

## Argumentative Essay Analysis

1. Why does Steven Pinker think that “critics of new media” are wrong when they argue that these technologies are “making us stupid” (5, 11)? In his view, what effect will those media have? How convincing is his argument? Explain.
2. We do not naturally and automatically acquire “intellectual depth” and habits of deep reflection,” Pinker writes (10). According to Pinker, how and when--in what kind of institutions--do we develop these capacities?
3. Pinker often uses anecdotal evidence, for instance, when he refers to the “familiar sight” of an SUV driver on a cell phone (6). How effective is this kind of evidence? Where does Pinker provide more scholarly proof, such as expert testimony and formal logical reasoning?

Format:

Article title and author in first sentence

Restate prompt to create topic sentence

Answer question

Support answer by using evidence

Tag quote citation

Explain how quote supports my answer

Transition to evidence 2

Tag quote citation

Explain how quote supports my answer.

End with how all this ties into everything

In *Mind Over Mass Media*, Steven Pinker argues against the idea that new technology is making us stupid or making juveniles turn into delinquents. Pinker thinks that the “critics of new media” are wrong because the new technology that humans have created has led them to the new discoveries that have propelled the human race forward. In Pinker’s article he writes, “If electronic media were hazardous to intelligence, the quality of science would be plummeting. Yet discoveries multiplying like fruit flies, and progress is dizzying” (560). Without the advancement of new technology we wouldn’t be able to be just steps away from finding a cure for cancer or other diseases. Scientists are constantly sharing information they have found via email (560). With that being said another argument is that video games and crime on TV is causing kids to become delinquents. Pinker dismissed this idea easily with a convincing

counter. He wrote, " If you train people to do one thing (recognize shapes, solve math puzzles, find hidden words), they get better at doing that thing, but almost nothing else" (561). He clarified with this sentence, " Accomplished people don't bulk up their brains with intellectual calisthenics; they immerse themselves in their fields. Novelists read lots of novels, scientists read lots of science" (561). Just because there are violent games and crime shows on TV doesn't mean that kids will all become murderers or thieves. They would have to actually study these fields and hopefully someone catches them before they make a horrible mistake. These two key points show that the new technology that is not making the human race stupid or turning juveniles into delinquents. It is moving humanity forward and leading us to a better tomorrow.