

Task 4: Manual Scripts

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Commentary

I have a work journal and a personal journal that I write by hand in every day. This task was a bit difficult because I knew it might be read by others, so I put more effort than I'd normally would into writing legibly. Usually, I do not write this much by hand in one sitting, so I did find my hand becoming a bit tired and it showed up in my penmanship. If I make a wording mistake, I crossed out the word and rewrote the correct word above or beside the cross out. If I made a spelling mistake or wrote illegibly, I would either cross it out or write the correct letters over the incorrect letters. Just as Gutenberg could have argued that the printing press' accuracy, economy and speed makes it better (Ewart, 2021), this process made me appreciate the efficiency of my laptop, but when I choose to write by hand in my personal life, the intended audience is myself, so I appreciate the segment when Robert Lamb and Joe McCormick (2021, 6:35) spoke of the written word's ability to "freeze" a moment of the mind books' ability to retain and reclaim lost knowledge. I saw a correspondence between this and my belief that mistakes can be viewed as "lost thoughts." When rereading my hand written work, I also look at the words I crossed out and try to pick up the train of thought that brought me to that word. Sometimes these words lead to a new idea or entry. During writing I encourage my students to cross out their mistakes with a single line so their mistakes are still legible. I believe it was the scientist Richard Feynman who developed a new theory from discarded notes that he'd kept. Just like Feynman, I perceive my mistakes to be memory crystals waiting to be distilled and refined at the right moment.

My typed work is used to interact with others, but I seldom directly interact with my typed work after it has been sent out. Professionally I do have to write many things by hand, but unlike what I hand write in my personal life, they are short-lived and often disappear with the swipe of a board eraser. While these writings exist on the board, I and my students interact with this text. If the purpose of a text is to be interacted with, perhaps these temporary texts meet this definition better than the others I create due to the number of people who interact with them and how they can be changed and added to almost instantly. On the other hand, while the written words may disappear, these texts often transform into oral knowledge because most students will lose their notes or throw them out at the end of the school year. At the beginning of this task, I considered oral texts to have little place within my life, but actually most of the texts I create professionally are transformed into oral texts that students share in discussions at school and home. While text technologies will transform how we view and use texts, humans' need for face-to-face communication make it impossible to remove the oral component of texts.

References

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