

Home Connection

Highlights of Unit 3: Modern Technology

Dear Family,

In this unit, students will learn about technology. They will consider concepts relating to how technology has benefited people and consider criticisms about how it has changed our relationships to one another. Students will read a variety of texts and listen to and view media as they discuss the Essential Question for the unit.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

As a class, in small groups, and independently, students will work to answer the question *How is modern technology helpful and harmful to society?* Give your student the opportunity to continue the discussion at home.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- What are some of the ways you could answer the question *How is modern technology helpful and harmful to society?*
- What do these selections say about our relationship to technology? How can we learn to find a healthy balance with modern technology?
- Why do you think stories about technology are so popular in the media and in books and film?

UNIT 3 SELECTION TITLES, AUTHORS, GENRES



WHOLE-CLASS LEARNING

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| “Feathered Friend” | Arthur C. Clarke | short story |
| “Teens and Technology Share a Future” | Stefan Etienne | blog post |
| “The Black Hole of Technology” | Leena Khan | blog post |
| “The Internet of Things” | IBM Social Media | media: video |



SMALL-GROUP LEARNING

| | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------|
| “The Fun They Had” | <i>Isaac Asimov</i> | short story |
| “Is Our Gain Also Our Loss?” | <i>Cailin Loesch</i> | blog post |
| “Bored . . . and Brilliant? A Challenge to Disconnect From Your Phone” | <i>NPR</i> | media: podcast |



INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Your student will choose one of the following to read independently. You may want to read it as well, so that you can discuss it together.

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------|
| “7-Year-Old Girl Gets New Hand From 3-D Printer” | <i>John Rogers</i> | news article |
| “Screen Time Can Mess With the Body’s ‘Clock’“ | <i>Andrew Bridges</i> | news article |
| “All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace” | <i>Richard Brautigan</i> | poetry |
| “Sonnet, without Salmon” | <i>Sherman Alexie</i> | poetry |
| “Teen Researchers Defend Media Multitasking” | <i>Sumathi Reddy</i> | news article |

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- How did you choose which selection to read?
- What is the most interesting aspect of modern technology that you learned from your reading?

PERFORMANCE TASKS AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Your student will need to answer the question *Do we rely on technology too much?* He or she will write an argumentative essay and then give an oral presentation, drawing on knowledge gained from the selections in this unit, as well as from the Performance Tasks he or she completed.

Whole-Class Learning Performance Task

After completing the Whole-Class section of the unit, your student will learn how to put together an argument. He or she will write an argument in the form of an editorial answering the question *Do electronic devices and online access really improve our lives?*

Small-Group Learning Performance Task

After completing the Small-Group section of the unit, your student will work with his or her group to plan and present a multimedia presentation addressing the question *Do the benefits of technology outweigh its disadvantages?*

End-of-Unit Performance-Based Assessment

At the end of the unit, your student will pull together his or her learning by completing a Performance-Based Assessment addressing the question *Do we rely on technology too much?* In response to that question, he or she will write an argumentative essay, then give an oral presentation.

STANDARDS

Activities and assignments in Unit 3 will help your student meet the following Common Core State Standards for reading literature and informational texts, writing, and speaking and listening. Here are some key standards students will work toward mastering in this unit.

Reading

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.
- Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
- Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

- Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

Speaking and Listening

- Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.

Writing

- Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

Thank you for your continuing support!