English 10H

Agenda
- Check annotations
- Review Regents Argument Essay
**Regents Argument Essay: Digital Issues**

**Directions:** Closely read each of the *four* texts provided and write a source-based argument on the topic below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response.

**Topic:** Does living in a digital world have a positive or negative effect on human beings?

**Your Task:** Carefully read each of the *four* texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least *three* of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding living in a digital world. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least *three* of the texts to develop your argument. Do *not* simply summarize each text.
Task 2 Argument Essay Outline

**Introduction:**

1. Begin with a lead/attention grabber =
   - strong statement
   - quotation
   - statistic
   - question

2. Summarize the warrants* (while acknowledging both sides of the argument)

3. State your claim/thesis-
   your position
   (Do not use personal pronouns.)

*Warrant = a reason for thinking, deciding, or doing something; a guarantee or proof
Body Paragraphs (2 or 3):

In each body paragraph:

1. Write about ONE particular warrant and begin with a TOPIC SENTENCE that states it.

2. Provide at least TWO pieces of EVIDENCE, and ANALYZE each.

3. Conclude with an acknowledgment of the opposing viewpoint, but reiterate why the evidence presented supports the claim = CLINCHER.
1. Restate and reinforce the supporting warrants

2. Acknowledge counter viewpoints and restate the claim

3. End with a call to action: a prediction, question, recommendations, quotation
Before you begin to outline your essay, you must first decide your position.

Topic: Does living in a digital world have a positive or negative effect on human beings?

Consider your readings. Which point would be easier to argue based on what you read?
Living in a digital world has a negative effect on human beings.

What evidence do I have of this from the articles?
What evidence do I have of this from the articles?

- It affects personal relationships.
- It distracts us.
- It reduces intimacy in relationships.
- It overloads or saturates us with information.
- It keeps us from reading books.
- It is linked to behavioral problems.
- It is linked to lower grades.
- It reduces face-to-face social interaction.
Now you must narrow it down.

Before you begin writing, you must decide what 2-3 main ideas you will focus on in your body paragraphs.
Brainstorm Body Paragraphs:

#1 digital media impacts personal relationships

#2 digital learning lacks the quality of traditional book learning

#3 living in a digital world also causes people to be more distracted
According to a new study from the Kaiser Family Foundation, “The average young American now spends practically every waking minute — except for the time in school — using a smart phone, computer, television or other electronic device” (LeWin). But is living in a digital world helpful or harmful to people?
2. Summary of warrants*
   (acknowledge both sides of the argument)

While some argue that technology has brought people closer, allowed for the exchange of ideas, and provided easy access to information, others believe that technology has hurt personal interactions, limited use of more quality educational material, and caused great distractions.
3. Claim/Thesis-
Student’s position
(Do not use personal pronouns.)

Make sure you are answering the essay question!

Living in a digital world may make life convenient, but it has irrefutable negative effects on human beings.

Claim/Thesis
Body Paragraphs (2 or 3):

1. Each body is about ONE particular warrant and provides a TOPIC SENTENCE that states it
   
   #1 digital media impacts personal relationships
   
   #2 digital learning lacks the quality of traditional book learning
   
   #3 living in a digital world also causes people to be more distracted
Evidence for Body Paragraphs

Which articles support the following ideas?

#1 digital media impacts personal relationships

#2 digital learning lacks the quality of traditional book learning

#3 living in a digital world also causes people to be more distracted
2. Each body provides at least TWO pieces of EVIDENCE, and ANALYZES each

   Perhaps the most devastating effect of technology is the impact it has had on personal relationships. In her book Alone Together, Sherry Turkle “maintains that people who choose to devote large portions of their time to connecting online are more isolated than ever in their non-virtual lives, leading to emotional disconnection, mental fatigue and anxiety” (Price). In other words, although people believe they are forming deep connections online, they are truly not, as virtual lives are just that: virtual, not real. When the computer or phone is turned off, people find themselves just as alone as before. In addition, technology allows people to avoid real life. Turkle explains, “The most dramatic change is our ability to be ‘elsewhere’ at any point in time, to sidestep what is difficult, what is hard in a personal interaction and go to another place where it does not have to be dealt with” (Price). In real life, people must face conflict and talk about issues that bother them, whereas online, people can
ignore the conversations in which they do not want to participate and “hide” from those they do not want to see. Furthermore, people are no longer as emotionally present in their real lives as they can escape at any time through digital media. “We are tempted to give precedence to people we are not with over people we are with,” says Turkle, citing the many instances in which people text, including while eating, driving, watching television, and supposedly spending time with friends. “We walk, we talk, we text, we drive, we set three alarms on our phone, then get up and do it again the next day,” says Mark C. Coleman. Technology, as Coleman sees it, is almost a habitual addiction in our society. This hardly leaves room for meaningful personal conversation or interaction.

3. Each body concludes with an acknowledgment of the opposing viewpoint, but reiterates why the evidence presented by the student supports the claim = CLINCHER
Similarly, it might be suggested that learning through digital media lacks the quality of traditional book learning. Digital media tend to be short, succinct, and without nuance; books require more thought and analysis than an entry on Wikipedia. Ray Bradbury’s acclaimed science fiction novel, Fahrenheit 451, famously details the importance of books in society, portraying them as much more meaningful than the television “parlor” walls of the digitally-obsessed culture. “Do you know why books such as this are so important?” Faber asks Montag. “Because they have quality. And what does the word quality mean? To me it means texture. This book has pores. It has features. This book can go under the microscope. You'd find life under the glass, streaming past in infinite profusion.” Faber suggests that the quality of traditional media often surpasses that of quick-fix digital entertainment. Like a long conversation with an old friend, books provide a depth that neither a tweet nor a text can provide.

clincher
Living in a digital world also causes people to be more distracted than ever before. Like Montag whose mind is cluttered with the Denham’s Dentifrice jingle, many people today are saturated with unimportant knowledge, and distracted by trying to do too many things at once: text a friend, while watching television, completing a homework assignment, and discussing the latest celebrity affair with family members. While people are often praised in modern society for “multi-tasking,” studies show “what most of us know implicitly: if you do two things at once, both efforts suffer” (Sullivan and Thompson). The truth is that when one juggles too many things at once, rarely are they all done well. In one study by the University of California, Irvine, “the distraction of an interruption, combined with the brain drain of preparing for that interruption, made... test takers 20 percent dumber... enough to turn a B-minus student (80 percent) into a failure (62 percent)” (Sullivan and Thompson). This study shows that distraction causes a significant impact on one’s performance, which could be detrimental to home or academic life. In fact, a
2005 study found that “heavy media use is associated with several negatives, including behavior problems and lower grades” (Lewin). And of course, no one can deny the dangers of texting while driving, in which distraction can be fatal. Obviously, distraction is good for no one.
It is clear that while convenient, living in a digital world has its costs. Though technology certainly “accelerates the sharing of ideas, freedoms of expression, and real-time decision making,” it ultimately hurts personal relationships, limits true knowledge, and interferes with productivity (Coleman). Still, there is no stopping progress. Therefore, perhaps instead of eliminating technology, people should learn to set limits for themselves and their families in order to curb the negative effects of technology.

**Conclusion:**
1. Restate and reinforce the supporting warrants
2. Acknowledge counter viewpoints and restate the claim
3. **Call to action:** prediction, question, recommendations, quotation

It is clear that while convenient, living in a digital world has its costs. Though technology certainly “accelerates the sharing of ideas, freedoms of expression, and real-time decision making,” it ultimately hurts personal relationships, limits true knowledge, and interferes with productivity (Coleman). Still, there is no stopping progress. Therefore, perhaps instead of eliminating technology, people should learn to set limits for themselves and their families in order to curb the negative effects of technology.