By Wednesday, 9 March, you must submit (via Sakai) a proposal for a research paper of approximately 1200 words, together with a formal specification (i.e., in MLA or APA or Chicago format) of a minimum of two credible resources.

The topic of your paper must be related to a specific tool used for communicating with words (whether spoken or written). In particular, it must examine the impact of that tool on the type and quality of communication. Examples follow.

“Credible resources” in this case refers to any of the following:

- peer-reviewed scholarly journals
- scholarly books (the technical term is “monograph”)
- verifiable factual sources (e.g., government publications, conference papers, mainstream news outlets, etc.)

“Tools” could be things like pencils, pens, text messaging systems, billboards, text-to-speech translators, Morse code, blogs, Twitter, hand-written letters, Kindle or Nook readers, ... anything that is a tool for communicating in words. Your paper can be about contemporary tools or about more traditional tools, even from centuries ago.

We will spend Friday looking at several sample resources on several possible topics; however, you should begin looking on your own.

The due date for the second paper is Friday, 1 April. The same criteria apply as for the first paper (citations/references in a standard format, numbered pages, PDF files only, and so on).