

Grade 6: Career and Technical Education

Wonderopolis Wonder of the Day #1054: How Does Your School Use Technology?

Source: <https://wonderopolis.org/wonder/how-does-your-school-use-technology>

Have You Ever Wondered...

- How does your school use technology?
- How does technology improve how you learn?
- What types of technology will be used in future classrooms?

Do you get to play with any cool gadgets at school? Today, many schools make technology part of learning. That means you get the chance to use personal computers, laptops, tablets, or other devices. You may even use smartphones in the classroom.



Classrooms have not always had the supplies they use today, though. One-room schoolhouses once used hornbooks. Those were wooden paddles. They had lessons written on them to teach. We've come a long way since then!

There was even a time before students had pencils and paper. Instead, they used slates. These were small, handheld blackboards that they could write on with chalk. Can you imagine taking notes on those?

In fact, the classroom chalkboard didn't come along until the late 1800s. With this new tool, the entire class could see what teachers were writing at the same time. Chalkboards seem like a thing of the past today. But they were cutting-edge technology at one time!

Over the years, new items were added to classrooms. Educators found ways for new devices to improve learning. They started using film projectors, radios, and televisions. Soon after came videotape players and overhead projectors.

Copying machines also brought big changes when they came along in the mid-1900s. Teachers could give students copies of lessons for homework and studying. This lets the classroom reach beyond its walls.

The use of audio tapes and headphones in the classroom made learning new languages easier. They also helped students with vision or reading impairments. With these new tools, they could listen to lessons instead of reading them.

Handheld calculators made math class easier for students. They also helped math teachers move more quickly through complex topics.

There are hundreds of other examples of educational technology over the years. Many changes have come in the past couple of decades, though. Schools have seen a lot of growth in the use of cutting-edge technology.

Then came the invention of the personal computer. Education took a huge leap forward. Soon after came the Internet. Modern education looks very different than it did when your parents were in school.

Today, it's not uncommon for children to use a laptop or tablet computers in school. Some schools may use handheld computers or smartphones. Some schools use the Internet to connect with other teachers and schools around the world!

You may even be reading this Wonder of the Day on a device at home. Some classes even use technology to make their own websites. They share with their friends and relatives what's going on in their classroom.

Does technology help you learn? Or would you rather work with pencils and paper? Maybe you'd love to try out a hornbook! The next time you're at school, take a good look around. What examples of technology can you find?

Take the Wonder Word Challenge – Match the term on the left to its definition on the right.

Technology	the practical application of science to commerce or industry
Complex	(plural) a machine that projects a movie or picture onto a screen
Slate	not easy to understand or explain; not simple
Educators	(formerly) a writing tablet made of metamorphic rock
Projectors	(plural) someone who helps others learn

Student Activity

All students will complete the following questions. You can do this by interviewing a family member at home, on the phone, or online, if possible. Please write these questions and responses on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What types of technology, if any, did your parents/grandparents/guardians or other family members use when they were in school? Ask them to think of any examples of things that they may have used. Did they have access to or use computers? What types of tools did they use in their math class? Compare the technologies they used to the technology you have access to while in school. Which one do you think is better and why? Have fun learning about what technology was like "back in the day".
2. What technologies do your parents/grandparents/guardians or other family members use while they are at work? Talk to them about the different types of technology they might use during a typical day. Do you use any of the same technology at school?
3. What technologies do you have in your school? Think about your classroom. How many examples of technology are there? How does technology improve your learning experience? Make a list of technology in your school and talk with a family member about how this technology may help you learn. Also, make a list of recommended technology for your school. Perhaps there is something that you feel would be great for you and your classmates.