

Teaching kids to think, not regurgitate

[Education](#), [Teaching](#)



As moral values, perceptions, taboos, and lifestyles evolve with each generation, an opposing interruption in human social interaction has cunningly begun paralyzing the generation of youths under the guise of revolutionary technology. Though our interactive reach impressively spans worldly distances and communicative access across oceans has been reduced to milliseconds, children's potential wisdom and cultivated neural pathways face handicaps with the negative polarities of technology among other modern obstacles like standardized testing and budget cuts to education.

In a world where identities increasingly rely on the content of individual feeds, quantities of thumbs up and heart icons and meme relevance, overexposure to social media stimulation shows symptoms similar to the receptiveness to fake news, useless information and a deceptive standard of lifestyle, beauty, and perceived happiness. Though the benefits of this social evolution have deservedly been recognized for moving mountains in various causes for humanity and rights, the weight of its detriment to thinking and reasoning amongst today's youth must not go unnoticed. Regurgitation of polluted feeds over books, educators, and real news is a pest in the present, but potentially a devastating dilemma in the future. As if the distractions of swiping and staring at screens were not menacing enough, the waning quality of public education correlates with diminished funding and governmental attention. Curriculums rely largely on memory regurgitation that hardly scratches at the surface of learning potential in a young developing brain. Returns on teaching investments rely on scoring multiple choice answers, fill-in-the-blank dittos, and paraphrased classroom

reminiscence. That 'intellect' is fleeting and unless accompanied by a critical thinking or problem-solving attribute becomes filed away in the mind's archive of short-term memory to be overridden by years of continuous momentary information. Regurgitation of education has survived through the decades and even produced successful individuals that managed to cement such intellect with the combination of critical thinking, human engagement, and if they were spiritually wealthy, the aspect of mindfulness. As technology dominates schools, child care centers, and households, the necessary human engagement factor fades. Society then potentially faces the threat of a sort of biological robot population lacking in the passion, presence, ethos, love, and emotional intelligence necessary to thrust the species forward in the social evolutionary scale for generations to come, regardless of the growing technological behemoth. The modern challenge for parents, educators, and those with influential roles amongst children is to teach children to think, not regurgitate and to be present and mindful, not drown in digitalism. They must stimulate new pathways in the brain, not just drill repetitive patterns. Technology should serve as a tool, not a nanny. Drills should serve to teach discipline and if used in education or upbringing be combined with building blocks necessary to naturally promote thinking skills and the capacity for reasoning, resourcefulness, comprehension, and servitude. In an age where the trickle of technology has already tainted parents of today's children with the allure of social media and on-demand television series and subscriptions, the first step comes in the form of self-acceptance and recognition of one's own contribution to the problem. Children have natural tendencies to follow in the footsteps of their

parents, role models, and influencers. If their paths are lit with beacons of blue light, scores of remote controls, endless lists of Snapchat, Instagram, and Twitter handles, their foundations are weakly rooted in the invisible Cloud, vulnerable to the villainy of hacks, power outages, defaulted subscription accounts, and cyber bullies. How then, would they survive the darkness?

The primitive survival and social concepts should be embedded in daily reminders, even if just demonstrated in a modernized form: tending a garden to produce the ingredients necessary for cooking a side dish to be a part of nature's life cycle; chopping wood to build a fire in the fireplace for heat in the winter; volunteering at a local shelter for a first-hand look at suffering to stimulate the inner humanitarian spirit; balancing books with screens, instruments with headphones, conversations with comments, and sunshine with subscriptions for nurturing the mind and body; and identifying all aspects of technological conveniences and slashing that by half for the sake of grounding the family in reality, rather than holograms of 1s and 0s. These actions will help skyrocket the critical thinking likelihood by trading real experiences with the watered-down stimulation of the digital stage. Rather than share, retweet, type, and hunch over a tablet or cell phone in self-imposed regurgitation drills - shift the lifestyles to invoke the senses and stretch out the neural branches to bear actual fruits of knowledge and mental stability necessary to propel the species to evolutionary potency.