Get real!

Can the digital world ever replace the physical world?

It was Amazon that started Internet shopping by moving book sales online. So why on earth did they later open a physical bookstore? It seems they discovered that people may buy a book online, but what makes them want to buy the book, is seeing it as a real object in a physical place.

Virtual learning

Virtual universities now provide free video lectures to millions of students. Online tests mark themselves automatically, students grade each other's essays, and there are Internet forums, too. But don't the students miss face-to-face discussions with each other? And isn't an enthusiastic teacher better in a classroom than on a video?

Old words, new meanings

Nearly all workers today spend time sitting in front of a computer screen, and we seem to lose touch with the physical world. We even forget that many of the words we use digitally come from the real world. For example, graphic designers used to **cut** out text and pictures with scissors, and **paste** them into a document to get everything in the **layout** right!

Physical survives

People thought downloading and streaming would take over music sales completely, and that we'd enjoy being free of physical CDs. But the sales of even vinyl records are booming, and it's the same in other areas. Board games are still popular, despite all the digital games around. And the number of high quality print magazines has been growing, too.

➡️

A book in the hand …

Perhaps Amazon realized that although we may enjoy the convenience of e-books, we don't love them in the same way that we love real books in our hands and on our shelves. We don't even feel that the e-books we've bought are ours. And it just doesn't seem right that the greatest of all the classics, War and Peace, looks the same on an e-book screen as a two-page report on traffic problems.

Overall then, while digital has its fans, it's clear that many people still feel the need for something physical that they can touch and feel.