

# Article review on is google really making us stupid

[Business](#), [Company](#)



In his renowned 2008 article for *The Atlantic Monthly*, "Is Google Making Us Stupid? What the internet is doing to our brains," writer Nicholas Carr suggest that while Internet has helped today's generation gain limitless amount of information at the click of a mouse, this easy access to information comes at a cost. Carr maintains that quick access to a large pool information results makes people skim information the contents quickly rather than carefully reading and conceptualizing the information. According to him, this results into shortened memory span, an increasing inability to concentrate or read long texts. As the internet increasingly becomes the primary source of information to humankind, compromising the ability of people to read books and longer storylines. This process of rewiring human brains has the potential of flattering human experience even as it offers the benefits of immediacy and efficiency of knowledge.

Carr, a renowned editor of *Harvard Business Review* and a writer on culture, business, and technology, fascinated with this question if his article "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" (2008). He soon after elaborated his thesis in a book, *The Shallows: What the Internet is doing to Our Brains*. The author maintains that Google and ultimately the internet is destroying our brains, depleting our memories and in depth thoughts, portioning our attention, and obliterating normal reflective reading behavior by turning it into a "skimming" activity (2008). In his essay, he cites cognitive neuroscientist, Maryanne Wolf, to build ground for his assertions, and argues that our information intensive world, where people increasingly use the Internet and Google, our brains are being restructured in such a manner that obstructs sustained reading, attention, and thinking. The author contends that

someone has been interfering with his brain making it change as he says that he does not enjoy reading anymore because he lacks the ability to sustain concentration while reading a book (2008).

I agree that the Internet and ultimately Google is making us stupid. This is because over the recent years, people have come to rely on Google to search for almost all information from work, term paper, answers to life problems, among others. People are able to find everything from the Internet, and it has become so instantaneous that we have become lazy. Books have become obsolete because it is more convenient to type a few keywords and find the information that you require. All these habits are in the real sense making us lazy. In his essay, Carr gives the example of Scott Karp, an online blogger who stopped reading books despite being a literature major while in college (2008). Karp is of the idea that the way he thinks has changed, rather than the way he reads. Google is not necessarily bad, but the convenience it comes with makes people lose their literary culture, which implies a decline in literacy rates, and subsequently making people more stupid.

In addition, research has showed that technology is responsible for the decline in reading. A study conducted in 2008 by the Centre for Information Behavior and Evaluation of Research (CIBER) with the aim of researching the impacts of internet on leaning and research skills came out with some fascinating findings. The study found that information literacy among the young generation has not improved despite the increasing access to technology. The research also found that the efficiency and speed of internet search implies that young people spend less time analyzing the information

they find. Additionally, young people do not have a good understanding of information needs, which therefore makes it difficult for them to master effective search strategies. Lastly, many internet users face many issues of plagiarism than before. Accordingly, these conclusions from the CIBER Project are in line with Carr's, for example that young readers, too, are in most cases, skimming over material and not conducting in depth analysis (2008). Additionally, young readers do not spend their much of their time appraising material, demonstrating more of a skimming activity, and not deep, sustained reading (2008).

According to Carr, the human brain is flexible and search engines have the ability to reroute our memory (2003). According to scientific research, it is believed that about 100 billion neurons in the human brain are fully fixed by the time one reaches adulthood. Nevertheless, as Carr states in his essay, brain researchers believe that this is not true (2008). James Olds, a neuroscientist asserts that nerve cells have the ability to form new routines and discard old ones (2008). The internet is changing how people remember things. Today, people remember things less because they know they can relocate the information they have forgotten by repeating the internet search. This is increasing making people lazy, as they see no need of remembering large amount of information while they can access it with a click of a mouse. People have rerouted their brains such that they do not see the need of retaining information due to easy access.

Other opponents maintain that Carr's is misplaced. The dilemma may not lie in our lack of ability to think deeply or concentrate, but is instead a product of the narrowing of the resources used in learning about a subject or

answering a question. For examples, sociologists have raised concern that researchers or students using search engines such as Google in finding information tend to use the top search results, and in most case, those that are most recently published. In addition, because researchers are able to fine-tune their searches, users are able to find exactly what they are looking, which could mean that there is lack of different or unique perspectives easily available. This inhibits access or finding new ideas. Today, many teachers complain about plagiarism simply because students can find their assignments on the internet and copy paste everything before submission. Some opponents to Carr's article may contend to his theory that Google and Internet are changing the way people think, but argue in turn the availability of surplus information at our fingertips is not necessarily a bad thing. Some have linked access to data through the Web to the invention of print media, which have enhanced access to books to scholars. In conclusion, digitalization and technology are experiencing a transition and influx, and it is still early to arrive at a conclusion about its pros and cons. However, this paper has presented some negative effects of the Internet and Google. It is important to recognize that technology has had significant implication on how people think today, and have made us more stupid than before.

### **Works Cited:**

Carr, Nicholas. "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" *The Atlantic*, July/August, 2008: 56-63. Print.

Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 2008. Print.

<https://assignbuster.com/article-review-on-is-google-really-making-us-stupid/>