

# Teacher: Embrace Books, Ditch Technology

Late last week, [The Washington Post](#) ran a piece written by high school English teacher Giles Scott. According to Scott, the coming school year will find his classroom laptop free.

Scott's resolve to remove technology from the reach of his students does not stem from secret Luddite tendencies. Instead, he argues that students need time away from the steady stream of information technology to learn to think for themselves:

*"Our classrooms should be places where we push back against technology, against a life largely circumscribed by screens. Most of these students, this generation, will breathe technology in almost every aspect of their lives for all of their lives. Technology will, in large part, define how they interact with and negotiate a world outside of themselves, and, more alarmingly, their own inner worlds.*

*Education's task is, of course, to teach them how to safely negotiate this world, but it is also our task to provide them with alternatives. They need a space away from the space of digital technology.*

*Literature presents a space where they can step away from that screened life, where they can learn to be critically reflective so that critical reflection can then be brought to bear upon the very medium so integral to the construction of their social and emotional worlds. It's why they shouldn't read literature in a space where every confusing reference can be sourced on a Wikipedia page, and, instead, wrestle with the uncertainty that difficult reading brings."*

Unfortunately, many of today's classrooms won't provide this

platform for critical reading and reflection, particularly since many schools are rushing to put an iPad on every desk in hopes of improving student scores. Thus it seems that if parents want their children to grow up to be critical thinkers who effectively read and understand the world around them, they are going to have to be the ones who replace technology with good books.

Naturally, many parents feel inadequate when it comes to which books to point their children towards. For those who feel this way, [\*The Classical Reader\*](#) may be a good place to start. With a searchable database of nearly 1,000 titles for grades K-12, *The Classical Reader* seeks to give parents suggestions of high quality literature that will spur children toward “truth, beauty, and goodness.”

Is it possible that by supplying their children with good, challenging books, many parents will be able to fill the holes the education system is leaving in their children?

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