Essential English

General instruction

• Work in this book will not be marked.

Stimulus 1

Context

This is a post on a website where people share ideas and information.

Share Q&A

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How have science and technology affected everyday life?

Taylor, University student ◆ Follow
In every way possible! The fact you're using something other than pen and paper — a quill and parchment! — to ask this question shows how science and technology have supercharged society. Once we would've stood on a street corner handing out leaflets. Now, we're tapping on keyboards and sending ideas through cyberspace. Not so long ago, one computer filled an entire room; now, we've got 2-millimetre microchips operating as computer brains. We mightn't recognise the world in 20 years, let alone 40 years from now.😃

(Reply)

Jamie, Research analyst ◆ Follow
And that's exactly why science and technology need to be managed, rather than let loose on society. Change should be controlled, otherwise science and tech will control us. Seems to me that people tend to think of them as having ALL the answers to ALL our problems, but if we're not careful, 'advances' might rob us ALL of our individuality. That's why artificial intelligence — especially — needs to be watched.

(Reply)

Sam, Student ◆ Follow
For me, science and tech are the triggers of imagination. They're a life force working together, making our lives better. They 'make the impossible possible'. Which is kind of cool, I think. Anyway, one day, I'm hoping we'll have:

• time travel (hello Ancient Greece, good to see you!)
• teleporting
• life spans of 180 years
• anti-gravity suits for personal flight (imagine being in air traffic control!?!?!?).

One day …

(Reply)

Daney, Consultant ◆ Follow

That's a big question! Science and tech affect every aspect of life in many parts of the world, but as the benefits aren't in every country for everyone to enjoy, science and tech have more work to do. Dreaming about time travel and teleporting doesn't matter in places where your next meal is the priority.

(Reply)

Tommi, Professor ◆ Follow

You have to understand that all our progress requires lots of electricity. And producing electricity comes at an environmental cost.

I'm no fool, but the hands of science and technology make everything evolve too quickly, tossing us around like leaves in the wind. Is anyone else bothered by the fact that simple maths is now done using a calculator instead of our own brain? Or bothered by predictive text shaping our ability to communicate? Such 'advancements' actually short-circuit human intelligence.

There's also our heavy dependence on smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops. People are almost surgically attached to their 'devices' these days. Please explain how that can be good.

Time to hit pause. Time to breathe … independent of machines.

(Reply)

Jay, Engineer ◆ Follow

There are those who embrace change and those who prefer to keep their head in the sand like an ostrich.

Think about electricity! Think medicine! Think of everything science and technology have given us:

- a neverending web of information
- access to cultures across continents and oceans by trains and planes
- amazing communication tools
- remote controls for everything.

Bring on the future — pocket-sized DNA fingerprinting devices, vitamins we can take to increase our discipline, pillows with built-in alarm clocks, levitating desk lamps — I'm a fan!

(Reply)

Stimulus 2

Context

This infographic is on a poster in a school classroom.

The impact of science and technology

Generates new technology

Builds a community by cross-pollinating generations of research

Provides solutions to social issues

Builds knowledge to benefit society

Answers difficult questions

Creates scientific data and technological solutions

Initiates innovation in medicine and transport

Involves questioning and investigating

Uncovers/ challenges 'truths'

Shapes society and our future

Sparks imagination

Creates order from disorder

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References

Stimulus 2

Brain image by kjpargeter on Freepik
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