



Two Sides to a Screen
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Students took a deep look into screens to see how they can both negatively and positively affect our lives. The first part of the project explored how excessive screen time and especially the use of social media can negatively impact our relationships with others and even impact our mental health. They also saw how important sleep is for our overall brain health and how screens can disrupt sleep and consequently impact their adolescent brains.

Next, students explored how screens can help our community. We partnered with memory care facilities in our area to learn about dementia and create game-based apps that stimulate decaying neuron connections for the residents, with the aim of slowing down the disease. While visiting and interviewing the residents at the memory care facility, students practiced Reminiscence Therapy by having residents recall specific past memories. With these memories, students made “memory collages” which were gifted to the residents once the project was finished.

TWO SIDES TO A SCREEN



Teacher Reflection

I was excited to show students how social media and excessive screen use can impact their lives, but quickly realized that the most impactful part of the project would come from our community partners. Students really took to learning about dementia and Alzheimer's. They thrived in what could have been awkward situations: pairing with an elderly resident suffering from dementia and simply talking with them. We went to the facilities several times throughout the project and each time it created deeper reflections on very big themes such as life itself, compassion, understanding, and how to not take what we have for granted. We realized towards the end of the project that the simple theme of something such as brain health would have been more tangible for students to grasp.

—Guy Maclaury

Student Reflection

When we learned about how screens can help delay the symptoms of dementia, it felt good to do something that would impact someone's life. Talking with the senior citizens with dementia was so cool; they were so excited to share their life with us, and pass on their surprising wisdom. After constructing the memory collages for our senior citizens, we gifted the collages to them, and the seniors were tearing up with happiness. This project helped me learn how one simple act of kindness can make someone's day, and how that act may make the world a little bit better.

—Jay

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