disconnected when it's taken away, and Noah sees firsthand how it's hurting our ability to focus and engage deeply with what's in front of us.

Reading Carr and Kelly's article while looking at Noah and Nick's point of view on the topic made me realize just how complicated our relationship with technology is. Carr and Kelly offer different views on whether technology is making us better or worse, but both make valid points about the impact technology is having on our minds, behaviors, and lives. Noah and Nick really bring some eye-opening perspectives from their own lives. Through their stories, it's clear how much technology shapes the way we focus, interact with people, and even how we feel about ourselves. It's not just a tool anymore it's starting to feel like a part of who we are. And that's what makes this all so complicated. The real challenge now is figuring out how to use technology in a way that helps us, without letting it take over the parts of us that matter most, our ability to think for ourselves, to learn deeply, and to truly connect with each other.

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Commented [15]: This is a good start. you make some good points throughout, but it can get confusing when you are using four different sources. I noticed you were summarizing the points that the writers were making rather than directly quoting them. over all its pretty good just try to focus on one author that we were introduced to in class.

Work cited

Carr, N. (2017). Is Google making us stupid? *The Best Technology Writing 2009*.

Kelly, K. (n.d.). *Technophilia* 2014.