

E 708: Technological Literacy Autobiography

In “Becoming Literate in the Information Age,” Hawisher and Selfe define “technological literacy” as “the practices involved in reading, writing, and exchanging information in online environments, as well as the values associated with such practices” (678). Behind such a definition is an attempt to “expand our conception of literacy beyond that of [a] single official reading and writing” (*Writing New Media* 58). In order to “expand our conception of literacy,” it will be useful to consider the ways literacy and technology shape each other in our own lives. For this assignment, please write a 4-5 page narrative essay in which you consider the intersections among literacy, technology, and identity in your own experience.

Considerations:

- Start this process by reading through Cynthia Selfe’s questions in “Activity 1” (*Writing New Media*) and the interview protocol questions at the end of Hawisher and Selfe.
- Write preliminary responses to some of the questions that resonate strongly with your own experience. Not all of the questions will yield interesting reflections for you.
- Identify specific anecdotes or narratives that seem representative or especially meaningful in terms of your own experience. That is, you will want to tell stories about technology and literacy in your life.
- However, do *not* aim to relate every detail about your literate/technological experience. The length of this essay (4-5 pages) precludes you from saying everything that could be said. Instead, choose anecdotes or narrative threads that help you make some larger point about your experience.
- Make some larger point about your experience. Note how both Selfe’s chapter in *Writing New Media* and Hawisher and Selfe’s “Becoming Literate” pull back to draw larger “lessons” or themes suggested by the narratives they present. You should do the same. What is the larger significance or meaning of your own experience with literacy and technology?
- You might consider using their existing lessons or themes to frame your analysis of the significance of your own experience, either in terms of confirming what they say, or as complicating it. However, you are not required to do so, and may instead develop your own lessons or themes out of your own narrative.

Please submit a final version of your Technological Literacy Autobiography to Moodle by the end of the day on **Tuesday, March 17**.