

Goodbye to Paper?

“What does biotransformation mean?”, I’m asking myself while preparing for school. As usual, I switch on my computer and look up the words on the Internet, like almost everybody else would do in my case. Suddenly, I begin to wonder if we, owing to our modern reading habits, soon have to say goodbye to books.

The greatest advantage of digital information is that it is a big time-saver. Hardly anyone today has time to go to a library and to search patiently for the right book just to find out that they don’t have it in stock. The internet is the biggest library in the world, and it’s fully accessible from your sofa. In addition to that, hyperlinks enable you to find additional information connected to what you were actually searching for in the first place - all available in an instant.

Also, when it comes to today’s mobile lifestyle, gadgets like tablets or e-readers are a perfect fit. They are so much easier to carry around than a stack of weighty traditional books. Moreover, they offer you the possibility to download books while you are sitting on a train or a bus, so that you don’t lose time browsing through book stores.

On the other hand, I can’t imagine any vacation without a proper book - a book I can hold in my hands. The tactile feeling of turning pages, anxiously asking what will happen next, is just more exciting than pressing buttons. Also, the unique smell of books adds so much to the experience of reading.

Another advantage of books is the fact that the information they contain cannot be manipulated very easily, whereas tampering with information online can be done with just a few clicks. Anybody with an e-mail address can create a Wikipedia account and alter articles there. Electronic words simply can’t compete with printed ones when it comes to trust and reliability.

To sum up, I think we don’t have to say goodbye to books in the future. It just depends on the situation, whether we read in a book or use the internet. And after quickly looking up my words in an online Duden dictionary I may have more time afterwards to finish the biography of Waris Dirie.