



## Computers, Consoles, the Future, *Oh My*: The Never-ending Journey

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1. Literacy in its raw form is simply the ability to read and write, but it is much more than that plain and obvious answer. The most common devices people use to read now are vastly different from what everyone used to use less than just fifty years ago. Newspapers and books which used to be the snapshot of literacy are now being replaced by screens of various types. Digital literacy was an enormous development that came into popularity very early on in life for the newer generations, including myself.
2. I remember when I got my first digital device: the Nintendo DS. It was a birthday present for, roughly, my ninth birthday; it's difficult to clearly remember which birthday it was since my birthday is in August and I almost always had my birthday party at the pool. I was unbelievably excited and tried it out right away. I remember it being difficult to set up, but my brother taught me how to since he had one before I did. The first game I ever played on that device was Nintendogs. Reading the intense list of directions was confusing at first, but the game got easier and easier as I played and read through prompts. I ended up having an entire collection of games soon enough and breezed through set up!
3. I also vividly remember writing my absolute favorite essay of all time in sophomore year of high school which was roughly October of 2017, making me fifteen years old. It was a research project, which I never liked doing, debating the ethics of cloning. This project showed me how the topic of an essay can change my attitude towards writing it and how fast I could write it so drastically. I had never been

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so excited to research a topic and write my opinion about it. I flew through articles on articles and had several pieces of evidence in a blink of an eye; it all came so easily. Without the use of technology and being able to access as many articles as I wanted in as short as milliseconds, writing essays would not be nearly as easy and exciting. I could not imagine having to dig through endless rows of a library just to find *one* source for a research paper.

4. Another important digital literacy memory I have is playing my favorite game to this day: Skyrim. I grew up watching my brother playing it since it came out in 2011 and decided to properly play it myself for the first time when I was eleven years old in 2013. There is an unbelievable amount of reading lore and listening to dialogue in the game and it taught me a ridiculous amount of words and concepts I never would have known at such a young age. That was probably the biggest digital literacy development that shaped my life in terms of actual knowledge.
5. Being a single mother, my mom was the main sponsor for all literacy, both digital and not, in my life. The only other one I can remember is the school system when they began to force computers into our lives. I despised it at first and hated learning how to type. I did and still do miss the act of writing on paper because it helps me remember material and deadlines a lot more easily. Everything after elementary school became highly digital-based and urged the use of a computer. Many people who did not own a digital device at home were injured badly by this encouragement. In junior year there was tons of controversy surrounding the school's decision to transition from a paper agenda to an online one in an app; I, like many others, much preferred a paper one where I could physically write out tasks. In that way I do not believe they had our best interests at heart because they did not listen to their students. They did, however, in my senior year finally decide to let everyone borrow a personal laptop for a reasonable price of fifty dollars, but they were not even that good in terms of functionality and the battery life was awful. Not to mention that they did not *allow* us to charge them at school, so picking and choosing battles was important.
6. When I was growing up there were two computers in my house that had internet access, thankfully. We got them later in my life, around elementary/middle school, when we lived with my mom's

best friend and her daughter. Having this internet access ties into my first memories of internet usage. I don't remember feeling too inclined to use it much, only for those girly "dress up" games or occasionally cooking games for some reason. I tended to prefer physical toys and watching movies on DVD since that is what I was used to; however, my life changed immediately when my brother introduced me to YouTube. I became obsessed and enveloped in this seemingly different reality, hypnotized even. It was definitely a "wow" moment when I figured out I could find and learn about almost anything on there that I wanted and would spend hours upon hours watching. Since he and I both enjoyed playing games, we would watch this genre of YouTube where you essentially watch someone play a game and commentate on it as they play through it. We bonded a ton through our mutual interest in it and would watch "episodes" together after school. My mom *still* does not understand the concept and is baffled as to why I would not just play something myself, but it is more about listening to someone else's perspective and insight. I also remember using it to find tutorials on how to make bracelets; I still have an entire gallon bag in my closet at home filled with them! YouTube definitely takes up about 85% of what I use the internet for on the daily.

7. Text messages are becoming almost a thing of the past, at least for me. I rarely send text messages anymore unless it is to my family and extremely close friends. I would say that with the way a ton of people my age text, the literacies that are encouraged are a lot of shortcuts with grammar not being an important factor. Very rarely will I see someone texting with good grammar, no acronyms, and capital letters. With acquaintances and mutual friends, social media is normally the way to communicate. I am starting to dislike the use of social media and honestly might delete it soon; it has been and is becoming more toxic by the second. With the concept of followers and likes, everyone becomes an attention seeker and dissociates from the original purpose of posting for themselves and instead feel like they need to please other people; even I have succumbed to feeling a little embarrassed if I do not get enough likes on something which is horrible and ridiculous for people to be upset over. I enjoy Snapchat a little more, but it is still toxic to an extent; I use it instead of text messaging generally and to keep up with people's lives.
8. Although several of my early childhood memories involve actual

books and paper, the shove into the digital world was nothing less than intense and sudden. Digital literacy has been a long process to figure out and master, but once I did it has been very helpful and practical. The times are ever-changing and with the future comes more and more innovation. Technology is ultimately changing for the better, but it has its flaws as everything does. Regardless of personal opinions, the snapshot of literacy is moving to an almost all technological basis. My generation seemed to at least have had some time to be actual kids and be outside before technology really took off, but the newest generation is bound to be more addicted and reliant on technology because they are being introduced to it at a much younger age than my generation was; it is simply inevitable.

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Instructor: Derek Mueller (Associate Professor)

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# Project One: Digital Literacy Narrative (10%)

Blueprint

✓ Published

Edit



ENGL1105 - Project One Overview (Mueller, 84445)



## Overview

"Literacy is best understood as a myriad of." [Googlism.com](http://www.googlism.com/) [\(http://www.googlism.com/\)](http://www.googlism.com/)

"Despite so much scholarship to the contrary and many compelling personal accounts, there remains a seemingly indestructible belief, so commonly expressed in our public discussions about literacy reform and literacy crises, that literacy is a relatively straightforward matter of learning a set of rules by which to communicate through written language" (29). Bob Yagelski, *Literacy Matters*

*Literacy*: what a deceptively simple word for an elaborate, unwieldy concept. People learn to read and write every day, and they build upon foundational literacies, adding nuance and subtlety to the wide and churning sea of human communication. With so much discussion and debate about literacy, given the accelerating rise of digital communication technologies in the last 20 years, one would expect that many of us have experienced unmistakable shifts in what we personally identify as "literate practices." Reading and writing still involves pencils and paper, printed books and paper newsletters, but literacies have also bloomed in digital environments. It's that expansion of digital literacies that this project invites you to explore and examine. Every new device and every new software update introduces a new wrinkle in our digital literacy practices--the ways we read, write, collect, like or upvote, speak and list, watch and follow, and so much more--in online environments. With these changes, our vocabulary must evolve for describing these practices. Adopters of Instagram, Twitch, or TikTok encounter new practices and new ways of naming those practices. There are specialist insider knowledges sponsored at these

platforms, and newcomers must learn those to be effective as someone who communicates and as some one who gives and gets attention in these digital environments. Many would agree that 'basic literacies' have, in the digital age, grown to involve *something* more than reading, writing, and arithmetic--the traditional three R's now almost cliched in their simplification of alphabetic and numeric literacies.

Our first major project this semester begins with some consideration of the range of habits and practices that have been formative for in your 'becoming literate.' We will explore this premise by examining the shifting ground of literacy brought on by your specific experiences and memories with new and emerging technologies. Meanwhile you will write your own digital literacy narrative, reflecting on a select few formative moments in your life that have shaped your views, attitudes, and habits with respect to literate practices. Remember the moments you choose to recount and analyze in the written account *will be contingent upon your own definitional groundwork with the concept of literacy*. In other words, you should think first about how you will focus and narrow the term 'literacy' so that the moments you illustrate give depth and insight into your sense of what it means to be literate in the twenty-first century.

Your digital literacy narrative will account for your own memory work where you identify a couple of key moments and present them as detailed vignettes, or short stories. It will also establish connections between those personal moments and a definition of literacies that you determine to be relevant given the scenes, moments, and artifacts focal in your writing. Your project will offer an analytical claim, meaning that it will alert the reader to insights and understandings gained from having examined something (a set of literacy memories, encounters, or practices) more carefully and deeply.

### **Generating Questions**

- What is literacy? What materials (e.g., printed texts, device screens) are assumed to be operating in snapshots of literacy development? And which materials are not (e.g., a coach's marker board, sidewalk chalk, Snapchat)?
- How do three specific micro-narratives, or brief stories, deepen or complicate a basic sense of digital literacy as it has operated in your life?
- Who are some of the people who have sponsored your digital literacy development? What are some of the institutions that have urged you to become more fluent with online environments? Do you *trust* these people and institutions? In what senses did these people or institutions have your best interests at heart?
- When did you first learn to read and write in digital environments? Who was present? Who encouraged you? How did those interactions play out? Note, too, that although this is not a project that requires you to interview anyone or to collect artifacts, such as photos, you could enrich your account perhaps by talking to a family member, retrieving and analyzing a photograph of a scene of reading or writing from your childhood, and even including these in your digital literacy narrative.
- Have you encountered negative attitudes or statements toward digital literacy (e.g., punishments, device bans)? Have you overheard or been subjected to discouraging or disparaging remarks about digital devices or digital literacy? When? From whom? How did you respond? How would you respond now?

- What is one of your earliest memories of learning to navigate a digital device or figuring something out related to digital literacy? What is one of your earliest memories reading or writing on or with a computer? A tablet? A mobile phone?
- Was there a computer with internet access where you grew up? Who used it the most? For what?
- Identify and describe one or two of the greatest "wow" moments in your experience with a technology, new or old.
- When did you first access the internet? Who taught you how to do this? What were the basic sites, applications, and skills you found most helpful as you explored the web?
- At what moment did you find that you were more technologically savvy than someone older than you? Or less technologically savvy than someone younger than you?
- How many text messages do you send in a week? To whom? What is the substance of these messages? How would you characterize the literacies they encourage or demand?
- How do you use social media platforms? Are you satisfied with your habits and practices on these sites? Or do you wish they would change? How so?

Your digital literacy narrative should be highly focused in its concern with three moments and the ways these moments lend depth and texture to what digital literacy means, to the ways digital literacy is not simple, to the ways it accords with the idyllic (positive), the harsh (negative), and at least one other quality. That is, it should acknowledge explicitly an evolving definition of literacy that taps into each narrative anecdote (or literacy moment) and that explores its significance, answering "So what?" more than once.

### **Deadlines and Specifications**

- A half-draft of at least 500 words is due for Week Four: Peer Review (as a Google Doc) no later than **Tuesday, September 15, by 11:59 p.m.**
- Project One and Invention Portfolio are due in your Google Folder no later than **Sunday, September 27, by 11:59 p.m.**
- At least four pages, typed and double-spaced (i.e., 1000 words)
- A title that adheres to the model, **Catchphrase: Description**, all the better if it has a playful, memorable turn of phrase in the first half

### **Boosts (optional)**

Boosts are value-added badges, of sorts. They offer you the incentive of doing something a little extra both to level-up your writing practice and also to gain experience with some aspect of development that will enrich your work. To claim a boost, simply add a note in your project at the location where you have applied the boost, like this [Boost One - Figure] or [Boost Two - Synthesis]. There are two boosts available for Project One. Each will also bear inflection in your project's evaluation, benefiting the project with a slight increase in credit.

#### **Boost One - Figure**

Incorporate an image and include beneath the image "Figure 1" and a descriptive caption. The image may be a copy of your literacy development map, or it may be a personal or family

photograph that reflects reading or writing, or that indicates some location in which reading or writing materials were in the environment (e.g., a room with a book shelf).

### **Boost Two - Synthesis**

Introduce and briefly synthesize one of the assigned readings for this project, account for it in relationship to the definitional work you are doing with digital literacy. That is, although you are not required to cite any sources for Project One, this boost encourages you to make direct reference to one of the sources we read, incorporating it into your writing with a leading phrase, following it with an in-text citation, and listing its reference details according to MLA in a Works Cited section at the end of the project.

### **Invention Portfolio Contents**

The invention portfolio amounts to a small collection of writings, notes, reflections, and annotations that lend a broader base to your thinking through and deciding about directions to take for Project One. Invention is a key rhetorical concept in that it names the processes and practices relating to how we come up with what we write or what we say when we speak. With this in mind, the Invention Portfolio is a collection of smaller, everyday writing prompted for you do as the project begins to take shape.

(Note: This list may change at our time on the project unfolds.)

### **Grading Breakdown and Rubric**

Grades for Project One will be returned to in Canvas using the rubric tool and Grades area of the course. The rubric assigns values to the following criteria:

- **Project One - Literacy Narrative**
  - **Evolving definition of literacy** - The project introduces a definition of digital literacy that shifts and gains nuance as the project progresses.
  - **Time-place specificity in three moments** - Each narrative account or brief story includes specific details about time and place, sufficient to situate it and provide context.
  - **Balanced and purposefully arranged moments** - The narrative accounts are balanced (approximately equal length) and arranged with purpose.
  - **Overall development (inc. title and length)** - The project honors specifications concerning title, length, and any other formatting noted in class.
  - **Style Conventions** - The project reflects control and consistency, which is evident in the presentation of understandable, accessible syntax (word order) and diction (word choice), regardless of multilingual and vernacular variation.
- **Invention Portfolio** - Evaluated based on the pattern of checks, check-plusses, and check-minuses in the collection of shorter written work.

**Points** 10

**Submitting** Nothing



| <b>Due</b> | <b>For</b> | <b>Available from</b> | <b>Until</b> |
|------------|------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Sep 27     | Everyone   | -                     | -            |

### **Project One - Digital Literacy Narrative**

You've already rated students with this rubric. Any major changes could affect their assessment results.

| Criteria                                                                                                                                                                                  | Ratings                                                  |                                                          |                                                                 |                                                               |                                              | Pts            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <p>Evolving definition of literacy</p> <p>The project introduces a definition of digital literacy that shifts and gains nuance as the project progresses.</p>                             | <p><b>1.4 to &gt;1.19 pts</b><br/><b>Exceptional</b></p> | <p><b>1.19 to &gt;1.05 pts</b><br/><b>Acceptable</b></p> | <p><b>1.05 to &gt;0.91 pts</b><br/><b>Needs Improvement</b></p> | <p><b>0.91 to &gt;0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Narrowly Applied</b></p> | <p><b>0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Not applied</b></p> | <p>1.4 pts</p> |
| <p>Time-place specificity in three moments</p> <p>Each narrative account or brief story includes specific details about time and place, sufficient to situate it and provide context.</p> | <p><b>1.4 to &gt;1.19 pts</b><br/><b>Exceptional</b></p> | <p><b>1.19 to &gt;1.05 pts</b><br/><b>Acceptable</b></p> | <p><b>1.05 to &gt;0.91 pts</b><br/><b>Needs Improvement</b></p> | <p><b>0.91 to &gt;0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Narrowly Applied</b></p> | <p><b>0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Not applied</b></p> | <p>1.4 pts</p> |
| <p>Balanced and purposefully arranged moments</p> <p>The narrative accounts are balanced (approximately equal length) and arranged with purpose.</p>                                      | <p><b>1.4 to &gt;1.19 pts</b><br/><b>Exceptional</b></p> | <p><b>1.19 to &gt;1.05 pts</b><br/><b>Acceptable</b></p> | <p><b>1.05 to &gt;0.91 pts</b><br/><b>Needs Improvement</b></p> | <p><b>0.91 to &gt;0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Narrowly Applied</b></p> | <p><b>0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Not applied</b></p> | <p>1.4 pts</p> |
| <p>Overall development (inc. title and length)</p> <p>The project honors specifications concerning title, length, and any other formatting noted in class.</p>                            | <p><b>1.4 to &gt;1.19 pts</b><br/><b>Exceptional</b></p> | <p><b>1.19 to &gt;1.05 pts</b><br/><b>Acceptable</b></p> | <p><b>1.05 to &gt;0.91 pts</b><br/><b>Needs Improvement</b></p> | <p><b>0.91 to &gt;0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Narrowly Applied</b></p> | <p><b>0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Not applied</b></p> | <p>1.4 pts</p> |

| Criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Ratings                                                  |                                                          |                                                                 |                                                               |                                              | Pts            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <p>Style Conventions</p> <p>The project reflects control and consistency, which is evident in the presentation of understandable, accessible syntax (word order) and diction (word choice), regardless of multilingual and vernacular variation.</p> | <p><b>1.4 to &gt;1.19 pts</b><br/><b>Exceptional</b></p> | <p><b>1.19 to &gt;1.05 pts</b><br/><b>Acceptable</b></p> | <p><b>1.05 to &gt;0.91 pts</b><br/><b>Needs Improvement</b></p> | <p><b>0.91 to &gt;0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Narrowly Applied</b></p> | <p><b>0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Not applied</b></p> | <p>1.4 pts</p> |
| <p>Invention Portfolio</p> <p>Ratings on everyday and shorter pieces of writing building up to the project.</p>                                                                                                                                      | <p><b>3.0 to &gt;2.55 pts</b><br/><b>Exceptional</b></p> | <p><b>2.55 to &gt;2.25 pts</b><br/><b>Acceptable</b></p> | <p><b>2.25 to &gt;1.95 pts</b><br/><b>Needs Improvement</b></p> | <p><b>1.95 to &gt;0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Narrowly Applied</b></p> | <p><b>0.0 pts</b><br/><b>Not Applied</b></p> | <p>3.0 pts</p> |
| <p>Boosts</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p><b>0.4 pts</b><br/><b>Two boosts</b></p>              |                                                          | <p><b>0.2 pts</b><br/><b>One boost</b></p>                      |                                                               | <p><b>0.0 pts</b><br/><b>No boosts</b></p>   | <p>0.4 pts</p> |
| <p>Total Points: 10.4</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                          |                                                          |                                                                 |                                                               |                                              |                |