

Reading Passage

The role of computers in the development of a young child has been a widely controversial topic for decades, and both parents and educators have put forth both concerns about the potential benefits as well as harms to young children. Critics argue that introducing technology in schools only wastes money and time, and that instead children should be allowed to develop essential learning and social skills through interaction with other students. On the other hand, proponents to the idea suggest that children should take advantage of the newest technologies and that children should learn to how to become adept at utilizing such technologies as a means to further their success in their eventual entering of the workforce. There are also some concerns that the most modern technologies are not being optimized and utilized in the best way possible.

Both critics and proponents of computers in the classroom agree that the early, formative years of any child are when physical, social-emotional, language, and cognitive skills are acquired. Perhaps the most researched area of development in relation to computer use has been that of cognitive development and the affect that modern technology has on a child's mind. Are computers being used properly to enhance and hasten a child's cognitive development, or are they inhibiting intellectual growth? Can technology support the specific needs of children, or does it take away from essential developmental experiences?

Recent research on brain development has focused on the capabilities of young children, the stages and styles of learning, and social-emotional development. Such research has showed that although children may lack knowledge and experience, they have ample reasoning ability. Given appropriate stimuli, such as close interaction with caring adults and engaging hands-on activities, most children have been shown to dramatically improve their mental developmental skills. A study by the National Research Council found that early learning is assisted by the supportive context of the family and the social environment, through the kinds of activities in

Questions

1. Which of the following best describes the development and organization of the passage?
 - a. The author begins with a concise introduction, followed with a thorough analysis of the shortcomings of using computers in the classroom.
 - b. After a broad overview of the argument, the author discusses recent trends in research, followed by a short description of how proponents and advocates of technology in the classroom agree on several key issues.
 - c. First opposing viewpoints are introduced, followed by an analysis of the similarities of the arguments for and against using technology in the classroom, and finally the technicalities of current research trends are briefly discussed.
 - d. The author proposes a hypothesis, and then proceeds to discuss how both critics and proponents of the use of technology in the classroom agree that the early childhood years are the formative years.
 - e. The author first selects to advocate the use of computer technology in the classroom, but then, upon a closer inspection of the arguments and research trends, ultimately decides to shun the use of modern technologies in education.
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which adults engage with children. The influence of the two most renowned learning theories of psychology, Piaget's theory and Vygotsky's constructivism theory, are evident in the most recent research efforts, and it is in considering their models of development that we can make some assessment about the significance of a computer's role in a child's development process. Researchers have attempted to apply the developmental theories of Piaget to children's computer usage. In considering the Piagetian tasks of classifying and categorization, researchers have made several interesting observations about computers and cognitive development. For example, it has been suggested that a child sorting grocery items in the kitchen is a sign of mental development.

- 2 The passage provides information that could be used to answer which of the following questions?
- a. Are Piaget's and Vygotsky's constructivism development theories similar, unique, or grossly opposed?
 - b. Approximately during which years of a child's life are physical, social, emotional, communication and cognitive skills acquired?
 - c. Does a young child sorting grocery items provide proof that social and communication skills are lacking?
 - d. Should computer technologies be introduced to students when they are in their teens?
 - e. Has research shown that the use of computers helps to enhance a child's cognitive development?

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