

Sharing Experiences vs. Isolation

Yanely Lovera



BEFORE YOU READ:

1. Look at the title. What does it mean to “share experiences”? What does “isolation” mean?
2. What are your early memories of playing? Did you play with others or alone? Did you have access to technology? If so, how did that affect your feeling of being connected or being isolated?
3. When you read, look for the words *antenna* and *battery* in **bold italics**. What do they mean?

My First Technology: A TV!

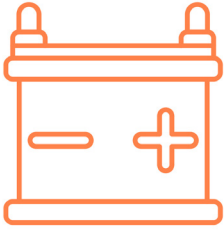
As a mother, I have to fight with technology every day. I know it helps in our lives but I really believe that we are better without it.

I grew up in a rural area. We did not have much access to technology. I remember when

I was a kid the only technology that we used was a small TV. My parents bought it in 1986. It was a black and white TV that worked with an outdoor *antenna*. Sometimes, we had to go out in the middle of the program to fix it because the signal would get lost. It also needed to be connected to a big *battery* because we did not have electricity yet. This battery only worked for a short time. After the *battery* died, we had to go to the nearest town to recharge it.

I was incredibly happy when I finished all my chores, and I could watch it. Sometimes I watched the same program many times because it was the only thing that was on. But it did not matter. The





important thing was that I shared this experience with my family and neighbors. Not all of my neighbors had a TV, so they came to our house to watch.



Everyone Came Over to Our House

It was fun to watch TV with my family and neighbors. Everybody worked a lot, so we did not get to see each other that often. Watching the TV together was one way we could spend time together. When the TV ran out of *battery*, we still played with our neighbors and parents. This is something that I do not see anymore. Now, each person has their own device. Each person watches their own show individually.

I Don't Know How to Save My Daughters

When I think about that time and I compare it with now, I can see how much technology has taken over. This makes me feel sad and scared. The happy world that I experienced as a child has disappeared. My daughters did not get to experience it, and I don't know how to save them from their world full of technology.

Technology indeed helps us at our jobs and school. With better jobs and more education, we can earn more money. We can get more material things. But what about the non-material things that make us happy? They are disappearing. For example, we don't spend time with our family and friends in the *neighborhood*. We do not know how to enjoy a party because everyone is on their phones. No one writes letters to each other anymore. Now, we only get a short text. People spend more time thinking of what to buy on the internet instead of sharing life with the people around us. Technology may be important but a childhood with love and connection to people is more important.

I am trying to teach my daughters about the most important values: love, family, respect, self-love, and integrity. I want them to make good decisions and find the best way to live their lives.

I have tried to make them strong and wise, so they can see the difference between important and valuable things versus wrong and easy things that can destroy their lives.

Every day, I pray for my daughters. I trust that I have done a good job of educating them. I pray that God will be with them all the way in their lives. I use technology only to send them texts, to give them advice, and tell them how much I love them.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, what is the main difference between her childhood and her children's childhood?
2. Think further about language: The suffix "hood" means "condition" or "state of being." *Childhood* is the time when you were a child. *Neighborhood* is the place where people are neighbors together. Other words that use the "hood" suffix include: motherhood, sisterhood, and likelihood. Think about what these words mean. Can you think of others that use "hood"?

Yanely Lovera is in ESL class at Olive Harvey College in Chicago, IL. She is from México. She had to make the difficult decision to leave her country and the life she loved to provide for her parents. She is now the proud mother of two girls. She tries to teach them the old things that made her happy so that they can have a happy childhood like she did.

