What’s the Connection?

In “There Will Come Soft Rains,” you read about a fictional house of the future that featured a variety of “smart” mechanical devices. The article you are about to read will tell you about actual “intelligent” houses that may be in your future.

Standards Focus: Synthesize

When you read different materials on a related topic, you synthesize—or put together—facts, ideas, and details from each source. As a result, you gain a fuller understanding of the topic than you would if you had simply relied on one text. Here’s how you can synthesize information from two or more selections.

- Determine the central idea and details of each selection.
- Record questions that come to you as you learn new information.
- Note any conflicts in the information presented.
- Reread each selection to answer your questions and fill in gaps in your understanding.

To help you synthesize information from the Bradbury story and the following article, complete a chart like the one started here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Central Ideas and Details</th>
<th>Questions and New or Conflicting Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“There Will Come Soft Rains”</td>
<td>Technology can improve living conditions, but it can also worsen them.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“Inside the Home of the Future”</td>
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As you pour the detergent into your last load of laundry, you realize the bottle is almost empty. But instead of making a mental note to add it to your grocery list, or running to the kitchen to scribble it down, you simply say out loud, “Remember: Buy laundry detergent.”

The word “remember” is picked up by a microphone in the wall and triggers a computer to transcribe your words to your to-do list.

It might sound like a sci-fi vision of the future. But it’s actually a project called Audio Notes, currently in the works at the Georgia Institute of Technology’s 5,000-square-foot Aware Home, a combination house and laboratory in Atlanta where scientists are dreaming up futuristic housing technology.

“I love that shopping list,” says Eileen Lange, a 68-year-old retiree from Lithonia, Ga., who toured the house and tried out some of its projects last year.

Researchers and commercial labs around the country are building experimental homes to test technology that could make domestic life easier and extend the independence of older homeowners. Such efforts go beyond so-called universal design, a trend toward building houses with wider doorways, grab bars and adjustable kitchen cabinets that took off in the early 1990s.

“These are lifestyle services empowered by a new generation of technology,” says Joseph Coughlin, director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s AgeLab in Cambridge.

In many cases, the mechanics for the gizmos already exist—mainly wireless sensors, cellphones, broadband access and home computers. What’s been missing, and what researchers now are trying to develop, are ways to harness the hardware to run your entire house with little effort or technological savvy—letting you turn up the heat remotely, anticipating when you want the lights on, or deciding automatically how long your food should cook. . . . Here’s a look at what’s in store for your home of the future.
Language Coach
Roots and Affixes  A prefix is an affix (word part) added before a root or base. Reread lines 79–86. The prefix *anti-* in *anticipate* means “before.” How does understanding the prefix help you figure out what *anticipate* means?

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**C SYNTHESIZE**
Summarize the various tasks that technology can assist in completing.

**D SYNTHESIZE**
How positive is the view of technology presented in the article? Does “There Will Come Soft Rains” present a similar or different view?
Comprehension

1. **Recall** Describe three capabilities of the houses mentioned in the article.

2. **Recall** Who is intended to benefit from living in such homes? How?

Text Analysis

3. **Synthesize** Review the ideas and information you noted on your chart. How is Bradbury’s fictional home of the future similar to actual homes being developed by researchers? Support your answer with details from both texts.

4. **Evaluate** What is the most useful innovation described in the article? Explain your answer.

Read for Information: Support an Opinion

**WRITING PROMPT**
Is technology more harmful or helpful to us? Consider both the advantages and disadvantages of living in a heavily mechanized society. Use your objective summaries of both the short story and the newspaper article to help you form an opinion.

To answer this prompt, you will have to support an opinion. An **opinion** is a statement that expresses an individual’s beliefs, feelings, or thoughts.

To support your opinion, you will need to follow these steps:

1. State your opinion on whether technology is more harmful or helpful to us.

2. Use your summary statements to find evidence from each selection that supports your opinion.

3. Recall personal knowledge or experiences that support your opinion.

Review the evidence to make sure that your opinion is adequately supported; revise your opinion if necessary.
Advertisement
You have just read a short story and a newspaper article that express differing views of technology. The selections’ writers used words to present their ideas. Now you will analyze a print advertisement that uses both words and an image to inform and persuade readers. To help you, answer the questions at right.

1. **INTERPRET**
Which feature or features described in the text of the advertisement can be seen in the image of the car? Does having more features than can be seen in the image support or take away from the effectiveness of the advertisement?

2. **ANALYZE**
What features in the image support the claim that the car has an aerodynamic shape?

3. **MAKE JUDGMENTS**
Do you think this car sold well? Why or why not?
Comparing Texts: Assessment Practice

LITERARY TEXT: “THERE WILL COME SOFT RAINS”

Assessments expect you to draw conclusions as you read literary texts. Practice this skill by answering the short constructed response question below.

After reading “There Will Come Soft Rains,” what can the reader conclude about the author’s view of technology? Support your answer with evidence from the story.

NONFICTION TEXT: “INSIDE THE HOME OF THE FUTURE”

Being able to recognize details that support a text’s main idea will help you better understand what you read. Practice the skill of recognizing supporting details by answering the short constructed response question below.

How does the author of “Inside the Home of the Future” support the idea that technology can be beneficial? Include evidence from the text in your answer.

COMPARING LITERARY AND NONFICTION TEXTS

Some assessment questions ask you to compare and contrast literary and nonfiction texts. Practice this valuable skill by answering the following short constructed response question about “There Will Come Soft Rains” and “Inside the Home of the Future.”

How are the views of technology expressed in “There Will Come Soft Rains” and “Inside the Home of the Future” similar and different? Support your answer with evidence from both texts.

STRATEGIES IN ACTION

1. Note that the question asks you to explain how the views in each text are alike and different.
2. Make a general statement of how the views are alike and different, and then look for specific evidence from both texts that support your general statement.