The Evolution of the Library

Cell phones, computers, and e-books give students the opportunity to interact with digital content, and schools are evolving to take advantage of the learning opportunities these devices offer. In the library and across the campus, the notion of what constitutes a book is changing.

The Changing Library
Librarians do more than just stock shelves with books. Librarians are trained to help students utilize technology for conducting research. Librarians, along with technology administrators, help usher in the technological changes that schools are facing, and now e-books, public databases, social media applications, and multimedia planning tools, in addition to traditional books and reference materials.

Reading in a New Way
The Barnes & Noble NOOK, Amazon's Kindle, and Apple's iPad have all become popular mediums for reading. As e-book sales and readership have risen significantly in recent years, some discussions have assumed that e-books would eventually replace print copies. However, as popular as digital readers are, data shows that the majority of children's books are still being purchased as print copies. Regardless of their convenience factor, e-books are not yet positioned to replace print books.

In January 2014, a study examined the different ways children engage with electronic media. 24 four-year-olds participated in this testing, which examined the impact e-books have on literacy development. According to the article published in SAGE Open, Young Children’s Engagement with E-books at School, digital tools provided a positive result.

There was a distinct difference in touching, moving, looking, and gesturing behaviors as the preschoolers interacted with an iPad, iPod, and touchscreen computer. The authors noticed the way that "the virtual explosion in apps has transformed the traditional storybook of early childhood into a highly interactive, multimedia literacy experience."

Access Is Critical
It is frequently assumed that everyone in our country has a cell phone, laptop, or digital reader. According to Pew Research, as of January 2014, 90% of American adults have a cell phone and 58% of adults have a smartphone. But the reality for students is that many cannot afford devices and/or Internet access at home. In fact, according to EdTech Magazine, only 54 percent of teachers say students have sufficient access to the digital tools they need to do assignments.

Therefore, it is critical for instructors to learn how to manage instruction for the students with devices and those without. Another important thing for teachers to keep in mind is that some students will already be familiar with the technology, but others will not.

Source: www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheets/mobile-technology-fact-sheet