



Synthesis Table (Sample Answers)

Research Question:				
Digital technologies influence how we gain access to information and how we communicate with other people. In the 21 st century, what skills will be essential?				
For each point of information:	For each source, indicate how it contributes to the category of information, including:			For each category, reflect on the information from the sources and consider:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefly describe what kind of question or information you are looking for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does the source have to say about this topic (summary of the source’s position or idea)? Indicate what kinds of assumptions the author makes about this topic. Indicate what kinds of evidence and examples are provided. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interesting relationships between what the different sources say. The nature of the connections between the sources. Is there debate or agreement? Your own position on this idea and how it relates to the other sources.
	Source A	Source B	Source C	Comments/Conclusions
Points	Prensky	Wohlsen	Jenkins	
<p>Point 1 – Access to information</p> <p>What does the research have to say about how digital technology affects the way we access information?</p>	<p>Prensky focuses on how the “digital natives” access information in fundamentally different ways because of exposure to digital tech: “as a result of this ubiquitous environment and the sheer volume of their interaction with it, today’s students think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors” (p. 1). Point is Prensky’s fundamental assumption that allows him to make his argument about changing curriculum;</p> <p>Interesting note: Wohlsen and Jenkins try to expose places where they need more skills to work with information, assuming, unlike Prensky, that they have significant skill gaps.</p>	<p>For Wohlsen, key skills in coding and algorithmic thinking are necessary primarily as they will enable the younger generation to be able to interpret and use the mass of information that is generated in a digital culture. Kids, he argues, need to be “skilled in the ways of information technology” because most career paths are “data-driven.”</p>	<p>For Jenkins the emphasis is on the skills necessary for participatory culture – in which participation in culture means the ability to produce and share information. With the skills to do so, individuals will be fully participating in culture as citizens.</p>	<p>Prensky focuses on a preference for how to consume or engage information, but Wohlsen and Jenkins are more focused on how digital literacy skills will enable the ability to produce and share information within society.</p> <p>For Prensky, digital technology has changed the way young people consume information.</p> <p>While this may be true, this view, perhaps because he writes in 2001, is only a small part of the issue. In the digital age, information and data are key, and Wohlsen and Jenkins emphasize the skills in interpreting, producing and sharing information as the cornerstone of digital literacy.</p> <p>In section – emphasize writers’ concern for this issue ranges from consumption, to production and sharing of information.</p>



Sample Answers

<p>Point 2 – Effects on Communication</p> <p>What does the research have to say about how digital technology affects the way we communicate?</p>	<p>Prensky’s notes that the “digital natives” and “digital immigrants” communicate and so learn in fundamentally different ways, causing friction.</p>	<p>Wohlsen’s focus is on coding skills to be able to participate in new ways in which information is produced and circulated.</p>		
<p>Point 3 – 21st Century Skills</p> <p>What does the research say about what skills we need to ensure we can continue to access information and communicate effectively in the 21st century?</p>		<p>Wohlsen emphasis for skills is the ability to make a computer do what you want it to do – coding and “logarithmic” thinking</p> <p>The rationale is to ensure success in “data-driven” environment.</p>	<p>Jenkins argues that in the era of “participatory culture” characterized by more integrated affiliations through social media and more collaboration, we need new skills; they list and explain these new skills which include problem-solving through “play”, “networking, collaboration or “collective intelligence” and “appropriation” or the ability to remix media content.</p> <p>All these skills are defined as necessary to help participate in the creation and sharing of information and communication in new participatory culture.</p>	<p>Wohlsen’s arguments are really smaller version of what Jenkins encapsulates in his major study of 21st century skills – the dominant features, if take all authors’ works together – collaboration, mixing and remixing, multi-media productions and distribution of media to share information and communicate.</p>