***As people rely more and more on technology to solve problems, the ability of humans to think for themselves will surely deteriorate.***

Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

With the advent of the World Wide Web and developments in Artificial Intelligence, technology has revolutionized the way we live, making life significantly easier than the pre-Internet age. It has become somewhat of a cliche these days for older generations to tell young people things along the lines of “Back in my day, we had it harder.” This is a valid statement; technology has simplified the way society functions, and this could sometimes be perceived as a deterioration of human ability. The root issue to address here is: Are these advancements detrimental to human ability? In my opinion, I mostly disagree with this sentiment, taking all things into account. This stance is built upon three main points.

First, people who agree with the prompt’s claim often consider technology to be an external actor in human life. However, this could not be further from the truth, since technology has been built by humans themselves. When technology keeps getting updated over the years, it is the people who create and enhance it that are responsible for it, and not some abstract robot-being. For technology to advance, it is humans who must work harder and solve problems. If anything, technology has shown us how much our problem solving has improved. The recent rise of Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT may drastically decrease a person’s workload if they are trying to get work done, but the brains behind the creation of technology like this are not to be understated. To say that technology deteriorates human ability in this way would be incorrect; it is a reflection of how far we have come.

Second, has technology stunted humans’ ability to think or solve problems, or made us lazier? The release of the iPhone in the early 2010s was one of the most pivotal moments of the human tech age. One may argue that smartphones like this are a cause of laziness, but the reasoning behind this is flawed. A smartphone can be used for calls, texts, e-mails, music, ordering food, playing games – a whole plethora of activities. Would it be worth it to not be ‘lazy’ as these people claim, and use separate devices or gadgets that did these things? These tools have simply removed redundant tasks, none of which were a big indicator of human ability. In recent times, one may resent the inability of people to remember phone numbers, thinking of it as a backward step. But is this really necessary? Is memorising a set of digits required? If anything, this allows people to remember other more important things.

Finally, technology has increased accessibility features that help those in need. The examples of the new chair that helps the elderly get downstairs, captioning software that aids the deaf in knowing what information is being said on any kind of visual media, spectacles that can ameliorate the color-differentiating power of the colorblind – are all proof of technology being for the best, augmenting human capability, and expanding possibilities. To regard such advancements as detrimental would be a disservice to the absolute human ingenuity that has led to these milestones. One may say “If kids these days use a calculator to add numbers, will they ever learn?” But it is important to consider the fact that the kids whose aim it is to develop new tech, will inevitably learn math out of interest. It may be possible that some may not even need much math in their career. Technology can be used as a teaching aid to help kids learn math in a better way than it has been taught.

In conclusion, a growing dependence on technology is not indicative of a deterioration in human cognitive ability. Rather than blame technology for making people ‘lazier,’ it would be better to embrace it and imagine what technology can do for us in the future. It is not something that will take over our abilities, but is a useful tool that has a lot of power and potential in improving human life as a whole.