Tablets vs. textbooks

During the 21st century, humans have developed the scientific technologies more rapidly than ever before. And the way of their lives is also changing according to the change of new technologies. Nowadays, we can easily see the people who are holding tablets with their hands around our place. A tablet is simply a mobile computer that is small, portable, and easy to use with just two fingers. Since it has been recognized for its usefulness and utility, many students study and do their homework with tablets. As tablets have become more prevalent, a new debate has formed over whether schools should replace print textbooks by tablets.

In fact, many schools and states have begun transitioning from the paper textbooks to digital learning environments, " California launched a free digital textbooks initiative in 2009, and West Virginia replaced social studies print textbook purchases with digital textbooks" (FCC). However, there are some people who disagree with the idea of using tablets in school. The opponent of tablets' argument is that tablets can have a bad influence on student'seducationin a way that it can distract student's attention and contribute to an eye strain. I would argue that the positive aspects of using tablets in school outweigh the negative.

The recent research has shown that tablets help students learn more materials faster, " Technology-based instruction can reduce the time students take to reach a learning objective by 30-80%, according to the US Department of Education and studies by the National Training" (FCC 9). Actually, tablets can provide various methods of studying which are very distinguishable from paper textbooks. It is possible for tablets to explain the concepts with such as sound and video clips. Not only do these functions

make studying interesting, but it would really help students improve their learning abilities.

In my experience, I also had more fun when I was studying with a tablet. Rather than just reading printed texts, variety of contents a tablet provides helped me understand the concepts more easily and interestingly. Also, tablets can hold thousands of books on one device. Usually, when we are using paper textbooks, the books actually take up much space of our place. However, if we are using tablets, we can eliminate the need for physical storage of textbooks and classroom materials. It is known that " The average tablet contains anywhere from 8 to 64 gigabytes (GB)

of storage space. On the Amazon Kindle Fire, for instance, 1, 000 books take up one GB of space" (Price), which implies that people don't need to go to the library every time when they need a book to borrow. Since they can find and read almost every book they need on one device, it can reduce the waste of time finding the books and help students concentrate on their studies. Furthermore, there is one another important aspect of the fact that tablets can hold thousands of books, which is that it can eliminate the need for carrying heavy print textbooks.

Up until now, students carry lots of heavy textbooks in their backpacks when they go to school. Not only does it make them feel tired, but it could actually cause injuries. According to the US Consumer Product Safety Commission, it was recorded that " during the 2011-12 school year more than 13, 700 kids, aged 5 to 18, were treated for backpack-related injuries" (Dallas). In contrast, a tablet-only weighs 1-2 pounds, while the average weight of a student's backpack is 15. 4 pounds (Dallas). When I was in high school, there

were some students who didn't want to carry the textbooks in their backpacks just because of its heavyweight.

But, if they are told to carry a tablet instead of textbooks, I am pretty sure all of them wouldn't resist doing it. Using tablets can also save some of themoneypurchasing from the print textbooks. For the print textbooks, there are printing, transportation and warehouse costs. However, if we are using E-textbooks on tablets, we can yield tangible savings in these costs. In fact, it is reported that " E-textbooks can save schools between $250- $1, 000 per student per year" (Electronista). With that amount of money saving per student, we can see that it would exceed the amount of expenditure on providing a tablet for each student.

Similarly, using E-textbooks can also save ourenvironment. Since all the print textbooks are made of paper, we have to cut down the trees to make a paper and ultimately print a textbook. Some statistical data has shown that A school with 100 teachers uses on average 250, 000 pieces of paper annually. A school of 1, 000 students on average spends between $3, 000-4, 000 a month on paper, ink, and toner, not counting printer wear and tear or technical support costs. (Williams) Indeed, we can see that we are using huge amount of papers in school and losing a lot of trees accordingly.

But, if we are using tablets, it will lower the amount of papers teachers have to print out for the assignments and handouts, which will consequently help to save the environment. Furthermore, tablets help students better prepare for a world immersed in technology. Students will be able to develop their technology skills with tablets by simply doing homework, customizing the apps or making out presentation materials. In the present and near future,

more jobs would require the worker's high technology skill, since the tools that workers use is also rapidly developing and changing.

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, it reports that " Employment in computer and information systems is expected to grow by 18% between 2010 and 2020". Therefore, students that learn technology skills early in their lives will be better prepared to pursue relevant careers later in life. However, there are some arguments that tablets can have a bad influence on student's education. The argument that tablets have too many distractions for classroom uses has been considered to be one of the most important concerns we shouldn't neglect.

Indeed, there is a high possibility that students may pay attention more to the apps, games and websites instead of their teachers. But, if there's the app for teachers that allow them to control all the devices in classroom, there will be no need to worry about students being distracted. Likewise, when I was in high school, students were not able to call with their phones within a school area. That was because the system in school blocked the student'scommunicationnetwork, so we needed to go outside of school to make a call.

Thus, in the similar way, schools may be able to block the distracting games and websites within the classroom. Another argument is that tablets are more susceptible to theft than print textbooks. It is reported that " In San Francisco, New York, and Los Angeles, robberies related to internet –enabled handheld devices have accounted for 50, 40, and 25 percent respectively of all robberies in 2012" (Associated Press). Since the electronic devices such

as tablets are likely to be more expensive than print textbooks, there will be a high possibility for the danger of theft.

Therefore, it will be very important to have a system that protects against the danger of tablet theft, if schools replace print textbooks by tablets. For the solution, schools may limit the use of tablets outside of school and let students keep their own tablets in theirlockers. And in fact, there is already the app that can track down the location of its device, so it would help prevent theft from others. Through researching the both advantages and disadvantages of using tablets in schools, I could have found that there are more advantages than disadvantages.

Even though tablets have some distractions and are more susceptible to theft than print textbooks, those problems can be resolved with the appropriate school's policy. Rather, we should focus on the positive influence that tablets can bring up on the students' education. In fact, many students easily fall asleep in class while reading the textbooks, because the print textbooks are boring to read and the reading level of some of the textbooks is too difficult so that students sometimes cannot understand the important concepts.

But, tablets can help reduce this kind of problems, because it can make learning fun and easy in a way of explaining the concepts. In print textbooks, it explains the concepts usually with bunch of written words, sometimes with pictures. Every page looks almost same if we don't look carefully on the content of writing. In contrast, the way of tablets can explain some particular concept is countless. Unlike the print textbooks, tablets allow us customize its software in several ways.

In that way, teachers can make their lectures more interesting and attractive for the students. Then, students will less likely to fall asleep during the class and learn more materials. In addition, students no longer have to carry bunch of heavy textbooks, if they can use tablets. Also, not only using tablets instead of textbooks can save money from the printing, transportation and warehouse costs, but it can also save our environment by reducing the amount of trees cutting down to make a paper.

Consequently, I could have noticed from researching the topic that the positive effect of tablets on student's education outweighs the negative. Tablets can effectively help students improve their learning abilities and creativities. Besides, it positively influences on the environment and students'healthproblem. But still, many people tend to stick to traditional education system. As we are living in an era of rapid technological change, it is also important for the education system to change and evolve correspondingly.