

Items

When I'm out and about, I usually have just a few items on me.

- **PHONE:** The apps I use the most on my iPhone are...
 - **Over-the-top text messaging apps (Messages and Whatsapp):** To stay connected with friends and family;
 - **Card apps (Wallet and Stocard):** To make purchases on my credit card and to store my membership cards;
 - **Banking app:** To help me keep track of my expenses with push notifications for any charges to my credit card;
 - **Smart lock app (August):** To unlock the door to my condo, and it also gives me notifications for any activity with the door; and
 - **Navigation app (Google Maps):** To help me navigate – we recently moved and I'm still getting used to this new area.
- **FLASH DRIVE:** I keep a copy of my important files on this 256GB flash drive, which I keep in my wallet. I also have copies of the same files on the cloud and in a solid-state drive at home.
- **WALLET:** In my wallet there's my credit card, Costco membership card, driver's licence, debit card, a \$20 bill, and the flash drive.
- **KEYS:** On my keychain I have the key fob and keys to my condo, my car key fob, as well as a custom key tag with my name on one side and my partner's name on the other (he has a matching one).
- **CONTACT LENSES:** I wear one-day contact lenses and usually keep an extra pair on me.
- **MASK:** With the pandemic, I also usually bring an extra mask, just in case.

Text, text technologies, literacies, and narrative

In reflecting on these items, a few themes jump out at me:

1) I rely on technology for day-to-day tasks, but still bring along their more dated counterparts as backup.

After typing out the descriptions of the items above, I'm realizing most of these items are backups. With the card apps, I don't need most of the cards in my wallet; with the smart lock app, I don't need the key to my condo; the flash drive is a backup of files I already have on the cloud. (In addition, the \$20 bill in my wallet is for in case I go somewhere that takes cash only, which almost never happens, and the contact lenses and mask are also backups.) I will have to reflect on this.

2) Most of my items are enabled by technology.

- **Phone:** The apps on my phone enable digital communication with other people and systems. For instance, my smart lock app is connected to the smart lock on my door. The app pushes notifications to my phone if there's any activity with the door. I can still use my key to unlock the door if the smart lock is offline.
- **Flash drive:** The flash drive requires a computer or certain digital devices to access the files on it.
- **Wallet:** The cards interact with their respective digital systems to execute tasks. I do not have insight into how exactly these cards work with the systems at the organizations that provided me with these cards, but with these cards I am granted access to certain affordances of these technologies.
- **Keys:** The condo key fob uses a radio-frequency identification (RFID) system to provide access to the main entrance, garage, and storage locker room of my building, as well as to my floor via the elevator. The car key fob allows me to unlock the car doors and to start the engine.

3) I would say the items themselves don't look too different compared to their equivalents from 15 years ago, but the underlying literacies associated with these items have evolved.

- **Phone:** In 2007, I would text friends and family using T9 predictive text technology via SMS, whereas now I use an on-screen keyboard with autocorrect and via over-the-top messaging apps. The word "text", as Berkowitz highlighted, was a "noun meaning a book or other piece of writing ... but now it's a verb, which means to send a text message" (Berkowitz, 2020). As a side note, in looking up the word "autocorrect" in the OED, I learned that the first documented usage of the word was in 1981 in reference to a typewriter; for clarity, the intended meaning here is the one referenced in the OED under the 2019 Computing entry (Oxford University Press, 2021a). In addition, in 2007 I did not use the apps mentioned above, and a quick search on Wikipedia confirmed the apps were not available at the time (Apple Wallet, 2022; August Home, 2021; Google Maps, 2022; WhatsApp, 2022). In 2022, the use of these apps require certain technological literacies.
- **Extra mask:** In 2007, masks were not common outside of East Asia (Ives, 2022), and I did not wear or carry masks back then. That has changed since the Covid-19 pandemic – and notably, the word "Covid" itself, in reference to the pandemic, appeared in 2020 (Oxford University Press, 2021b). In looking up the terms "mask" and "masking" in the OED, I came across two references added in 2020 that alluded to "mask[ing] up" related to the pandemic (Oxford University Press, 2021c). I also looked up "mask" in Google Trends and noticed an uptick in early- to mid-2020 (Google Trends, n.d.), which coincides with the start of the pandemic.

4) There are both direct and indirect clues in these items as to the places I inhabit and the activities I take up.

The car key fob, condo key fob, and my earlier reference to Google Maps particularly stand out to me – these are new additions for me. My partner and I recently moved from downtown Vancouver, where we had been for years, and we were used to getting around on foot and taking short commutes on transit. We now live in a suburban area in Vancouver proper (which may be suggested by the car key and the lack of a transit fare card in my items) and my work went remote (which may be suggested by the lack of an access card). There's not much in this area and I work and do school remotely, so I don't leave home often.

5) I would say these items are consistent with the image I project.

I appreciate technology, I can be overly cautious at times (all the backups!), and I stick with the essentials.

Present vs. past and future

Present vs. past:

I'm noticing that the equivalent of these items from 15 years ago would've been less integrated compared to their 2022 counterparts. For instance, in 2007, I would not have been able to easily view purchases on my credit card in realtime (whereas I can now via my banking app on my phone) or start my car without its key (whereas I can now via my car app).

Present vs. future:

If an archeologist far into the future were to examine my items from today (2022), I imagine their observations would be similar to mine today reflecting on my items from 15 years ago, in the sense that many of these items work relatively independent of one another. In other words, I believe that as technology continues to advance, our items will become even more connected and integrated with our phones or other technology.

Hello! My name is Erin Duchesne, a grade 1 teacher in Edmonton Alberta and here is what is in my bag!

Items: current book (The Alchemist), extra mask, reusable bamboo cutlery, reusable collapsible metal straw, cell phone, car/house/mailbox keys, hand sanitizer, reusable water bottle, school keys, wallet, extra headphones, lip balm, lunch bag, laptop.

This is the bag that got me through four years of undergrad and now acts as the bag I take to work everyday as a teacher and my carry on bag when I travel. These items subtly say a lot about me – light packer, efficient, reader, apple user, Albertan, and cares about sustainability. My tendency to travel light is very much the same when it comes to other aspects of my life. For example I do not keep anything in my car, all of my teaching resources are digital so I do not have any paper copies or binders in my classroom, and I have only a few apps on my phone. Most of the time when I am out and about I only take my cell phone with my license and debit card hidden in the case and my car keys – so this depicts the most that I would ever carry. The bag itself is also a very conscious choice. I love using a backpack because then I always have two arms free and don't get a sore arm or shoulder from carrying a heavy purse on one side of my body. I specifically bought this bag (ok well actually I got it as a Christmas gift) because it has so many compartments! A fleece-lined pocket specifically for a laptop, waterproof compartment for food, water bottle holders with straps so it does not fall out, small pocket in the front for my wallet and keys, and so many little pockets for everything!

My text technologies (literacy and digital literacy) include my laptop, cell phone and book which show that I like to have means of entertainment and information readily available in multiple forms. I believe the items in my bag represent me quite well in that I do not like clutter, I love reading and using technology on a daily basis and also reflects my past self and what I would have carried for the past 10 years or so. If a future archeologist were to dig up this bag and contents in particular, they would see that in this time period our society values compact technology, reusable items, and being socially connected. They would also see that I still carry around my University of Alberta ID from when I was 18 in the front of my wallet that expired years ago. Why? 1. it used to be my bus pass, 2. the photo is much better than my license photo, and 3. it gets me student pricing to museums and other experiences when I travel! (they never actually look at the expiration date).

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