

The 'toxic' Web generation: Children spend six hours a day in front of screens

Laura Clark, Mail Online | Friday, January 23, 2009



Youngsters are shunning books and outdoor games to spend up to six hours a day in front of a screen, a survey has revealed. Children as young as five are turning their bedrooms into multi-media 'hubs' with TVs, computers, games consoles, MP3 players and mobile phones all within easy reach.

The trend triggered warnings that the next generation will struggle to compete in the adult world because they lack reading and writing skills. At the same time their mastery of technology is not widely appreciated by their parents.

The market research involving 1,800 children aged five to 16 found that they spend an average of 2.7 hours a day watching TV, 1.5 on the internet and 1.3 playing on games consoles, although in some cases these activities are simultaneous, such as watching TV while playing on a console. In contrast, youngsters spend just over half an hour reading books, according to the survey by ChildWise.

Almost a third take a games console to bed rather than a book, while a quarter never read in their own time. And instead of kicking a football around, more than a quarter of boys regularly meet in an online games 'environment' where they discuss tactics and technical problems.

Parents justified internet access on the grounds that it would help with homework but the survey found education had become an 'afterthought', with only 9 per cent of youngsters looking up information for schoolwork the last time they went online. In contrast, 34 per cent played games, 32 per cent used instant messaging, 31 per cent visited a social networking site and 28 per cent watched video clips on sites such as YouTube. More than half of children now have their own PC or laptop and a third say their computer is the single piece of equipment they could least live without, compared with a declining number - one in five - who name TV.

A report on the findings from ChildWise concluded that many youngsters were 'leaving traditional books behind' but were caught in a 'communications trap'. It said: 'Their online abilities often exceed those of their parents' generation, but this is not necessarily recognized or valued. 'Their conventional reading and writing skills are frequently criticized and their limited experience and expertise in this area makes it harder for them to compete in an adult-dominated world.' Rosemary Duff, research director of ChildWise, said: 'They are a generation abandoning print and paper.'

1. In appropriate paragraph form, provide a brief synopsis of the rather enlightening findings from ChildWise. In your personal opinion, how may parents tactfully combat the ever-growing concern with the amount of time their children continue to invest on assorted multi-media technology. Create a Venn Diagram where you will compare and contrast the pros and cons in regards to the results reported in the study conducted by ChildWise. Explain your answers.
(GPS – Grades 6 – 8: MRC a, d)
2. Use the concepts of ratio, proportion, and scale factor to demonstrate the relationships between similar plane figures which possess the same shape, but not necessarily the same size for the following: a 32 gb iPod Touch with a height of 4.3 inches and a width of 2.4 inches to an Apple computer monitor containing a width of 23.1 inches and an unknown height (h). Design and solve a proportion to find the monitor's height. Identify the scale factor for these two similar rectangular figures. Illustrate each of the two figures, communicate your thoughts mathematically and thoroughly explain how you arrived at your conclusion. **(GPS - Grade 6: M6P1 – M6P5; MRC; M6G1 c)**
3. Use representations to model and interpret physical, social, and mathematics phenomena via sketching, modeling, and describing cross sections of cylinders for the following questions: A cylinder-shaped iPod docking station is strategically cut by an iPhone to form a cross section shaped like an ellipse. How could the plane that formed the cross-section have cut the cylinder? Acceptable responses may include parallel or perpendicular to a base, etc.
(GPS Grade 7: M7P1 – M7P5; MRC; M7G4 b)
4. Probability (P) is a way to measure the chance that a particular event will occur. Find the probability of the following simple independent events: a) the number of kids who take a games console to bed rather than a book and those who never read in their own time; b) the number of boys who regularly meet in an online games environment' where they discuss tactics and technical problems and youngsters looking up information for schoolwork the last time they went online. Express each solution as a fraction, decimal, and percentage.
(GPS Grade 8: M8P4 a - c; M8D3 a, b)
5. Upon completion of this assignment, how far have we progressed through the 2008-09 series of *The Daughtry Times*? Express your answer interchangeably as a fraction, decimal, percentage, and circle graph.
(GPS – Grade 6: M6N1 f, g; M6D1c; Grade 7: M7D1 f)
6. Using contextual clues only, define the following italicized words: *tactics*, *expertise*, *console*, *shunning*, and *simultaneous* obtained from the passage above. Additionally, use each word in a complete sentence to demonstrate further comprehension. **(GPS – Grades 6 –8: MRC a, c, d)**

Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) adapted from georgiastandards.org. Standards specifically addressed in this edition are strategically aligned with the curriculum map and annotated adjacent to the respective grade level inquiry.

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