

Mini Assignment 1 – Introduction to Critical Thinking about Technology – 5%

The purpose of this assignment is to observe, record and speculate about your own use of technologies of communication and information; it is a first step towards thinking critically about communication and technology in your own life. The assignment has two parts.

Part 1

Choose **one** technology from the list below that is significantly integrated into your daily life. In first section of your paper spend approximately 250 words describing in detail how the technology is integrated into your daily life and why you think this technology is so important to you. The following technologies can be considered:

Desktop Computer	Land Line Telephone
Notebook/Laptop Computers	Answering Machine/Voicemail
Palm Pilot/Personal Organizer	Cell Phone
Television	Pager
VCR/DVD Player	Car Radio/Stereo
Personal Stereo (cassette/cd/MP3)	Bank Machines
Home Stereo	Video/Computer/Virtual Reality Games
Radio	Electronic PA Equipment

Part 2

The second part of this assignment requires you to **write critically** about the use of the selected technology from **three** of the following perspectives (aspects). In this section you should go beyond your own personal usage and speculate on the broader social implications and dimensions.

Some Aspects of Technology

Political: The ways your selected technology is shaped by and in turn shapes forms of legal and political power and discourse

Economic: Economic structures and patterns of economic development that affect the use of your selected technology and are also affected by it

Psychological: The shaping of individual attitudes, perceptions and personalities through engagements with your selected technology

Cultural: Implications of the selected technology for cultural formations and expressions including effects on popular culture

Aesthetic: Impacts of the selected technology on artistic forms, genres, expressions

Spiritual/Metaphysical: Evolution of structures of belief and their transformation through the use of the selected technology

Physical: Shifts in the physical body and the way it is used from engagements with the selected technology

Technical Requirements

Your paper must be written in **formal academic English** and be **at least 500-750 words long**.

Include a word count at the end of your document. Papers that are shorter than the required length will be graded accordingly. External references are not required for the completion of this assignment; however, if you choose to use them, you must reference them properly using accepted academic styles (APA, MLA, Chicago). Hand in a **hard copy** (stapled sheets, 1" margins, double-spaced, 12 point font, numbered pages, no title page, no folders, etc.) at the **beginning of the lecture on October 14th**. **Late penalty is 10% per day, including weekends.**