

Personal Ephemera

Instructions

Ephemera are the “the minor transient documents of everyday life” — unimportant documents (normally made of paper) that are intended to only be briefly useful. (For example: receipts, playbills, and to-do lists.)

Find three pieces of ephemera from your recent daily life, and **write a short (1-3 page) reflection**, answering the following questions.

*For the purpose of this assignment, you should locate **material ephemera** (physical pieces of paper), not digital ephemera.*

To answer in **one paragraph about each piece** of ephemera:

- Why do you consider this piece to be ephemera?
- What physical material is it made out of?
- What was the original context in which it was used?
- Would the original context be obvious to someone now who didn't already know it?
- Why do you still have this piece of ephemera? (In other words: why didn't you throw it away when it was no longer useful?)

To answer **once about the entire collection**:

- Imagine a future historian only has these three pieces of ephemera to figure out who you were and what you were like. What conclusions could they arrive at about you based on this collection? Do you consider these conclusions to be accurate? Why or why not?
- What could someone miss about you based on this collection?