

## **Week 1 - Defining terms and Introductions**

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ETEC\_V 540 64A 2025W1 Text Technologies: The Changing Spaces of Reading and Writing

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## **Activity: [1.3.2] - Community Network Discussion Forum**

I believe that encouraging students to publish their work publicly in an educational platform is both advantageous and challenging. One of the significant benefits, in my view, is the empowerment it brings to students. It extends their work beyond the classroom, motivating them to invest more effort in their school assignments. It also provides a platform for them to share their ideas, learn from others, and build confidence as writers and thinkers. However, the open nature of publishing also raises privacy concerns, as students may not always feel comfortable having their work shared publicly.

There is also the risk of exposing personal information or ideas to criticism that may not always be constructive. When students publish their work, their sense of audience changes. Instead of writing only for their teacher, they know that classmates, peers, and sometimes even strangers may read their work. This can make feedback feel more authentic, since it comes from a wider audience, and it can significantly increase the sense that their writing has real-world value.

However, it can also increase pressure, as students may worry about being judged more harshly. Publication also affects students' feelings of privacy, safety, and risk-taking. Some students may feel proud and motivated, while others may become more cautious, limiting their creativity or avoiding personal topics. In a classroom, whether physical or virtual, it is crucial for teachers to balance the benefits of open sharing with respect for students' comfort levels. Offering options, such as publishing with limited access or under pseudonyms, can help maintain both the educational value of authentic audiences and the protection of students' privacy.

## Activity: [1.4] : Defining Terms

To my understanding, the word “*text*” originates from prose, which traditionally describes how people communicate, record, and share ideas or events using pen and paper. It is the written form of expression that helps preserve knowledge and culture. On the other hand, *technology* refers to the tools, systems, and methods people develop to accomplish tasks more efficiently.

When we bring the two together as *text technology*, it can be understood as the evolving ways people create, store, share, and interact with text through modern digital tools. Computers, smartphones, tablets, and other devices can now produce and access text electronically, eliminating the need for handwriting or print.

This shift has transformed many areas of life. For example, in education, students can learn online through e-books, discussion forums, and virtual classrooms, making knowledge accessible beyond the walls of a physical school. In the medical field, doctors now rely on electronic health records, online diagnostic tools, and even telemedicine consultations to provide better and faster care. I remember when my uncle had to go through cataract surgery; the operation was done within ten minutes using technology, unlike the manual procedure that I grew up knowing. Business, emails, instant messaging, and collaborative platforms like Google Docs have replaced many traditional paper-based processes, making communication and teamwork more immediate and efficient.

Even in everyday life, text technologies play a significant role, whether it’s sending a quick text message, using voice-to-text features, or reading digital newspapers instead of print editions. Social media platforms also demonstrate how text technology has changed how people connect, giving individuals the ability to share stories, opinions, and news instantly with a global audience. At the same time, when words are misused or cited incorrectly, they can distort meaning and cause misunderstanding, showing how important accuracy and clarity are in communication (Berkowitz).

Overall, text technology is more than just writing in digital form; it represents the integration of language, communication, and modern tools to enhance learning, health, work, and social interaction in today’s world.

### Reference

Berkowitz & Associates Consulting Inc. (2025). *CBC’s The Word Guy*. Berkowitz & Associates. <https://berkowitzandassociates.ca/resources/cbcs-the-word-guy/>

## Activity: [1.5] - Thinking about Text and Technology

“Etymology is the study of the origin of words and the way in which their meanings have changed throughout history. Part of the intent of the "defining terms" etymological activity was to get you thinking broadly about what might constitute *text*, what might constitute *technology*, and how these two words come together historically and in the context of this course.”

The word "*text*" has deep roots and fascinating connections to other words. It is intricately linked to *textile* and *texture*, both of which imply a sense of weaving. This perspective of text as a fabric of words woven together sparks our imagination, much like a textile. Text can also be seen as a surface teeming with patterns, rhythms, and images, mirroring the complexity of language. Robert Scholes (1992), in *Canonicity and Textuality*, traces the evolution of the word *text* from its Greek origins to Latin and eventually into English, each phase contributing to our current understanding.

The process of text creation and sharing has undergone a profound evolution since the 1970s. Back then, typewriters were the primary tool for producing fixed, printed words on paper. Once typed, text was difficult to alter without starting over, giving it a sense of permanence. The advent of word processors and personal computers in the 1980s and 1990s revolutionized the editing, formatting, and distribution of written work. The rise of the Internet in the 2000s ushered in a new era of interactivity and accessibility for text, with the emergence of email, blogs, and online discussion boards. Today, in a post-print society, digital text is even more dynamic: it can be linked, multimedia-rich, and constantly updated through social media, online articles, or collaborative platforms like Google Docs.

My own experience as a stenographer gives me a unique perspective on this transformation of text. In stenography, accuracy, speed, and permanence were central—the words I recorded had to be captured exactly as spoken, with little room for revision. That role reflected an era when text was fixed and stable, much like the typed pages produced on a typewriter. Now, as an educator, I see how text has shifted into a more flexible and collaborative form. For instance, digital platforms like Google Docs enable students to edit, revise, and co-create texts in real-time, which is a sharp contrast to my earlier experiences, where once words were recorded, they became permanent. This personal journey from stenography to digital teaching underscores how text technologies not only shape professional practices but also redefine what it means to read, write, and learn in the 21st century.

Reference:

Scholes, R. (1992). *Canonicity and textuality*. University of Michigan Press.

## Activity: [1.7] - What's in your bag?



My name is Bosede Ojo. I am a teacher with over 25 years of experience, and I currently live and work in Toronto, Ontario. Throughout my career, I have always enjoyed learning new things and sharing knowledge with others, both in and outside of the classroom, but I had never realized how many things I carry with me every day and how much these items define who I am until this introduction to the “What is in my bag?” assignment. I was shocked by the meaning of each item in my bag and how I depended on it daily.

The contents of my bag represent both pragmatic needs and more general cultural narratives that influence my everyday activities. Things like my wallet, credit and debit cards, car keys, and garage door opener serve as reminders of how crucial financial accessibility and mobility are to my daily existence. My cell phone, laptop, charger, and earbuds are all clear examples of how technology influences academic and professional work. In addition to these, personal hygiene products like a toothbrush, toothpaste, hand cream, lip balm, hairbrush, and face towel emphasize the self-care practices that allow me to transition between my personal, professional, and academic lives with ease. When combined, these objects convey a sense of readiness and flexibility that reflects the variety of roles I play every day.

These items, when regarded as "texts," shed light on the historical, social, and cultural settings in which I work and live. In addition to placing me within both traditional literate practices and modern digital literacies, my laptop, diary, pens, and notebook highlight my identity as a communicator and learner. Equally important are the masks, hand sanitizer, and Kleenex that are included; they are cultural relics of the pandemic period and demonstrate the increased consciousness of cleanliness and health in public life. Conversely, the use of cosmetics and

self-care items allude to larger cultural discourses about comfort, appearance, and self-image. As a result, the items in the bag function as multimodal "texts," expressing my identity while also enmeshing me in everyday social experiences.

Several distinct instances of "text technologies" are included in my bag within the parameters of this course. The most visible are my cell phone and laptop, which are devices for creating, storing, and sending information in various formats. However, the notebook, pen, diary, and writing tools are timeless forms of inscription that enable me to record, think, and reflect in ways that are different from those of digital technologies. These items collectively demonstrate the hybridity of my communication style: I use both digital and analog tools to manage my personal and academic literacies. One could consider even my water bottle to be a type of health literacy text that reflects larger social discussions about sustainability and well-being.

The items in my bag indicate continuity and change both in the present and in the past. Instead of the multipurpose gadgets I carry now, my bag probably would have included more tangible media twenty-five years ago, like books, letters, and maybe a film camera. On the other hand, an archaeologist looking at this bag many years from now would probably see the mask, laptop, and smartphone as representative of the early 21st century, a time of global health crises and digital transformation. As a result, the bag serves as a temporal archive that chronicles not only my literacies but also the technological and cultural changes that place them in context.