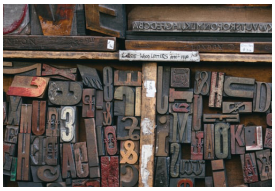
Thinking Focus: **Old Tech**

Technology that is no longer in day to day use.





If General Motors had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving $25 cars that got 1,000 MPG.
Bill Gates

Curriculum Focus

Many of the students we teach today could be alive in the 22nd Century. Who knows what (or if) technological devices will be available then, or even how people will interact with them. We can help students to understand and respond to the vast changes in all kinds of technology by giving them a sense of how quickly developments take place. And we can do this by looking into the recent past to examine technological change.

Knowledge, Skills & Values

Pupils can gain a factual knowledge of the ways in which everyday items such as phones and cameras have changed - both before they were born and during their lifetimes. They will be able to examine the vast changes in performance of devices and the impact on areas such as communication and entertainment. With this knowledge they can start a discussion about the values and beliefs which will guide their interactions with new technology.

Starting Points

Text

https://electronics.howstuffworks.com/gadgets/other-gadgets/80s-tech.htm

Choose 5 of the 12 technologies. Select and copy the best sentence from each description.

Data

https://www.tommiemedia.com/featured-news/history-of-the-cell-phone/

Extend the infographic with information/data that brings it up to date.

Map

https://www.mindmeister.com/blog/why-mind-mapping/

Use this kind of mindmap style to make another one about what you learned in the Text and Data sections.

1. Basic Questions/Tasks

Name at least 6 technologies that have changed over the last 60 years. What is their biggest change?
Find/research/investigate and record creatively:

- 16 words related to the old technology
- 8 images related to old technology
- 4 reasons why technology changes
- 2 ways that technology affects humans
- 1 sound that represents old technology best

Make a realistic model of some old tech.

To criticize Facebook is to criticize the telephone.
Jesse Eisenberg

2. Deeper Questions/Tasks

When does technology actually become 'old'? Propose 3 reasons to justify your answer. Defend them against another pupil's ideas.

Identify at least 4 interesting connections between different devices that were invented in 1980s.

Imagine and design a piece of old tech that COULD have existed but never did.

3. Long-term Questions/Tasks

Design a way to monitor your own use of technology. List the benefits of your use of technology and the risks. What might you be missing? What might you be gaining?

Find out how one specific piece of old tech works - like a VHS cassette - try to get hold of it and take it to pieces. Present the parts in a way that teaches others well.

Books

Retro Tech
by Peter Leigh

Timelines of Everything
by DK

The Space Race
by Sarah Cruddas

Starting Points

Watch

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DENG7Q7VRgo

What has changed most, least? Which fact is most surprising? Does this video need updating? If so, how?

Act

https://www.tnmoc.org/
https://bletchleypark.org.uk/

Visit a museum linked to the history of old technology. Present your learning in a memorable and engaging way.

Extend

Choose one current item of technology such as a computer or camera and trace it as far back in time as you can. Where did the idea for it start? How many steps are there from now to then?