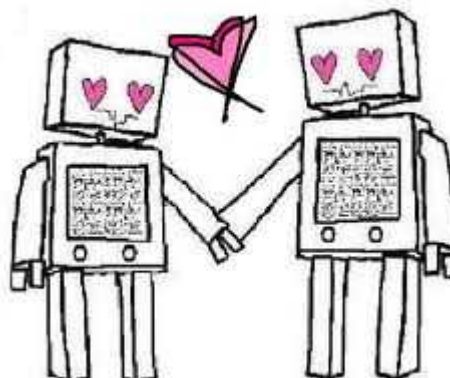Conversation
Digital Divide

Conversation

Yumi : I often hear the **buzzword "digital divide."** What exactly does it mean?

Takashi : It's a newly minted catch phrase. It's been spreading rapidly in the United States since a report was released a few years ago about "Net dropouts."

Yumi : It's sounds kind of negative.

Takashi : Yeah, you're right. But that's only the upside of the "divide." It has a downside, too. First, for example, Internet use by African-American and Hispanic families is 40 percent less than that of white families. Second, Internet use in rural communities generally **lags far behind** urban areas.

Yumi : Oh, I get it. You mean that the expansion of the digital divide may speed up the **animosity** that already exists between the rich and the poor; the "haves" and the "have nots"?

Takashi : That's it. It seems to me that the lack of computer skills may worsen the **inequality** that already exists in US society. It would be tragic and ironic if the same instrument that helped to break down **barriers** between

Word Booster	
digital divide	the gap between those who have computers with Internet access and those who do not, as well as the gap between those who are
drop out	failure to read a bit of stored information.
inequality	lack of equality; disparity
lag (behind)	to move slowly, backward in terms of technology
animosity	hostility, unfriendliness
barriers	hindrance, walls between (something)
buzzword	famous words or phrases

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