

Who is afraid of technology?

It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity. ~Albert Einstein

One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man. ~Elbert Hubbard

The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom. ~Isaac Asimov

Technology is the making, usage, and knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems or methods of organization in order to solve a problem or perform a specific function. It can also refer to the collection of such tools, machinery, and procedures. The term can either be applied generally or to specific areas: examples include construction technology, medical technology, and information technology.

Technologies significantly affect human as well as other animal species' ability to control and adapt to their natural environments. The human species' use of technology began with the conversion of natural resources into simple tools. The prehistorical discovery of the ability to control fire increased the available sources of food and the invention of the wheel helped humans in travelling in and controlling their environment. Recent technological developments, including the printing press, the telephone, and the Internet, have lessened physical barriers to communication and allowed humans to interact freely on a global scale. However, not all technology has been used for peaceful purposes; the development of weapons of ever-increasing destructive power has progressed throughout history, from clubs to nuclear weapons.

Philosophical debates have arisen over the present and future use of technology in society, with disagreements over whether technology improves the human condition or worsens it. Neo-Luddism, anarcho-primitivism, and similar movements criticise the pervasiveness of technology in the modern world, opining that it harms the environment and alienates people; proponents of ideologies such as transhumanism and techno-progressivism view continued technological progress as beneficial to society and the human condition.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Today information technology is part of our life.

We find computers everywhere, at the work place as well as in our personal lives. We are living an industrial revolution, an economic change and a social transformation due to technology.

One of the most positive aspects of it is "knowledge": Internet is an educational instrument which gives access to different kinds of useful information and improves our knowledge. Internet gives us the possibility to communicate with other people, make friends, learn different cultures and experiences.

There are also practical advantages: shopping, paying bills, booking flights, controlling accounts, etc.

Let's not forget entertainment! Through computer we can choose and listen to different kinds of music, play videogames, watch films, fashion, etc.

Unfortunately, we cannot disregard negative aspects of information technology: first of all there are people who cannot afford a personal computer or Internet and e-mail; moreover, some people "abuse" technology and completely isolate themselves, thus confusing fantasy and reality (especially children with

videogames). Such computer addiction causes a lot of social and relationship problems: people cannot communicate “face to face” anymore. Another negative aspect is criminal acts through Internet: dangerous people use Internet to meet and capture their victims (especially children and young people) and ask for a date with bad consequences.

Finally, the health aspect should be regarded: there are possible risks of exposure to electromagnetic radiations from the computer’s monitor (reported symptoms include headaches, anxiety, depression, nausea and fatigue).

A1. The term ‘technology’ refers to ...

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) tools and machines that may be used to solve real-world problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) a collection of techniques, machines and methods | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) artefacts created by humans and the methods used to create those artefacts | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) the application of knowledge for practical purposes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A2. Technology, over the years, ...

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) has improved men’s control over nature | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) has improved communication | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) has reduced men’s ability to communicate | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) has increased men’s destructive power | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A3. Today ...

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|---|--------------------------|
| A) there are people discussing positive and negative aspects of technology | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) everyone believes that technology has negative effects on society | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) everyone believes that technology has positive effects on society | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) everyone believes that technological progress improves the human condition | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A4. Information technology is ...

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) a specific area concerned with technology | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) all of computing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) out of our life | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) of one the main reasons for economic and social changes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A5. Why does information technology produce knowledge?

T F

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) Because Internet is a great source of information | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) Because Internet gives access to all kinds of information | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) Because, through Internet, we can communicate with other people | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) Because Internet is an informative instrument | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A6. Unfortunately, information technology causes ... T

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) isolation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) loss of sense of reality | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) addiction | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) social problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A7. Being on the computer for too long can cause ...

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|----------------|--------------------------|
| A) tension | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) tranquility | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) relief | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) calmness | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A8. What is the purpose of the text?

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|--|--------------------------|
| A) To encourage people to buy computers | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) To encourage people to reflect upon positive and negative aspects of technology | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) To encourage people to disregard technology | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) To inform people about techno-progressivism theories | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A9. What is 'It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity'?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) It's an essay by Einstein | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) It's an article by Einstein | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) It's a quotation by Einstein | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) It's a work by Einstein | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A10. What does 'The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom' mean?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| A) People are wise | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) We live in a society based on knowledge rather than wisdom | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) Our life is very sad | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) We live in a society based on wisdom rather than knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A11. What is technology?

A12. Have recent technological developments improved communication?

A13. What are the positive aspects of ICT?

A14. What are the negative aspects of ICT?

A15. Do you believe that technology improves human communication? Why?

