

**SSUSH23 – Assess the political, economic, and technological changes during the Reagan, Bush, Sr., Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations.**

c. Examine the influence of technological changes on society including the personal computer, the Internet, and social media.

Technology in the late Twentieth Century dramatically changed society. The efficiency of new technological innovations led to greater productivity in business, industrial, and personal sectors. Communication was revolutionized as new platforms took hold at the start of the new millennium.

Scholars at the University of Pennsylvania designed the first computer in 1946. Their device was known as ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer). While it was the first step into the new technological age, it was not practical for widespread consumer use. ENIAC was enormous and had a limited capacity for output. The next step was to reduce the size of the computer's hardware in order to make the technology viable for business and eventually **personal use**. That development came about in 1971 with the invention of the microprocessor. The power of ENIAC was thus harnessed and contained in a silicon chip the size of a postage stamp. The capability of computers was growing very quickly with computation and word processing functions. Technology innovators were also improving the speed at which computers were able to process data.

As computer technology improved, a vast new world of instant, global communication arose. During the 1980s and 1990s, Internet was developed as a conglomeration of computer networks from around the world. Personal computers became popular as the Internet became more accessible to individuals. No longer was computer technology used solely in business and manufacturing settings. Home computers became more affordable and practical in their capability for individual use.

A new platform for communication emerged from the development of the **Internet**. The term Email is short for electronic mail. In the mid-1990s, the use of Email started to become a popular mode for sending messages instantly over the Internet. No longer did commercial companies or individuals have to wait for written documents, messages, or information to be physically transported. Instead, Email is an immediate method of information transfer. Email changed the way business communication is conducted and the way individuals often communicate.

**Social Media** is another recent technological phenomenon in which individuals share information in online communities. Popular social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. Individuals create accounts and share or post messages, photos, and videos to the online community they create. The popularity of social media has dramatically increased in the first few decades of the Twenty-first Century. Social media is becoming a source for news and instant information sharing. While popular, there are growing concerns about the credibility and reliability of some information disseminated through social media. Cyber bullying is another problem that has resulted from the advent of social media.

Technological changes in the Twenty-first Century have been dramatic. Businesses and individuals rely heavily on computers, the Internet, and social media for communication and productivity. While innovation has increased global connectivity and efficiency, there have been some negative consequences that came along with the new technology. Privacy, trustworthiness of information being presented, and cyber security risks are all challenges that must be addressed as technology continues to evolve.

**Define**

**Internet**

**Social Media**

1. How did the internet impact society?
2. How did the personal computer impact society?
3. How did social media impact society?

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d. Examine the historic nature of the presidential election of 2008.

The candidates in the **Presidential Election of 2008** campaigned on the issues of the lagging economy and the war to fight terrorism. Trillions of dollars had been spent on the war in Iraq, the economy was weakening, and unemployment was on the rise. It was a politically charged campaign that led to the **historic outcome** of the election in which the first person of color was elected to be President of the United States.

Many Americans and journalists thought Hillary Clinton would be the Democratic nominee for the 2008 Presidential Election. Instead the Democratic Party nominated Barack Obama. His platform of "Hope and Change," delivered with skilled oratory, captured the attention of his party and many Americans. Obama was relatively new to national politics having only served one term as a Senator from Illinois. Barack Obama was a 47 year old, Harvard educated lawyer when he was elected President. He was the biracial son of a White woman from Kansas and a Black man from Kenya.

Obama's Republican opponent in the 2008 Presidential Election was Senator John McCain of Arizona. In contrast to Obama's youth and lack of national political experience, McCain was a veteran on both counts. He was 72 years old during the campaign in 2008, had served in the United States Congress for 25 years, and was a Vietnam War veteran who was shot down and captured as a Prisoner of War. The campaign between McCain and Obama was hard fought. Ultimately, Obama won with an Electoral College victory of 365-173.

Barack Obama was reelected in 2012 over the Republican nominee, Mitt Romney. Obama served two terms as President. Some of the major outcomes of his presidency were the controversial passage of Healthcare Reform (Obamacare) in 2010. His foreign policy effort was highlighted by the elimination of Osama bin Laden, who was America's prime target in the War on Terror after the September 11th attack. A Navy SEAL team killed bin Laden on May 11, 2011. Throughout Obama's historic presidency there was a growing conservative movement that opposed the efforts of the President and the Democratic Party. The result was a deep political divide in the United States that pitted Democrats and Republicans in bitter state and national elections.

1. Why was the election of 2008 historic?