As I am writing this last paper, ironically these words that I write will never be printed *on* paper. I am sitting in a coffee shop watching college-age people do exactly what this unit is talking about. While working on school work, they focus for only a few minutes and then switch to something new, all the while listening to the music coming out of their headphones and checking their phones for text messages. The ones in this coffee shop who are not studying are at tables in pairs, but they are putting more effort into following something on their smart phones than in engaging the person with whom they are sitting. As for me, my history with technology is a little empty. For someone who graduated from Michigan State University (MSU) in 1999, right when the internet started to take off, saying that I have been slow to adapt is an understatement.

My first experience with a computer was when I moved into Holmes Hall, and my roommate brought out his Macintosh computer and created an MSU email account for me. I only knew one other email account - my roommate's email - and I had no need to email him since we lived together, so I never checked the account again. While at MSU, I do not remember using a computer outside my FORTRAN and AutoCAD class, for anything but word processing.

Four weeks after graduation I joined Peace Corps, moved to Niger in West Africa and lived without electricity, running water, or a toilet in a mud hut for two years. To highlight how far away from technology I was, here is an example: the closest I got to instant messaging or email was if I wanted to send a letter to my then-girlfriend. I would have to write a letter addressed to the "white person" in Gotheye (a large village near her small village), give it to a bush taxi driver who was going near her village, and hope that some child would be given that letter to hold for her until the next market day when she was certain to come into the village. For the three years that I was in Niger, it was voted the least internet accessible country in the world. The following year I moved to Honduras.

The years in West Africa and Central America being essentially without technology would not have been that detrimental if it were not for what I was doing in those years. My last year in Niger and the year in Honduras were my first years teaching. I had not majored in teaching in undergrad, so the time in Niger and Honduras included my first experiences in a classroom. These were the years that I learned about lesson plans, how to differentiate a classroom, engaging students, and to challenge students: all done without computers or the internet.

The first really significant event in technology for me was when I got my first useful email account. I actually got it my first year teaching in Niger, but the connection was so slow that it was only useful for me in order to set up times with my family back in the United States to talk by phone. There is a long time span of six years from when I set up my email account to it actually becoming useful to me as a teacher.

Not until I started teaching at my current job did it become something that has helped my classroom and my students' understanding of math. I learned to use email as an educational tool (group emails, weekly updates, and email etiquette) from conversations with other teachers and by investing the time myself. I check my email about four to five times a day outside of school. I do this to answer students' and parents' questions, to address behavior concerns, and to send updates to all my parents. In ways, this access to me and my students' parents has created an environment like the online gamers from Digital Nation. I have whole online relationships with parents that if they walked by me in the store I would not know them from Adam. Email is not the only tool to open up my classroom. All the teachers at my school are expected to have a Wiki page.

For the five years that I have been at Piedmont IB Middle School, I have been asked to have a Wiki page to communicate with students and parents. My first year at Piedmont and first year with a Wiki, when someone clicked on my Wiki link he or she would see this note: "If you have questions or concerns about my class please email me." It was not until last year - my fourth year of teaching at Piedmont - did I have a parent help me set up my Wiki properly. The only way that I kept up with it was to have his son put my homework on the Wiki every day. This year is a different story, because I feel that my Wiki has finally come into its own. I update it daily with assignments and PDFs of handouts, I have linked Khan Academy videos, and I have even tried a flip classroom.

The difference with my email and wiki page over these five years is accessibility. This is the first year that I have had my own laptop. I am not tied to the old versions of software and slow school computers. This laptop has helped me become more tech savvy for two reasons: first, I am now able to access my accounts from anywhere there is Wi-Fi, and second, because all the hours that I have spent on the computer have made me more comfortable with different programs. Like me in past years, my students have the same limitations with accessibility.

Piedmont is a pilot school for the district's Bring Your Own Technology Program (BYOT) The hope is that Piedmont becomes that school in New York and New Jersey from *Digital Nation*. To some extent we have become that school. I have seen students in the halls with their I Pads and Tablets working on their projects and teachers using QR codes to give hints to their lessons. Even in my class, I have used this accessibility to differentiate lessons and extend what is happening in class. My school getting Wi-Fi throughout the school has not fixed everything, however.

We are still a school where half the population applies for free or reduced lunch. These students do not have the money to purchase lunch - let alone an I Pad. The Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) has bought 80 I Pads during the last two years to help this population. Like me, they will not see any dividends until they are able to truly "own" the technology. Putting it in their hands just a few times a week is not going to get them to know the technology.

I have also watched as my students have stopped reading. They no longer carry books around. My school, and especially my grade level, used to be a school of readers. We would have kids walk the track during recess reading a book. Now my students have their tech out to play games and to text their friends in the classroom next door, and reading has stopped. It is exactly how Rich explains it: "Many youths spend most of their time on the internet playing games or sending instant messages, activities that involve minimal reading at best." Teaching sixth grade, and this being the first year of BYOT at my school, we have yet to see any documented decline in students' reading scores.

The evolution of technology over the last five years has been impressive at my school. We went from having two computer labs to adding three laptop carts and then nearly 80 I Pads for classroom use. I have not had the I Pads in my class even once this year. I know that my students like them, and they would be interested in working with them, but I see them as somewhat of a distraction. *Digital Nation* showed that teacher in front of a smart board using it the same way that I use my $300 LCD projector. He was also using a "clicker" response system to assess his students' understanding of a multiple choice question. Give me a $40 set of whiteboards, and I will truly assess what my students know and what they are thinking - not their ability to choose A, B, C, or D.

I am not totally set in my 2003 ways, though. This is the first year that I have not asked my students to memorize equations, knowing that my students in the 21st century need to be able to *find* equations that they need. Six years ago when I taught in Cairo, I would give quizzes where my students were responsible for memorizing fifteen equations. I have also been successful with laptops and the desk tops in my room. I have classes of 32 students who come from very different schools and know diverse things. I have used the desk tops in my room and other classrooms to extend the kids who understand what I am teaching, so that I can work with a smaller group of kids that need extra attention. This too is a strategy that I learned from another teacher.

Through this autobiographical inquiry into my history of technology, I have noticed that my experience with technology is really short and limited. Inquiry into myself as a teacher and into my practices as a teacher has value because I am the one in the classroom leading instruction, and I need to be aware of where I am taking my students. Just as I have incorporated technology into my classroom, this inquiry has its limits. I can only inquire as far as I know something about teaching with technology. I understand that the internet and technology are not going to go the way of the eight-track. I know that my methods and style as a teacher are going to have to continue to evolve in order for me to stay successful. My students are changing. What they carry in their bags and what they have on their desks is changing, and so, too, should I change.