

Art & Technology



LEVEL D-11 • Written by Elfrieda H. Hiebert



**An engineer uses
computer-aided design
(CAD) technology to
design a theme park ride**

Technology Changes the Arts

New technologies, or new ways of doing things, have changed the world. Today, we can ride in planes instead of riding on horses. That's because of new technology. We can send mail through computers instead of through the post office. New technologies have changed art and music, too. Although artists still use paint and musicians still play pianos, new technologies allow artists and musicians to create their work in new ways.

Perhaps the most exciting part of these new technologies is that they have created new ways to create art works. Just as people still send letters through the post office, people still use paint and pianos without speakers. Today, however, artists can paint with beams of light. Musicians can write music with computers. Technology adds richness to the ways people can create and experience the arts.

Key Notes:

How has technology changed the arts?



**Digital cameras can
load images onto
computers.**

Digital Photography

At first, many people thought that photography was not really one of the arts. A photograph, after all, was nothing more than a picture of something that existed in life. Early in the 20th century, though, people began to think of photographs as art. They understood that photographers chose their subjects and arranged them just as painters did. Today, photography is an accepted art form.

Although photography was once a new technology, digital photography has become an even newer technology. Digital cameras store photos on memory chips, not on film. Photographers using this new technology do not need a darkroom. Instead, they load their images on a computer and print them on a printer. Artists can easily change the colors, sizes, and shapes of their subjects on a computer screen. Digital photographers can also create photographs that look like paintings.

Key Notes:

What is digital photography?



Synthesizers can sound like the piano and other instruments.

Music and Computers

At first, people did not think computers should be used in music. Some people wondered if musicians were really composing music if they used a computer. If the sounds weren't coming from instruments, were they listening to real music.

There are several ways musicians can use computers as they write and perform. Composers can program a computer with sounds and rhythms and tell the computer how to arrange them. Composers can also tell a computer to add sounds that no instruments can make. The work can then be played either by instrument or on a machine called a synthesizer. A synthesizer has a keyboard and can make the sounds of other instruments.

Musicians can also use a computer to write music. They play a song, and the computer records the sounds and turns them into written music that others can play.

Key Notes:

How can musicians use computers?



Some artists are digital painters.

Computer Art

Artists began using computers to create art in the early 1960s. As with music, some people did not think that art and computers should be used together. Computer artists, though, proved that computers could be used as an artist's tool.

Some technologies allow artists to create and change images on a computer screen. One technique, called digital painting, is like painting or drawing that is done on a computer screen, not on paper. Digital painters draw with a stylus, or a special pen, on a tablet that is connected to the computer. The lines drawn by the stylus then appear on the computer screen. Using this technique, painters can work on one part of a painting and easily transfer their work to another part of the painting. Later, they can print their work or hang it on a wall.

Key Notes:

How can computers be used in art?

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ISBN: 978-1-959326-22-9



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