

A DAY WITHOUT THE MEDIA
DUE TUESDAY, APRIL 22
FOUR PAGES, DOUBLE-SPACED
WORTH 30 POINTS

To begin thinking about the roles and functions of the mass media in society, it is helpful to observe the place of the media in your own life. For this assignment you are to avoid all mass media for one day (24 hours) and then write a four-page paper (no more, no less) describing your experience and your reactions to it. This includes a detailed description of your day without media, comparing it to a typical day (i.e., waking to an alarm instead of music; listening to your car rattle instead of a CD on the drive to school). You cannot "recall" a day you went without media. You must do this assignment between today and when it is due. The detailed day without and a typical day with should take at least two pages.

During the day try to avoid all mass media such as television, radio, music, the Internet, computer games, mail advertisements, books, magazines, and movies. Interpersonal communication is allowed, including the telephone and e-mail but not online gaming. No tweeting or reading tweets. No Instagram or Pinterest. MP3 players, music from your computer, and the like are considered media. Do not use them. No Facebook or similar sites. When in doubt, go without.

After the day is over, write a paper, in detail, describing your observations, including how your day went comparing it to a day with media. You must answer the following questions to get full credit as well as include a description of your day: What did you like about not having the mass media in your daily routine? What did you dislike? Was it difficult for you? Why or why not? What did you learn about your own media use? What did you learn about society's dependence on mass media? It may help to take notes.

The paper should be typed or computer-generated double-spaced 12 point type with one-inch margins. No hand corrections. It should be grammatically correct with proper punctuation and spelling. Put some thought into the writing of the paper, as carelessness will lower your grade. No papers may be e-mailed or dropped off in my box or slipped under my door. Only papers turned in the first 10 minutes of class on Tuesday, April 22, will be accepted.

Is it mass media if it's work or school? Reading a textbook for a class, using a computer at your job, having background music where you work—all of these are NOT considered media use. However, going to a bar, restaurant, mall, or coffeehouse to shop, eat, browse, etc., where there is music in the background must be avoided. The same is true with riding in a car and listening to music, going to a movie with a friend, or watching that big playoff game on television. Any sort of Internet surfing is considered media use. Email, because it is considered interpersonal (such as telephone use) is not and can be used. Texting (but not Tweeting) is OK, too. Don't panic if you find yourself someplace where music is playing, or if you catch yourself after a minute reading a newspaper or, even, a billboard. You don't need to start over! In fact, the inadvertent use of media is something that few of us can avoid and should be noted in your paper about how ubiquitous mass media are in our lives.