Research exercise: Syntheses of Research on Technology and Schools

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## Technology in Education

By: Amy E. Fox, Megan E. Sullivan, Alec A. Wade
Professor Susan Ferguson and Dr. Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch

### What are the problems surrounding the digital divide in education?

- Professional development for teachers is lacking, because only the basics of a program is provided with no follow-up sessions.
- The divide also excludes many students from having meaningful experiences in using technology. In high-SES schools students often use the computer for enrichment activities, but low-SES counterparts use the computers as means for standardized test preparation.
- There are barriers in race and geography. Black and Hispanic children typically live in urban areas, where districts drill students to raise test scores.

### Is President Obama’s plan to accelerate the digital transition, so every student has an e-book by 2017, beneficial for all schools and students?

- E-books are interactive and grade school students respond better to hands-on reading. There are pictures and animations that enhance the story in a way that books cannot. Students are more engaged and active while reading.
- Students were distracted by the games they could play throughout the story. They were more interested in animations, and teachers did not like the limited dictionary on the e-readers. The games and animations took away from the content and main points of the story.
- Students have the ability to search for extra content and background information easily during class. If a class is having a discussion, students can look up evidence and examples to support their argument.

### What are the negative effects of increasing electronic media among school students?

- A brain’s social network that is frequently exposed to electronic media will not develop correctly because the brain adapts to the environment that it is present in. If it is overexposed to electronic media, the social network’s development will be hindered.
- Electronic media hinders the development of the brain’s memory system; mass media often mutilates the context of certain events, and we therefore find little meaning in the event. As a result, our memory system presents an uncommon event as being common, which causes people to overreact in a violent manner.
- Electronic media causes lower grades as well as violent behavior in children. When presented with violent material, the children develop a more violent attitude.
- Due to electronic media, eyesight is often strained or damaged because of the constant stare at such a bright screen.