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Kortkerosskaya secondary school

10A Class

Kortkeros, Komi Republic, Russia

Books or computers



What will happen to books? Will they disappear? If yes what will appear instead of books?

To be a success at school an ordinary student has to do a lot of things: find information about something or somebody; find the word definitions; read different maps; read classics for literature lessons, etc. A few years ago people should go to the library and work with encyclopedias, dictionaries, atlases, books. They did a tremendous work

Now we can surf the Internet and without leaving our homes we can find information in Wikipedia, Google Earth, and even read books on-line. From year to year it becomes easier to get the information we need.

We have asked students from Moscow and the USA where they get information. Most of them find it with the help of the computer. In our school we have asked 106 students in the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades. 64% of them find information in books. But at the same time we found out that our students read less. There are 680 students in our school, 457 of them take books in our local library, and 337 students visit our school library.

What is a computer? Are computers friends or foes? At the start of new millennium, technological and educational advances are reaching extremes. As everything becomes more complex, the way we work out problems and find the solutions is becoming easier. With the help of computers we have an access to the best libraries in the world, an access to a huge database. Computers reduce the time we spend on looking for information.

However, students who rely on computers to do all their work are being cheated out of mind-expanding experience. Students still need to be forced to use their own brains for some things. Here what our students think:

“I’m for computerized education. Some people think that students should learn to use their own brains. I find it humorous that parents and teachers call for a limit on access to computers for school children.” (Vanya)

”We are against computerized education. We think fundamentals rank higher. They should learn to use the data they have access to. Some people think computers are an integral part of modern education. However, students’ brains should be challenged.” (Natasha, Kristina)

According to our survey 81% of students use their computers for pleasure. They chat, meet with friends in Facebook, and find videos, games, music. Only 19% of them use their computer for research and school work.

We face a new problem- computer addiction. Some people become so dependent on computers that they don’t care about their everyday responsibilities. Computer addicts do not even admit being dependent on the Net. According to the online survey 15% admit themselves as computer addicts. In our school 17% think that they have computer addiction.

Maressa Orzac, a psychologist researching computer addiction, underlines the following signs and symptoms: using the computer for pleasure, or relief from stress; feeling out of control or depressed when not using it; spending increasing amounts of time and money on hardware, software, magazines, and computer-related activities; neglecting work, school, or family obligations; failing of computer use; having irregular meals, repetitive strain injuries, backache, dry eyes, headaches, and loss of sleep. You are a computer addict if you have one of these symptoms. According to our survey 15% of students answered all the questions in the affirmative; 35% of students fail to control computer use.

What will happen to books and computers in 50 years? Moscow students think that computers will replace books because more and more people around the world use computer as often as books. 31% of the USA students think that computers will replace books. Most of them think that books and computers will co-exist. They suppose that advanced holographic books will develop.

20% of the students in Kortkerosskaya School think that books will exist, 45% think they will co-exist with computers. 35% students think that computers will replace books. They say: “The future of books will continue to be bright. They have certain advantages over electronic media. First, they’re cheap. Second, no batteries or other power is required. Books have been a part of our culture for hundreds of years” (Katya, Anya)

“Some people think that computers will replace books, others consider that books will be around us as long as people enjoy using them. We think that books and computers will co-exist.”(Kristina, Natasha)

“Technology, such as World Wide Web, provides us with an excellent opportunity to access an astronomical amount of information. It is possible that schools will use laptops instead of books. Another way computers could help learning is the chance children have of interacting with children from around the world.” (Andrey, Ivan)