**A sample “6” (excellent) English 1A final exam** written in 2008 to the Neil Postman prompt. Note that it is not perfect in terms of grammar and punctuation. We do judge these as rough drafts written under pressure. In normal-sized handwriting, single-spaced, it covered 3 pages.

In a world immersed in technology and information, a man named Neil Postman dares to argue that such a wealth of information and technological advancements do not solve what Postman refers to as the “human dilemma.” Postman argues that technology, “is a monumental and dangerous waste of human talent and energy”. He also points out how such movies like Star Wars will not be the answer to nuclear war and how artificial intelligence is not the way to self-knowledge. Instead of wasting time and energy on technology, Postman suggests that such talent and energy should be geared toward philosophy, theology, the arts, imaginative literature, and education. Even a cartoon character named Pogo knows the problem, and he states, “We have met the enemy, and he is us.” Even though the world has technology, information and instant communication, nothing fundamental can be solved while humanity is wrapped in this “technological glory.”

Over the past two decades, the rise of computers and computer scientists has led to the invention of better and better technology, whether it be things that help us with daily tastes or even special effects in summer blockbuster movies. But as of today, computers and technology do not make a person wise, or solve the human dilemma. It is as if technology is a very sharp sword, that has been refined and improved upon for years, yet it is still merely a tool, used for cutting and slicing. That sword, no matter how sharp it becomes, will never light up a dark room, or give deep insight into life. If the talent and energy used to bring forth the amazing technology available today was used to pursue more meaningful subjects, such as philosophy, or education, important life questions could be answered. Not only is technology a hinderance and a waste, but so is the incredible amount of information available.

From the birth of computers came the rise of the internet, which dominates this age of information. There is a very distinct difference between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge are the facts, the data, and raw information. Wisdom on the other hand is the ability to understand the truths of things. Filling the mind with information will only turn one into what Postman calls, “the fact-mongerer, the information junkie, and the technological idiot.” Socrates was said that, “the beginning of wisdom, is knowing that you know nothing.” Even with all of the information of the world at one’s disposal, it is useless.

In addition to technology and information, the last decade has given rise to instantaneous global communication. Cell phones, instant messaging, and even web cams allow a person to communicate with anyone in the world. This ability, as amazing as it is, is not a bridge to mutual understanding. Nations and cultures cannot understand each other by just instant communication, it requires intense study of history. Just as technology is merely a tool, so too is communication.

As the world continues on, technology and information will continue to grow and improve, but the human dilemma will remain, unless there is a shift of focus that happens. There will not be a great shift of focus, until humanity realizes the empty fruits that our technology yields.