Socrates once said that learning to read and write had no intelligent value for thinkers. Today, some, like Nicholas Carr, believe that technological innovations like the internet are changing the way we read and therefore making us stupid. Between Socrates and Carr, neither of them is correct. Instead, reading and writing are valuable in providing thinkers with the information they need to argue intelligently and the internet provides a new medium by which more information can be gained. Ultimately, from Socrates to Carr, the way in which information has been obtained has changed for the better giving society a larger foundation from which to argue.

Throughout history, great thinkers have provided new thoughts on various topics. From those thinkers, we can build on their ideas to strengthen our understanding. Isaac Newton once said, “If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.” In this instance, Newton is referring to how he was able to make mathematical advances because of the foundations laid before him by other mathematicians. Without the legwork done by previous mathematicians, Newton would have never been able to make the advances that he did because he would have been discovering other less difficult types of math. In the same way, Google can be considered a stepping stone into bettering our ideas about the world and the way it works. Brilliant minds went into the making of Google and where it takes you, and they did so with the mindset that new minds would make new discoveries in years to come. We use Google as a foundation of ideas from which we build on to broaden the way the world works.

Because of Socrates’ incorrect opinion of writing, we are able to see the path we took get to where we are. Now, Nicholas Carr states his opinion of how Google makes us dumber, showing us that some “stones” may appear to be going the wrong direction. Ultimately, the path we are taking started with writing and continues with Google; all of these steps take us closer to greatness.