

We are \leftarrow the last generation to touch a book. \rightarrow

Outlines:

① Introduction:

Thesis Statement: Although technological advancements in the form of ereaders, smartphones and audio-books have provided accessibility and ease, this transition is a great challenge to the traditional book reading culture. However, ^{with} taking necessary steps, it is possible to come out from the spider web of this technological world and to preserve the glory of books.

② How the distance between books and human is increasing. \rightarrow far as us bacon.

③ Factors behind losing interest in reading.

④ Introduction and popularization of digital formats.
"Burning the page" by Jason Merkoski.

⑤ Rise of digital devices like e-books and smartphones.

1) The decline in physical books sale.

"The Last Bookshop in London" by Medeline Martin

Essay:

We are the last generation to touch a book

In the classical fable, the ant spends the summer in gathering and storing food while the grasshopper spends his time idle. The ant uses the store food in winter when everything is cover with snow while the grasshopper dies from hunger. Similarly, the physical books are much like the ant's store food which are valuable source of knowledge and development of critical thinking. But these are taken for granted by the contemporary generation like grasshopper and perhaps we are the last generation to touch a book. The main reason behind losing interest in book reading is the technological advancement and digital revolution like e-reader, audio-book which are easily accessible to everyone and that's why preferred by young generation. Other factors include decline in book sale, high costs of book and lack of book reading culture especially in children. This attitude of breaking ties with books has negative implications on individuals like

weakening of cognitive abilities, loss of historical and cultural knowledge, loss of creativity and many more. Therefore, there is a need to take several steps to preserve book reading culture like establishing of libraries and book clubs, and encouraging publishing and print media. Another step maybe conducting of books festivals in educational institutes and also availability of books at low cost. In a nutshell, technological advancements in the form of e-reader and audiobooks have provided accessibility and ease, but this transition is great challenge to the book reading culture and can be lost if not preserved. However, by taking necessary steps, it is possible to come out from the spider web of this digital world and to preserve the glory of books.

The distance between books and readers is increasing in the coming generation. Perhaps we ^{it} ~~are~~ ^{is} the last generation who is experiencing the sensation of flipping through the paper pages and the musty smell of an old library. A research conducted by BLS American

Time Use Survey, shows that people aged between 15-44 read for an average of 10 minutes or less per day. The research says that this group is more likely to watch television than read a book. Another survey by Pew Research Center revealed that 23% of American adults didn't read a book in 2020. This shows that books reading culture is decreasing in contemporary generation.

The most important factor that increases the distance between books and humans is rise of digital media. With the rise of digital media such as social media, streaming services and video games, people are increasingly choosing to spend their free time on these activities. Jason Merkoski in his book "Burning the last page" discusses that digital revolution has contributed to a decline in reading habits. He argues that the proliferation of digital devices such as smartphones has made it easier for people to be distracted while reading. Similarly David Toscana in his book "The Last Reader" says

that digital media has led to a decline in reading habits. With so many digital distractions, people may not behave the desire to read books.

Along with the rise in digital media and digital revolution, the decline in physical books sale has led to the decline in book reading habits. The unavailability of bookshops and the closing of bookshops has impacted the reading habits of individuals. The Madeline Martin in his novel "The Last Bookshop in London" discusses that the loss of bookshops can negatively impact the culture of reading and book appreciation. He says that most of the readers prefer physical books and may not have access to them if bookshops have closed. This particularly impact those who do not have access to online books. This book also argues that physical books provide sensory experience that involves touching, smelling and feeling the weight of the book, which some readers find enhances their reading experience. The decline of physical bookshops can lead to a loss

of this experience when choosing and reading books.

Not only decline in physical books sale but lack of book reading culture has also contributed in increasing distance between readers and books. Individuals especially children are not exposed to physical books in their childhood. Also students in universities are provided with written notes of the specific topics, rather than reading books. David Toscana in his book "The Last Reader" highlights the importance of culture of reading as a cornerstone of education and intellectual life. Without culture of reading, the author suggests, we risk a valuable means of broadening our intellectual horizons.

Since there is unavailability of physical bookshops, the prices of printed books are very high which is one of the important reasons of not reading books. Digital books are often less expensive than physical books, this has made reading physical books unaffordable for many people in this

time of high inflation.

Other important factor that caused divorce between reader and book is the growth of artificial intelligence. The recent invention in artificial intelligence i.e Chat GPT is contributing alot in causing distance between readers and books. As human beings like/ prefer ease and these technologies provide instant answers to the questions asked by individual. Due to this reason humans prefer online services and avoid physical books.

The breaking of ties with books have serious implications on the individual. It negatively impact the memory and cognitive abilities of the current and coming generation. The abundance of information and distractions available on the internet is negatively affecting our ability to concentrate deeply and think critically. Nicholas Carr in his book "The Shallow: What the internet is doing to Our Brains" argues that spending time on internet rather than reading books erodes our ability to recall and retain information. Carr suggests that by continuously distracting us with new information and images, the

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Internet is rewiring our brains and making it harder for us to engage with long-form reading and other activities that require deep focus and reflection.

Other implications include loss of culture and traditional knowledge. Reading allows individuals to learn about their own culture and explore new cultures and experiences which are fading away in the current generation. Reading is a means of preserving knowledge, and if people don't read, the knowledge gained over centuries could be lost.

Similarly, when less reading weakens the language skills which make it difficult to preserve and transmit the culture through language.

Lack of reading also fosters creativity. By exposing oneself to new ideas and experiences, reading can expand the mind and stimulate the imagination. The study, conducted by researchers at Kingston University in London, surveyed 123 people and asked them about their reading habits and creative activities. The researchers found that participants who reported reading more frequently also tended to score higher on tests of

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diverge thinking, which is key component of creativity. This shows that people who don't read books are less creative compare to those who do it more.

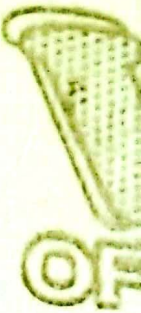
The decrease in reading may have an impacts on communication patterns in society. Reading helps to improve vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skill, which are important components of effective communication. When people read less, they are more likely to struggle with these skills, which could lead to changes in the way that people communicate. In addition, lack of reading limit exposure to different writing styles and ideas, which could in turn impact the way that people communicate. For example, if people are not exposed to a variety of writing styles, they may be more likely to use repetitive or simplistic language in their own writing and speech.

Breaking ties with books also have negative effects on mental as well as physical health. One study published in the journal Social Science and Medicine found that individuals who read less than three and a half hours ($3\frac{1}{2}$) per week were

at high risk of developing dementia later in life compared to those who read more. The study followed 3635 participants aged 65 and over for 12 years, and found that those who read regularly were 17% less likely to develop dementia.

Reading is essential and has numerous benefits for individuals and therefore, a culture of reading books should be preserved. There are several ways to preserve the habit of reading and encourage individuals to read more books. It can be done through establishing libraries which helps in promoting reading and improve literacy rates in a community. The author Fatima Akhtar in her research paper "The Role of Libraries in Promoting a Culture of Reading" argues that libraries can play a critical role in encouraging reading by providing access to books, organizing literary events and championing reading as an essential part of personal and intellectual development.

Along with establishing libraries, encouraging publishing and printing media can also promote book reading culture in



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current generation. By encouraging these, more books can be made available to the public, which can increase access to reading materials and encourage individuals to read more. It also promotes diversity in books, enhances the quality of books and also authors can get more opportunities to publish their work and reach a broader audience.

Promoting reading culture habits within children can also be a powerful way to enhance and preserve books reading culture. Children who are encouraged to read at a young age are more likely to develop a lifelong love of reading. Carolyn Hart and Erin Phelps in their research paper "The Importance of Reading Aloud to Children" argue that reading aloud to children can improve literacy rates and foster a love of reading.

Conducting book festivals in educational institutions i.e. Universities and schools can also be an effective way to promote reading habits among individuals. Book festivals provide an opportunity for individuals to explore a wide range of books. This exposure can pique their interest in reading and encourage them to read more. Book festivals

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also promote reading as a leisure activity, encouraging individuals to read for pleasure rather than just for academic or professional purposes. This can help to establish a lifelong reading habit.

The availability of books at low cost can be an efficient and productive way to promote reading. When books are available at low cost, more people can afford to buy them, increasing access to reading material. It also helps in supporting diverse voices, building a reading culture and making books accessible for educational purposes.

In the conclusion, it can be said that as we move further into the digital age, it is becoming increasingly apparent that we may indeed be the last generation to touch a book.

However, preserving book reading culture is important to maintain the value of literature and the role it plays in shaping the society. By applying and adopting the above methods, book reading culture can be preserved in this era of technological advancements.