

Unit 5: Technology and the Limit of the Human

ECE/AP English Language and Composition

12 Class Meetings

Rev. August 2017

Essential Questions

- What is the boundary of the human?
- What are the potential risks and benefits of the fast pace of artificial intelligence?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: Humans are unique in the animal world; one of our unique traits is our dependence on things that are themselves dependent on us.

- Identify the myriad ways in which we interact with technology every day.
- Evaluate the possibility that our use of technology may be changing our brains.

EU 2: Our entanglement with things has both positive and negative consequences.

- Identify points of entanglement, specifically our interactions with social media.
- Weigh pros and cons of this entanglement.

EU 3: The quickly developing field of artificial intelligence creates complex moral questions for human society.

- Consider the far-reaching possibilities of the trajectory of current technology advance
- Ask probing questions about the future of artificial intelligence.

Standards

Common Core State Standards

- **RL.11-12.1:** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **RI.11-12.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and

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refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

- **W.11-12.1:** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- **W.11-12.7:** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **W.11-12.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- **SL.11-12.2:** Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- **SL.11-12.6:** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate
- **L.11-12.6:** Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

MSMHS 21st Century Learning Expectations

Competency 1. Read and write effectively for a variety of purposes

Competency 2. Speak effectively with a variety of audiences in an accountable manner

Competency 5. Contribute to a positive learning environment with respect and responsibility

Unit Content Overview

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- Construction and Evaluation of Argument
- Close Reading Skills
- Human-thing entanglement
- The impact of social media and technology on human anatomy and society
- The Turing test and its new iterations
- Human-Robot relationships
- Artificial Intelligence
- New research into memory implants and prosthetics
- Vocabulary: Attributable, acerbic, ally, apologist, arid, array, assert, authorial, candor, coarse, colleague, decorum, discount, disjointed, dismissive, disparity, dispassionate, etiquette, evocation, feign, ferment, fixed, fret, generalist, genial, gulf, heedless, idiosyncratic, idolatrous, imparting, imperative, inexorably, inflated, ingratiating, inherent, insular, irate, linguistic, masterly, mediocre, paradigm, paucity, pedantic, persona, petulant, pretentious, profuse, reverent, sardonic, scandalized, scholarly, scornful, speculative, strident, sublime, suggestive, taxonomy, transcription, unfounded, virtuosity
- Ignite Presentation Skills
- Grammar Topic: Modifiers

Interdisciplinary Connections

- AP Psychology: brain and cognitive changes in the age of technology; new research on memory implants
- AP Computer Science: Virtual reality games and avatars; computer-human interaction; WATSON

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Describe the unique skills of human cooperation and explain Harari's idea about our dual world
- Explain the idea of human-thing entanglement
- Analyze the validity of Hodder's argument, using examples from personal experience
- Trace and evaluate personal use of social media
- Analyze a photo essay to determine its argument
- Evaluate the validity of an older argument based on new evidence
- Evaluate the pros and cons of human-data entanglement
- Define transhumanism and analyze its implications

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- Generate original questions inspired by article
- Create and develop original Ignite speech
- Present original Ignite speech

Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Lecture with notes
- Homework
- Close reading with annotations
- Accountable Talk discussions
- Graphic organizers
- Jigsaw
- Self-assessments
- Strategic grouping
- Student choice
- Flash cards for vocab
- Learning through competitive games
- Personal connections
- Process checks on writing assignment
- Group work

Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- ECE 1010 Analytical Essay on the choice text and the ideas of the unit
 - MSMHS Rubric 1: Literacy
- Group Work
- Harkness Discussions
- Homework
- White board review games

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- Warm Ups
- Think-pair-shares
- Observations
- Self-assessments
- Journal Writing
- AP style writing practice
- Multiple Choice practice

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- ECE 1010 Essay: Connections Between Choice Text and Unit Ideas
- Original Ignite Speech on Humans and Technology
- Unit Test

Unit Task

Unit Task Name: ECE 1010 Essay: Connections Between Choice Text and Unit Ideas

Description: Students will use information and skills learned in this unit to write an essay drawing connections between choice text and the questions raised in the unit about the relationship between humans and technology (AI, robots, things). The essay will include reflections on personal relationships with things (EU 2) and will stake a claim concerning personal concerns about and/or excitement for the fast pace of technological development (EU 3). Essays will be a minimum of 6 pages and will be in MLA format.

Evaluation: MSMHS Rubric #1: Literacy

Unit Resources

- Textbook: *The Language of Composition*
- Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*
- Ernest Cline's *Ready Player One*
- Katharine Hayles's "Wrestling with Transhumanism"
- Tony McCaffrey's "There Will Always Be Limits to How Creative a Computer Can Be"
- Gary Marcus's "What Comes After the Turing Test"
- Nicholas Carr's "Is Google Making Us Stupid"

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- Sherry Turkle's "Stop Googling. Let's Talk"
- Excerpts from Yuva Noah Harari's *Sapiens*
- Excerpts from Sherry Turkle's *Alone Together*
- TED talks
- Ignite Speeches
- RAnimate Speeches
- Youtube videos
- The internet