Application of knowledge to the practical aims of human life or to changing and manipulating the human environment. Technology includes the use of materials, tools, techniques, and sources of power to 5 make life easier or more pleasant and work more productive. Whereas science is concerned with how and why things happen, technology focuses on making things happen."

What does technology mean to you?

That's a tidy definition, but there is nothing in it that to could not also be construed to apply to the world of mining, for instance.

The word technology is a combination of two Greek words, techne and logos. Techne means art, craft, or skill. Logos means "to speak of". Some have since 15 taken the word logos to imply the practical application oftechne, but others say that is stretching its etymological roots.

Needless to say, neither of these bookish pursuits seem to help us nail down a definition that would be 20 satisfying to a modern audience.

Perhaps the best way to look at technology is in terms of progress. In many ways, the world simply gets better because technology has the ability to create a higher standard of living. A vaccine eliminated polio.

The internet breaks down social, racial and sexual barriers. Computers provide better access to education. But is it always true that more technology is the answer to the world's problems?

Not according to tech legend Bill Gates. Gates say 30 that while the dream of providing internet access to the billions of people who do not have it is a noble one, is isn't even close to being as important as ensuring that more people have proper plumbing, or access to vaccinations against infectious diseases.

\*Innovation is a good thing," Gates told The Financial Times recently. "The human condition – put aside bioterrorism and a few footnotes – is improving because of innovation," he says. But while - "technology's amazing, it doesn't get down to the 40 people most in need in anything near the timeframe we should want it to".

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