

THE ENRICHMENT PROJECT

Badge Program

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DIGITAL NATIVES

Steps

1. Frontline: Digital Nation

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/digitalnation/view/?utm_campaign=viewpage&utm_medium=grid&utm_source=grid

For an overview of digital natives, watch the flash video from Frontline on PBS. Originally, this aired February 2010. It is 90 minutes long, so get comfortable before you start.

2. PBS webinar.

www.pbs.org/teachers/webinar/archive.html

Scroll down the archive of PBS webinars and find "Education in the Digital Age: A Tour of Frontline's Digital Nation." This webinar highlights the Web's impact on education, multitasking and social media. This webinar will help expand your view of how the world is changing for and by digital natives.

3. Digital native map.

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/digitalnation/extras/digital_native.html

Learn about how digital natives are affected by exploring Wen-Jay. Click on each circle on her picture and learn physical information about digital natives. The list below shows the areas you can find statistics about how technology is affecting our youth.

- Brain
- Eyes
- Ears
- Mouth
- Heart
- Spine
- Hands
- Wuji (dog)

Check out other digital native resources on the main PBS Digital Nation page.

4. Digital natives vs. digital immigrants.

Are all people born in the 21st century digital natives? Are all of those born before digital immigrants? There are no absolutes. Find the characteristics of digital natives and immigrants. Take a poll of your friends and family. Which category does each fall into? Or are they somewhere in between?



Digital Natives

When you were young, you might not have had a computer, a television or even a radio. Today's youth were born into technology and it infuses every moment of their lives. Because of this, you may find that you are lost when talking to them or have difficulty connecting with them. They are digital natives. While you may not be comfortable with the technology, you need to be able to understand their world.



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5. **Moving toward truly global.**

Phrases like “global community” have been with us a long time. Digital natives communicate with people who are interested in the same things they are. They tend to disregard geographical and political distinctions. They are individual and adaptable, more likely to try something new or look at the world a different way.

With technology, your location is no longer as important as your access. As stagnant, location-specific industries such as newspapers and book publishing fail, others flourish with a world-wide audience. Think of the things you use every day. How many are moving into the global? How many are dying because they are afraid of change? How are digital natives embracing and fueling these changes? How are digital immigrants reacting?

6. **Redefining the terms.**

Friendship used to mean someone you spent time with physically, going bowling or fishing. You’d discuss your day or air out your problems to a sympathetic ear. Now, friendship is limited to a few hundred people who follow you on the Web.

You can find people interested in the same things you are. For example, when I started desktop publishing in the early 1990s, there weren’t people I could talk to locally. I had to drive an hour and a half to Chicago for lessons as none of the local colleges taught any of the programs. This limitation is gone with the Web. You can ask a question about software and get responses within minutes from people anywhere in the world.

Reflect on how the terms friendship and acquaintance have changed over the last few years. See how much, or little, personal information digital natives share. See how freely ideas and interests are shared and how fast new ideas are developed. Our current technological revolution is redefining and speeding up our lives. What other terms have been affected?

BREAKING IT DOWN

7. **Digital education.**

Traditional education was designed to create individuals who were replaceable in the factories, just another material for the industrial revolution. With digital natives, this educational system is changing. From K-12, college and even enrichment classes can be found online. Find out what digital offerings are available that you might like to try. What areas offer digital education? What areas do not?

8. **Enrichment project.**

larajla.com/adult-enrichment-project

Could the Enrichment Project have existed five years ago? Ten years ago? By earning badges online with free resources, you can tailor each badge program for your own tastes, experiences and materials available to you. In addition, multiple people can post their own interpretations to badge programs that can be shared over time, not wasted on a single class or group of individuals. Think of a subject you are interested in that is not available. Can you digitize it?

9. **Digital workplace.**

Brainstorm the tasks you do every day at your job. What parts could you do digitally without making the trip to the office? Can your company do as IBM and have an empty building with all employees working from home? Think “outside the box” to include not only the tasks you do every day, but how the entire company can adjust to utilize new technologies.



10. **Digital entertainment.**

Digital entertainment is no longer the domain of large corporations. It is moving toward smaller, more dynamic markets. Read the three areas highlighted below and discuss the questions with others of varying ages and technical abilities to help broaden your understanding of the changes happening in digital entertainment.

Compare the number of television stations 20 years ago and now. How have your watching habits changed? How has technology affected how and when you enjoy television? Try watching a “television” show online. Do you think broadcasting will slowly move completely to the Web? Will programming be on-demand? Will viewing habits be tracked in real time? Do you think old shows and movies will be archived or will younger generations not be interested in “I Love Lucy” and “The Three Stooges?”

Video games are no longer played by one or two people in their home. Video game consoles can connect to the Web to play with people around the world or they can play the games online without having hardware beyond their computer. Will game systems such as Playstation and Wii be around in 20 years or will they be a pay service on the Web?

Compare the music industry of the 1980s and today. How do you get your music? How do digital natives get theirs? Check out the offerings on iTunes or YouTube. Find at least one musician who gives away their music for free. Do you think purchasing pre-packaged music will become obsolete?

11. **Social media.**

Digital natives are always “on.” Wired. Wireless. Mobile. Instantaneous. They are constantly checking what their friends are doing and sharing what they are doing. Social media affects how information is delivered, communicated and organized. Check out a social media sight such as Facebook, MySpace, Pinterest, Tumblr or Twitter. See what they have to offer digital natives. How can you utilize this for your own purposes?

12. **Web 2.0 is the place to explore.**

This is a generalized list of different types of Web 2.0 technology that is utilized by digital natives. Explore some of these areas and note how digital natives make Web 2.0 theirs. Do you use any of these?

- Blogs
- Podcasts
- Wikis
- Social bookmarking
- RSS - Really Simple Syndication
- Content tagging

Try experiencing one or more of these items. Check out ehow.com or a learning site of your choice for short tutorials. How easy is it to adjust a wiki or reply to a blog? Would RSS help you keep track of a subject you’re interested in? Does the new technology help make the Web easier for you to use?

13. **Creating content.**

More than half of teenagers have created online content. Often, they collaborate. Look through social media, video and other sites teenagers frequent. How many do you think were made by the digital natives themselves? What are the benefits of working collaboratively with others? How does this change the Web? How does it change other media? How have attitudes toward intellectual property changed? Look at how Creative Commons has allowed those holding copyrights to waive some of their rights.



14. **Multitasking.**

Have you seen a digital native working on three or more tasks at a time? This is multitasking. Debates are raging on whether this is something people are adept at or if it is interfering with deeper learning and understanding. Look at both sides of this issue and determine where you fit into the debate.

15. **Hardware.**

You can't have digital natives without hardware. Do you remember the first computers that didn't have hard drives? Now, you have a powerful computer that can be easily carried in the iPad. Smart phones are another "computer" used by digital natives. How do you think the hardware will change in the future? Do you think everyone will have desktop computers or do you think the entire planet will go wireless?

Sites to Explore

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_native
www.marcprensky.com/writing
www.twistimage.com/blog/archives/digital-natives-are-here
www.mondaynote.com/2010/07/25/understanding-the-digital-natives
www.openeducation.net/2009/09/23/digital-natives-are-they-really-skilled-at-multitasking
www.ehow.com/list_6631103_effects-digital-technology.html
www.ehow.com/list_6798576_implications-digital-technology-music.html
www.ehow.com/about_6522661_cell-phones-educational-tool.html
workawesome.com/management/ditch-multitasking
www.ericsson.com/ericsson/corpinfo/publications/ericsson_business_review/pdf/108/understanding_digital_natives.pdf
www.youtube.com
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creativecommons.org
openid.net

Check out Larajla's Enrichment Project to start your own adventure.