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**Digital Natives and Immigrants**

**By Marc Prensky**

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Perhaps the least understood and least appreciated notion among those who design and deliver education today is the fact that our students have changed radically. A really big discontinuity has taken place - the arrival and rapid dissemination of digital technology in the last decades of the 20th century.

Today's learners represent the first generations to grow up with this new technology. The numbers are overwhelming: over 10,000 hours playing videogames, over 10,000 hours talking on digital cell phones; over 20,000 hours watching TV (a high percentage fast speed MTV), over 200,000 emails and instant messages sent and received; over 500,000 commercials seen—all before today's kids leave college. And, maybe, at the very most, 5,000 hours of book reading.

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. "Different kinds of experiences lead to different brain structures, " says Dr. Bruce D. Berry of Baylor College of Medicine.

Today's students are Digital Natives. They are "native speakers" of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet.

So what does that make the rest of us? Those of us who were not born into the digital world but have come to it later in our lives are, compared to them, Digital Immigrants. And as we Digital Immigrants learn - like all immigrants, some better than others - to adapt to their environment, we always retain, to some degree, an "accent," that is, our foot in the past. The "Digital Immigrant accent" can be seen in such things as turning to the Internet for information second rather than first; in reading the manual for a program rather than assuming that the program itself will teach us to use it; in printing out our emails (or having our secretary print them out for us - an even "thicker" accent); or in never changing the original ring of our cell phone. Those of us who are Digital Immigrants can, and should, laugh at

## Digital Natives and Immigrants

ourselves and our "accent."

But this is not just a joke. It's very serious, because the single biggest problem facing education today is that our Digital Immigrant instructors, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language.

Digital Natives are used to receiving information really fast. They like to parallel process and multi-task. They prefer their graphics before their text rather than the opposite. They prefer random access (like hypertext). They function best when networked. They thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards. They prefer games to "serious" work.

Digital Immigrant instructors typically have very little appreciation for these new skills that the Natives have acquired and perfected through years of interaction and practice. These skills are almost totally foreign to the Immigrants, who themselves learned - and so choose to teach - slowly, step-by-step,

one thing at a time, individually, and above all, seriously.

Digital Immigrant teachers typically assume that learners are the same as they have always been, and that the same methods that worked for the teachers when they were students will work for their students now. But that assumption is no longer valid. Today's learners are different.

The people sitting in their classes grew up on the "twitch speed" of video games and MTV. They are used to the instantaneity of hypertext, downloaded music, phones in their pockets, a library on their laptops, beamed messages and instant messaging. They've been networked most or all of their lives. They have little patience for lectures, step-by-step logic, and "tell-test" instruction.

So is it that the Digital Natives can't pay attention, or that they choose not to? Often from the Natives' point of view their Digital Immigrant instructors make their education not worth paying attention to compared to everything else they experience - "Every time I go to school I have to power down," complains one student - and then they blame them for not paying attention! And, more and more, the Digital Natives won't take it.

So what should happen? Should we force the Digital Native students to learn the old ways, or should their Digital Immigrant educators learn the new? Unfortunately, no matter how much the Immigrants may wish it, it is highly unlikely the Digital Natives will go backwards. In the first place, it may be impossible - their brains may already be different. It also flies in the face of everything we know about cultural migration. Kids born into any new culture learn the new language easily, and forcefully resist using the old. Smart adult immigrants accept that they don't know about their new world and take advantage of their kids to help them learn and integrate. Not-so-smart (or not-so-flexible) immigrants spend most of their time grousing about how good things were in the "old country."

So unless we want to just forget about educating Digital Natives until they grow up and do it themselves, Digital Immigrants had better confront this issue. It's time to stop grousing, and as the Nike motto of the Digital Native generation says, "Just do it!" If you don't know how, just watch your kids!

Marc Prensky is an internationally acclaimed speaker, writer, consultant, and designer in the critical areas of education and learning. He is the author of *Digital Game-Based Learning* (McGraw-Hill, 2001). Marc is founder and CEO of Games2train, a game-based learning company, and founder of The Digital Multiplier, an organization dedicated to eliminating the digital divide in learning worldwide. He is also the creator of the sites and . Marc holds an MBA from Harvard and a Masters in Teaching from Yale. More of his writings can be found at . More of Marc's writings on the positive effects of video games can be found at

### **Digital Film Processing is Really the Only Option for Truly Quality Prints**

**By Dave Gonzalez**

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Digital photography has taken off like wildfire these days, primarily due to its ease and quality in its digital film processing. With a good digital camera, it's as though you're using the very best Kodak film for every single one of your digital photos. Moreover, digital film processing can be done from the comfort of your own home with the right digital film processing software or with digital photo developing online.

The most standard form of digital film processing is digital photos of 4x5 film processing. By using this size, you can make sure to get the very best in cost and quality, as many digital cameras are designed to function their very best at that level. Moreover, if cost is your primary concern, then you'll enjoy the advantage that comes with bulk digital photo developing for all of your parties and other important occasions where many people will be wanting copies.

Just like a standard camera with film, digital cameras use a lens and a shutter, except instead recording your image on film, it is captured electronically by way of a sensor, which converts it into a digital file. This file is saved on a memory device, which is frequently removable. This way, you can choose where you'd like to keep your pictures, and specifically what sort of digital film processing is best for you.

For example, some of your digital photos may be fine if they're kept in digital form on your computer, but others, such as wedding photos, may require better quality digital film processing. This allows you to print your digital pictures on regular paper, photo quality paper, use a home digital film processing printer, or even take it for the professionals to manage, as you would regular film.

When it is your regular digital photography that you'll be digital film processing, however, you'll love the great benefits of having your digital photo quickly, easily, and accurately.

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