

Tweens:

TECHNOLOGY, PERSONAL AGENCY, ENGAGEMENT

A Model For Design Research

MEDIA DESIGN PROGRAM Art Center College of Design



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FINDINGS

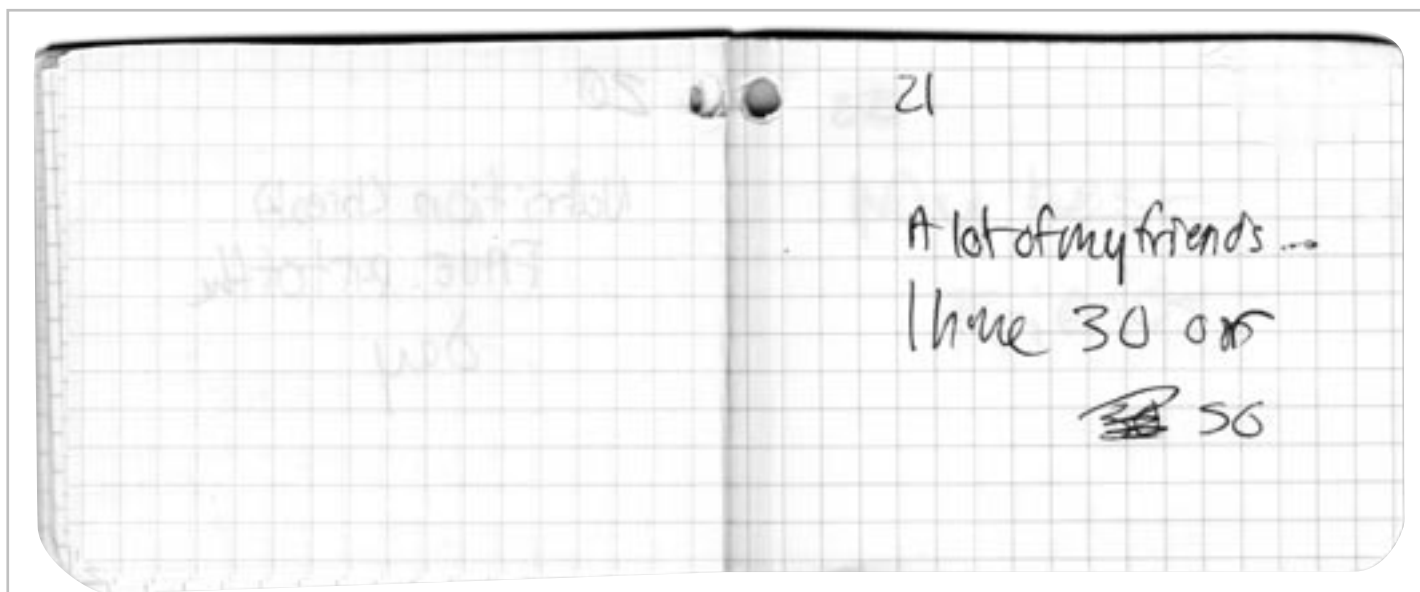
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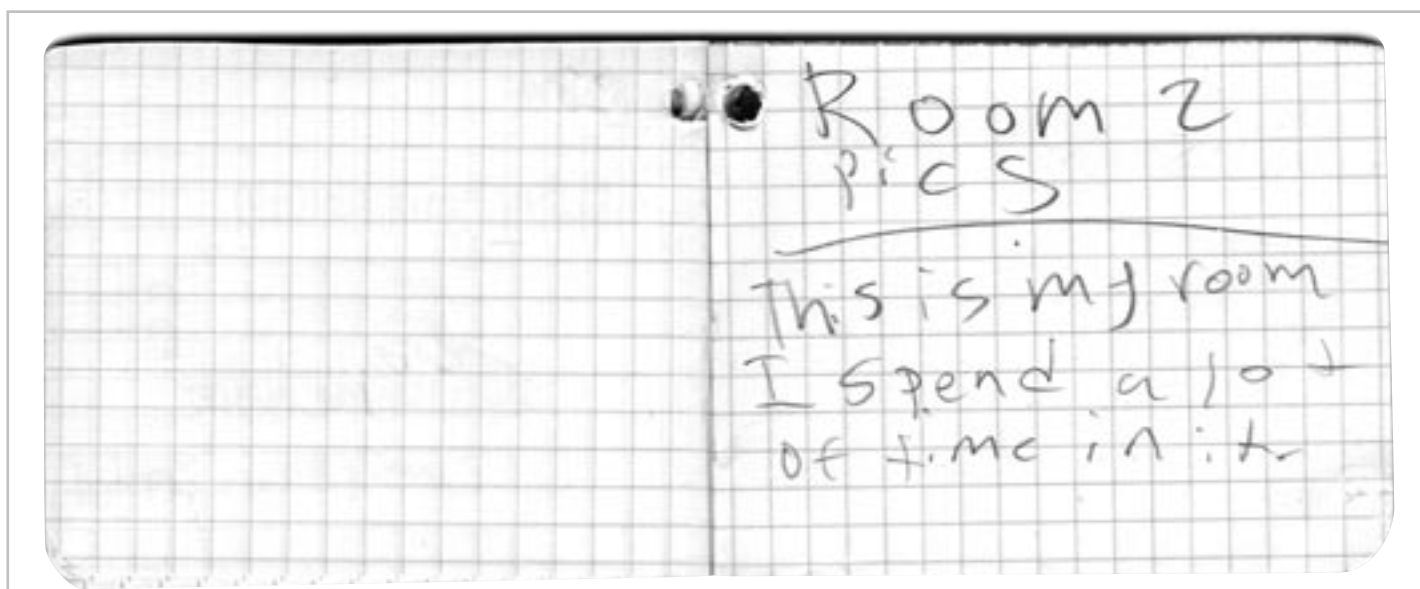
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18. My massive, billion
pound backpack
I juggle around every
day

Leah, age 13



Haily, age 12



Zach, age 12

RESEARCH SUBJECTS: PHOTO AUDIT

IN THEIR OWN WORDS AND IMAGES

We asked each tween to take photos of their rooms, the inside of their bags, their friends and family, and anything else that was important to them so that we could learn more about them from their own point of view.



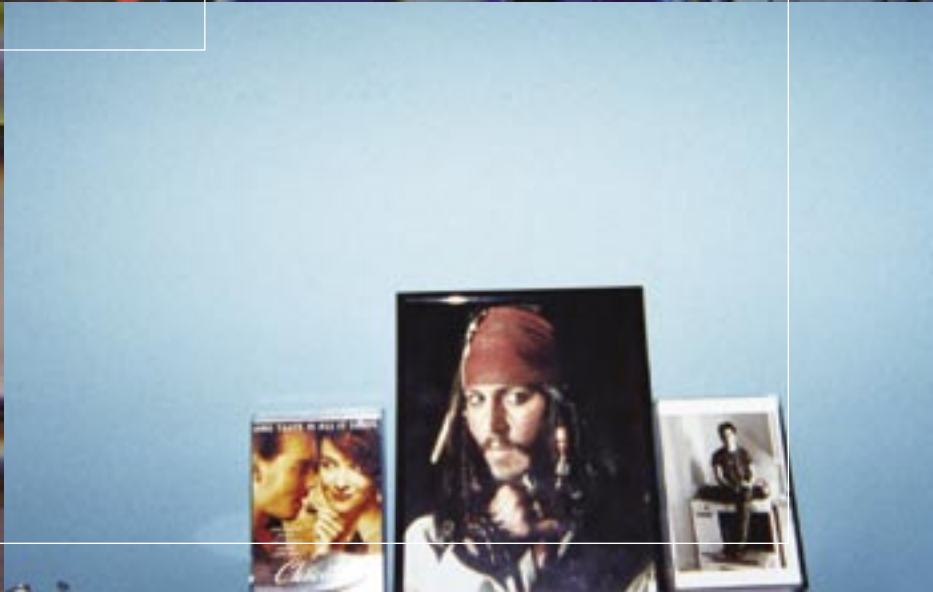
SELF PORTRAITS



TROPHIES



COLLECTIONS





CREATIVITY

8th picture is
my invention
Raspberry Cream...
I like to make things
(looking art) every day.



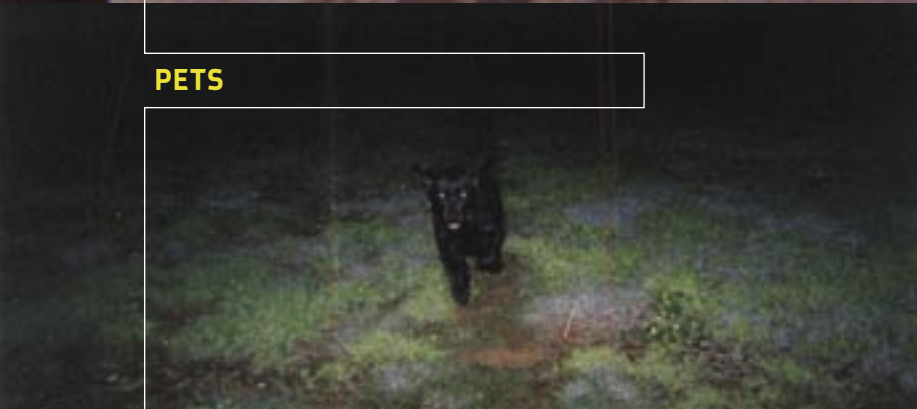
I like chilled
with chicks
but sometimes
people get in the
way

FRIENDS

A lot of my friends --
I have 30 or
50



① My dog Wesley. He's
so cute and I love him a lot
but, he's stupid and a little
bit.

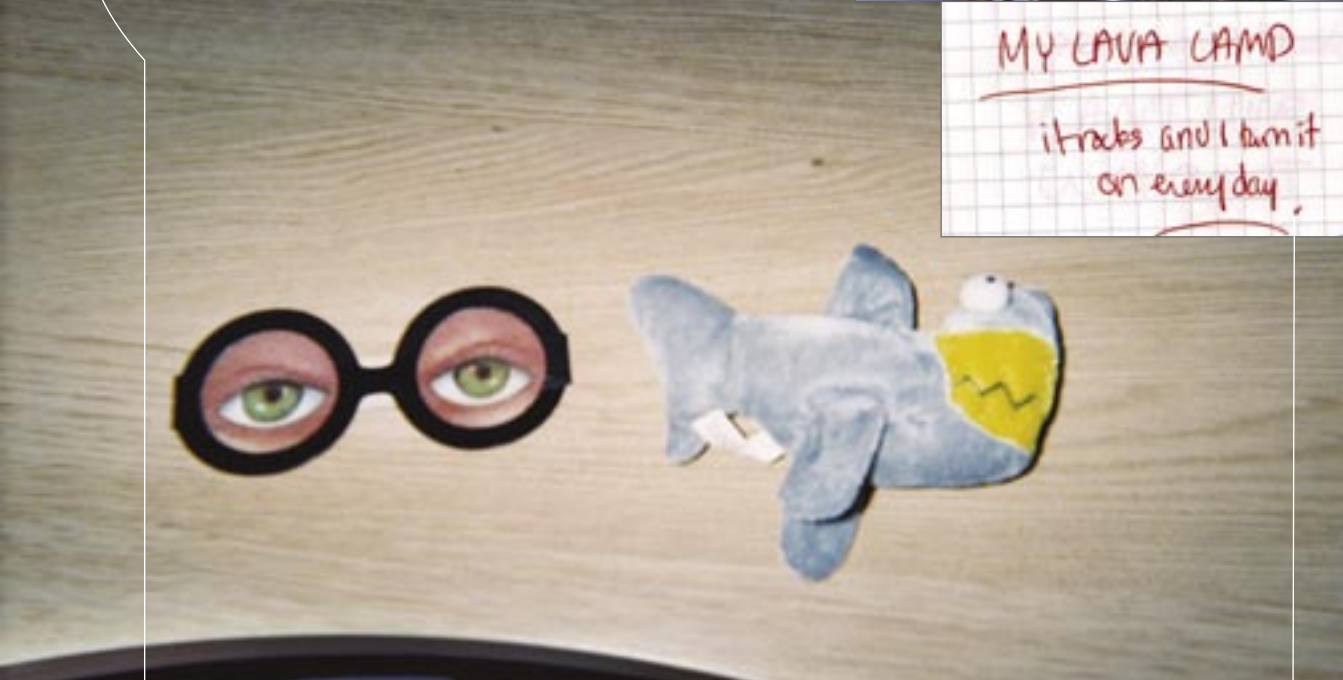
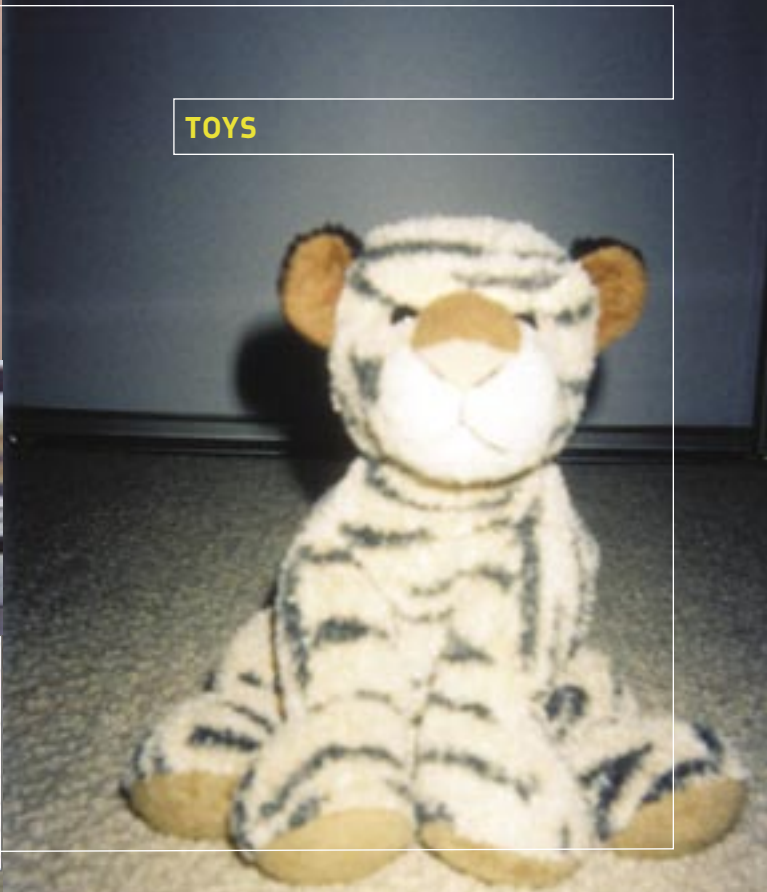


PETS





TOYS



MY LAVA LAMP

it rocks and I turn it
on every day.

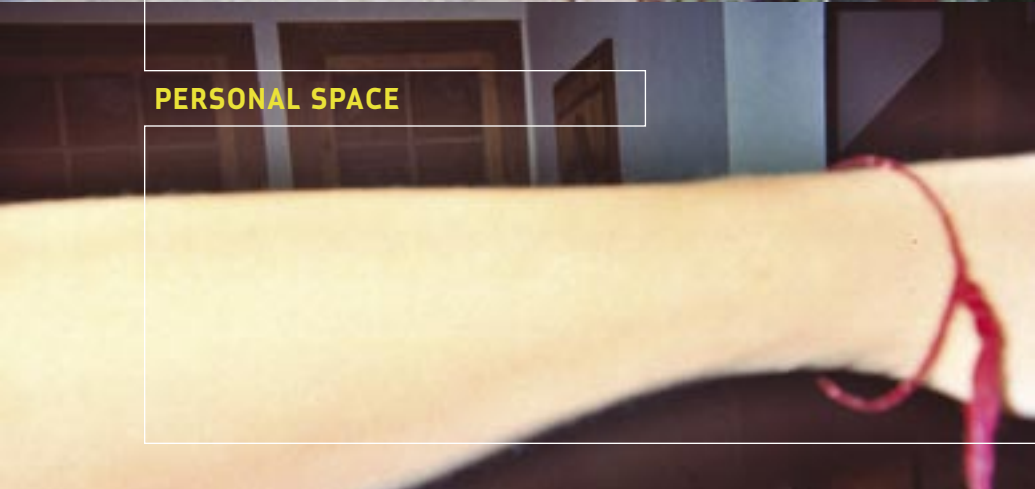


Backyard.

Pretty and a
nice place to
just sit
and think



PERSONAL SPACE





SPORTS



TWEENS: TECHNOLOGY, PERSONAL AGENCY, ENGAGEMENT

THE MEDIA DESIGN PROGRAM AT ART CENTER COLLEGE OF DESIGN

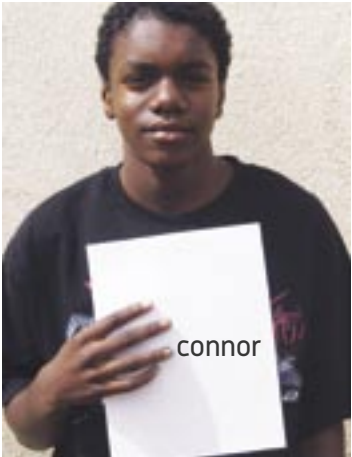
was sponsored by Hewlett Packard's Consumer Applications and Systems Laboratory to conduct research of tweens (ages 11-14) in relation to **TECHNOLOGY, PERSONAL AGENCY, AND ENGAGEMENT**. This research was completed during the first term of Super Studio, a one-year, team-oriented group project that is part of the core curriculum of the Media Design program. Super Studio focuses on the importance of conducting research as designers.

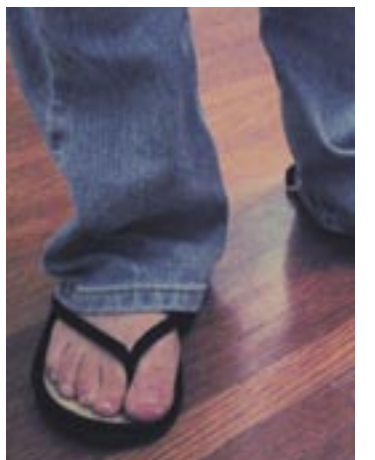
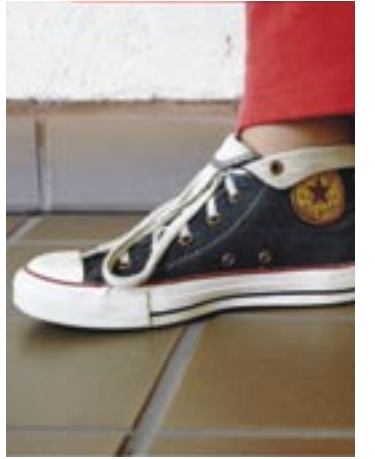
SO WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR DESIGNERS TO ENGAGE IN THIS TYPE OF RESEARCH? How is it different than the research conducted by market researchers, social scientists or anthropologists? At the Media Design program at Art Center, we focus on the ability for media designers to bring unique insight into the different aspects of the world through design. Designers see the world differently and can communicate their ideas through visual representation. This enables us to capture and convey the emotional aspects of research, which are often difficult to glean when reading a more traditional type of research report.

We interviewed **ELEVEN PAIRS OF TWEENS** (22 total) from Southern California. Six pairs were interviewed at a research facility in Santa Monica and five pairs were interviewed at their homes in the San Gabriel Valley. We asked them questions about **WHO THEY ARE, THEIR HABITS, THEIR EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES AND VALUES**. During the interviews we photographed and videotaped all of the tweens and at the in-home interviews this included their rooms. We also gave each tween their own camera with a notebook attached and asked them to take photographs of their lives which included their rooms, backpacks, friends, family, and daily activities. The **FINDINGS** section of this book shows an edited selection of the research, a mere fraction of the total data that we gathered. The **INTERPRETATIONS** section was designed out of this massive body of research, and uses imagery and quotations from the tweens themselves to illuminate our analysis of the findings.

RESEARCH SUBJECTS: INTERVIEW MEDIA

TWENTY-TWO TEENS



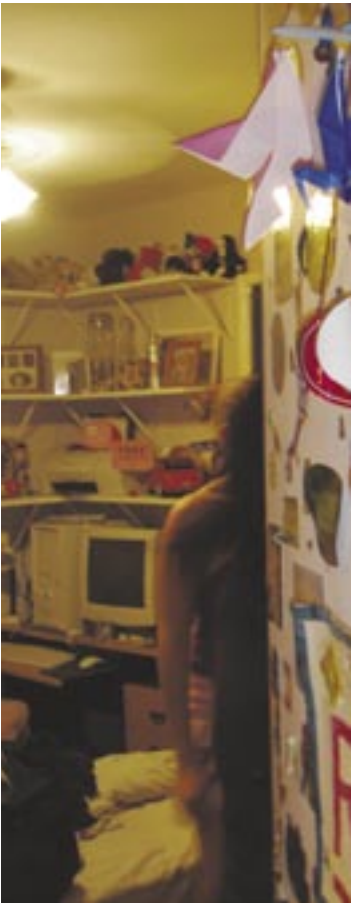


TWO SAMPLE BEDROOMS



Eva, age 14

MOST VALUED OBJECT: Johnny Depp Poster
IM NAMES: 3vA D3VA (diva), pY1o mAnEak (pyromaniac), Deva 3va, and EvaD333va





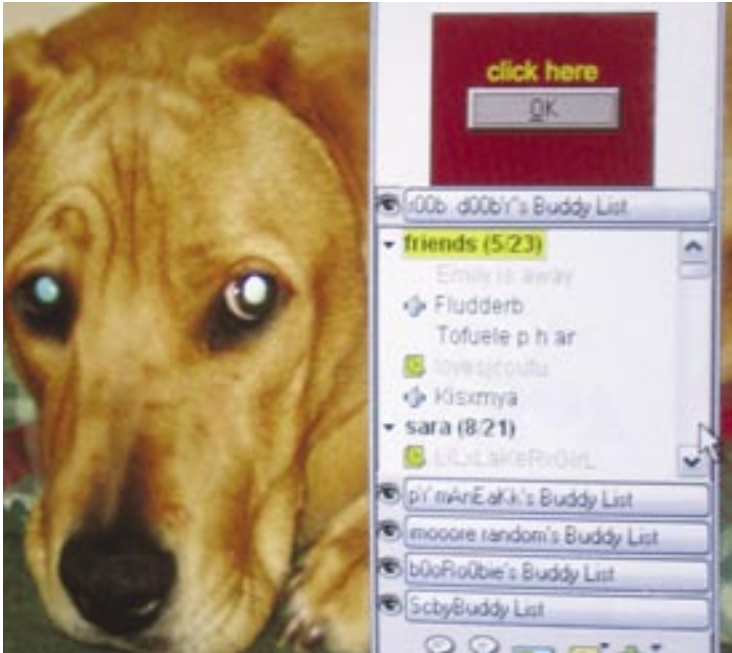
Caleb, age 11

MOST VALUED OBJECT: Green Bay Packers Collection

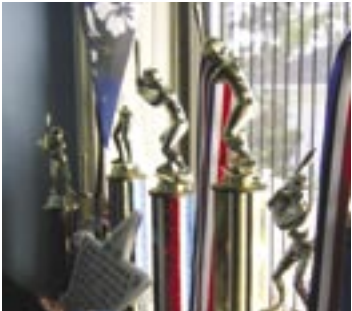
IM NAMES: Ranc1d Punkr 7569, MeHottieUUgly, NumbGuy Number 21, and PackerDude 57

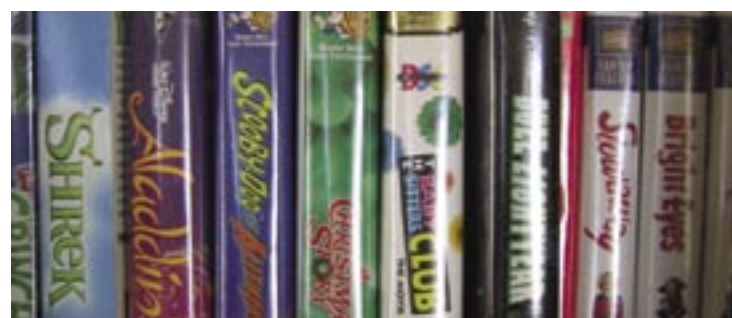
RESEARCH SUBJECTS: INTERVIEW MEDIA

PHOTO ESSAY









HOW TWEENS DESCRIBE THE FUTURE

During the interviews, we asked each of the 22 tweens to complete what we called the future word exercise. Each individual was asked to circle words in red, words in green, and words in blue. Below is a list of the words that were written in by the respondent and their ability to influence their future (green) for each tween.

insp^{irer} dream choice revolution chance
determined* successful leader action
convenient happy positive* entertaining fun
choice successful happy wish successful
fun thoughtful fun curve-ball leader
fantastic successful thoughtful scary
chance strong human successful mortal
successful leader insp^{irer} revolution
successful chance advanced happy sincere
different* good successful convenient fun
powerful successful successful successful
good good good ecstatic happy logical

*words that were written in by the respondent

- INSTRUCTIONS:
- 1. Circle words that describe the future (blue)
 - 2. Circle words that describe your future (red)
 - 3. Circle words that describe your ability to influence your future (green)
 - 4. Mark the most meaningful word in each color (black)

Word Exercise Name Chloe

successful serious fun fantastic revolution scary powerful superhero team member leader science fiction playful entertaining energetic sad failure manipulation shot illusion fantasy delusion deception different	magical conjure colorful black red blue green yellow maze orange white mortal human follower captain inspirer cheerleader trainer difficult hard sincere thoughtful	dangerous good happy mighty right strong relevant crucial material wish dream chance choice logical convenient curve-ball action reaction satisfying pleasure mastery ecstatic kind of loyal
---	--	--

Word Exercise Name Jan

successful serious fun fantastic revolution scary powerful superhero team member leader science fiction playful entertaining energetic sad failure manipulation shot illusion fantasy delusion deception	magical conjure colorful black red blue green yellow maze orange white mortal human follower captain inspirer cheerleader trainer difficult hard sincere thoughtful	dangerous good happy mighty right strong relevant crucial material wish dream chance choice logical convenient curve-ball action reaction satisfying pleasure mastery ecstatic
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Word Exercise Name Seth

successful serious fun fantastic revolution scary powerful superhero team member leader science fiction playful entertaining energetic sad failure manipulation shot illusion fantasy delusion deception	magical conjure colorful black red blue green yellow maze orange white mortal human follower captain inspirer cheerleader trainer difficult hard sincere thoughtful	dangerous good happy mighty right strong relevant crucial material wish dream chance choice logical convenient curve-ball action reaction satisfying pleasure mastery ecstatic mystery
---	--	--

Word Exercise Name Camy

successful serious fun fantastic revolution scary powerful superhero team member leader science fiction playful entertaining energetic sad failure manipulation shot illusion fantasy delusion deception Intresting	magical conjure colorful black red blue green yellow maze orange white mortal human follower captain inspirer cheerleader trainer difficult hard sincere thoughtful	dangerous good happy mighty right strong relevant crucial material wish dream chance choice logical convenient curve-ball action reaction satisfying pleasure mastery ecstatic
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The following section shows the **INTERPRETIVE TOOLS** that we developed in response to the research we gathered.

Moving beyond what we had learned from secondary research, we strove to identify **KEY FINDINGS** specific to this group of tweens, moments of insight that would help us better understand who they are. We looked for the **OPPORTUNITY SPACES**, the **UNFULFILLED DESIRES**, or the **UNMET NEEDS** in their lives.

The interpretations we designed are not meant to be exhaustive or complete — instead they capture particular aspects that we found to be interesting or compelling. They can be used individually or in various combinations to **ENABLE DESIGNERS, ENGINEERS, AND DEVELOPERS** to make the **CREATIVE LEAP FROM RESEARCH TO DESIGN** when inventing products or systems to enhance tweens' lives.

TWEEN REALITIES

STUCK AT HOME • TRYING THINGS ON FOR SIZE • NO TIME • MY MOST VALUED OBJECT... MY ROOM PAGES 26–33

The realities are a distillation of the research findings into four analytical tools that map the key issues that define tweens' lives. The realities provide a conceptual framework for thinking about the tweens.

PERSONAS

STEVIE • PAM • JAKE • AMANDA PAGES 35–73

Personas represent patterns and clusters of traits based on real people. They are characters that embody our ideas of who the tweens are, including their values, concerns, desires and priorities.

SCENARIOS

AT HOME WITH STEVIE • PAM PURCHASES AN IPOD • HANGIN' OUT WITH JAKE • AMANDA'S NIGHT IN PAGES 74–83

Scenarios are detailed and deliberate illustrations of moments and activities that the tweens engage in. These moments are combined together to form a meaningful narrative about what a tween might experience in their daily life.

VIBRATIONS

EXCITEMENT FLOW • SLOW FLOW • PRESSURE • FRUSTRATION • INSECURITY • COMFORT PAGES 84–89

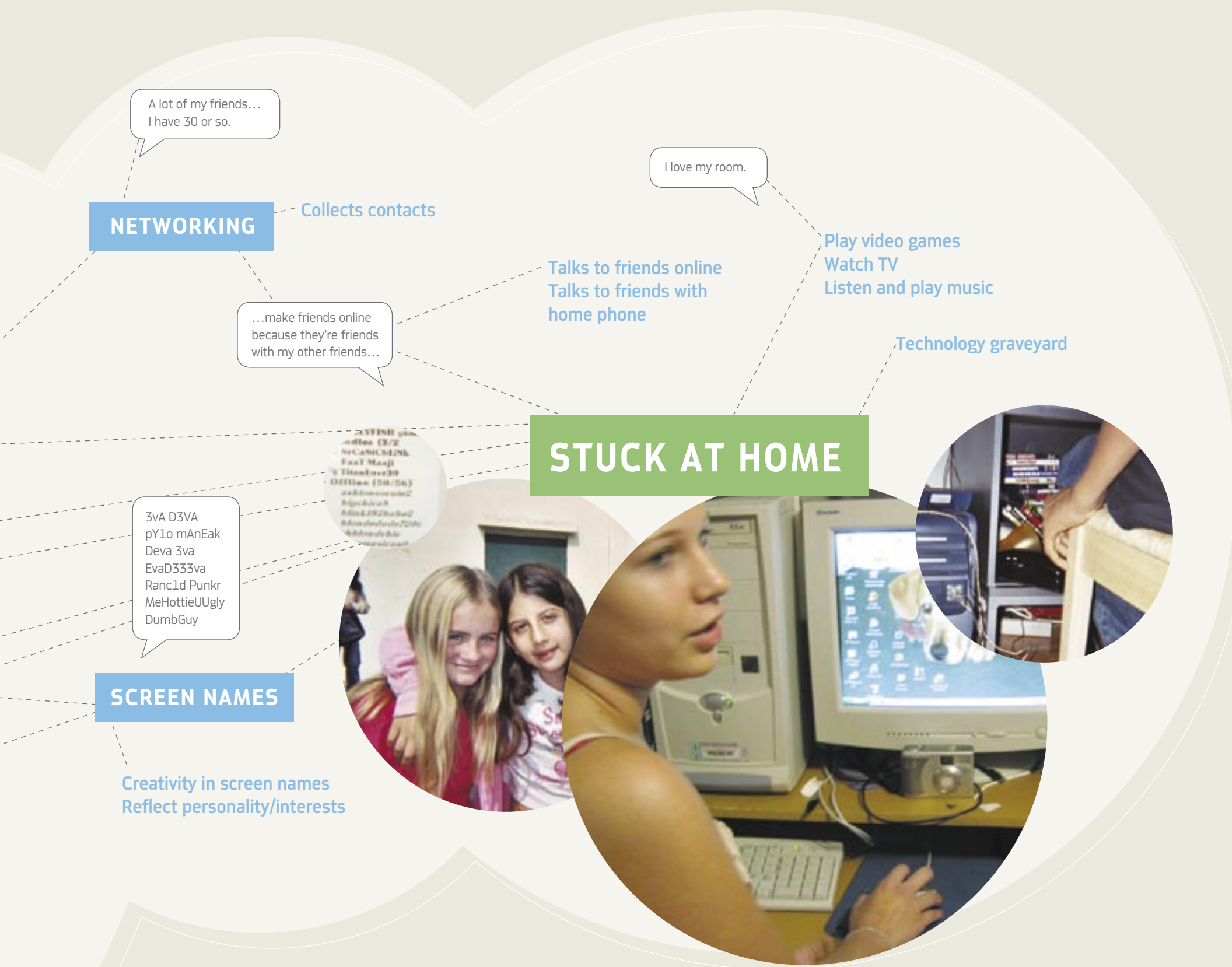
Vibra

the range of emotional states of a tween by enabling the viewer to become immersed in each experiential state.

STUCK AT HOME

TWEEN REALITY #1





Sometimes I make friends online because they're friends with my other friends.

Being stuck at home is a particular experience unique to tweens. They are old enough that they have started to gain independence. They are able to meet up and hang out with their friends without parental supervision, but they are not able to get to most places by themselves. This makes the experience of being home feel more like being stuck at this age.

TWEEN REALITY #2

Fantasizing about being older

Knowing specific model numbers, colors, sizes of desired items

ONLINE WINDOW SHOPPING

Keeping up with the next upgrade

Looking online vs. going to the mall with friends

Latest and greatest thing

I think I want to be a designer...
or president.

The tweens spoke of window shopping at eBay, buying fashion that the celebrities are wearing, getting good grades, and aspiring to have a family some day. The tweens are fantasizing about their future and trying things on for size to see how they might fit in the future.



NO TIME

TWEEN REALITY #3





Music is very important to me so when I'm doing homework I can get it done faster.

Between school, hanging out with their friends, chores, and homework, the tweens have no time to waste. They go from one thing to the next, and they have developed systems for how they like to work and play.

TWEEN REALITY #4

Ban indifference.
Ban insecurity.

Personalization
Branding their room:

- naming
- positioning

I call this my technology
graveyard.

I spend a lot of time
in my room.

My friends and I hang/
out here all the time.

The stupid alarm clock
that wakes me up at
six every morning.

MY MOST VALUED OBJECT... MY ROOM



This is my closet.
I spend a lot of time in there.

The tweens' rooms are a major part of their lives. It is their space that they can personalize, brand, and decorate. It is the place where they can start to build their identity, listen to music, surf the web, and hang out with friends.



STEVIE, AGE 11

HOMETOWN: **Santa Monica, California**

SIBLINGS: **None**

Stevie is an 11-year-old only child who goes to private school in Santa Monica.

He sits up front on the bus every day with his two best friends, Frank and Gary.

School is easy for Stevie, so he has a lot of free time on his hands.

He has a tendency to excuse himself from class to go to the bathroom where he usually plays a quick game before returning.

Sometimes Stevie dozes off in class thinking about the different websites he wants to surf when he gets home.

Stevie walks around with his Gameboy in his right pocket throughout the day.

His Gameboy is off while he is in school for the most part, with the exception of when he is at lunch with his buddies.

Stevie is very aware of his friends, and loves playing video games with them.

At home, Stevie continues to play video games while surfing the Web for new adventures.

He is disconnected from reality and likes to visit virtual worlds. He doesn't care how he comes across to others.

He claims that he never gets bored, but he is afraid of it.

He is a great kid but a spoiled child; his mom cleans his room everyday but he won't let her or anyone else touch his video game collection.

VIDEO GAMES + ADVENTURES = STEVIE

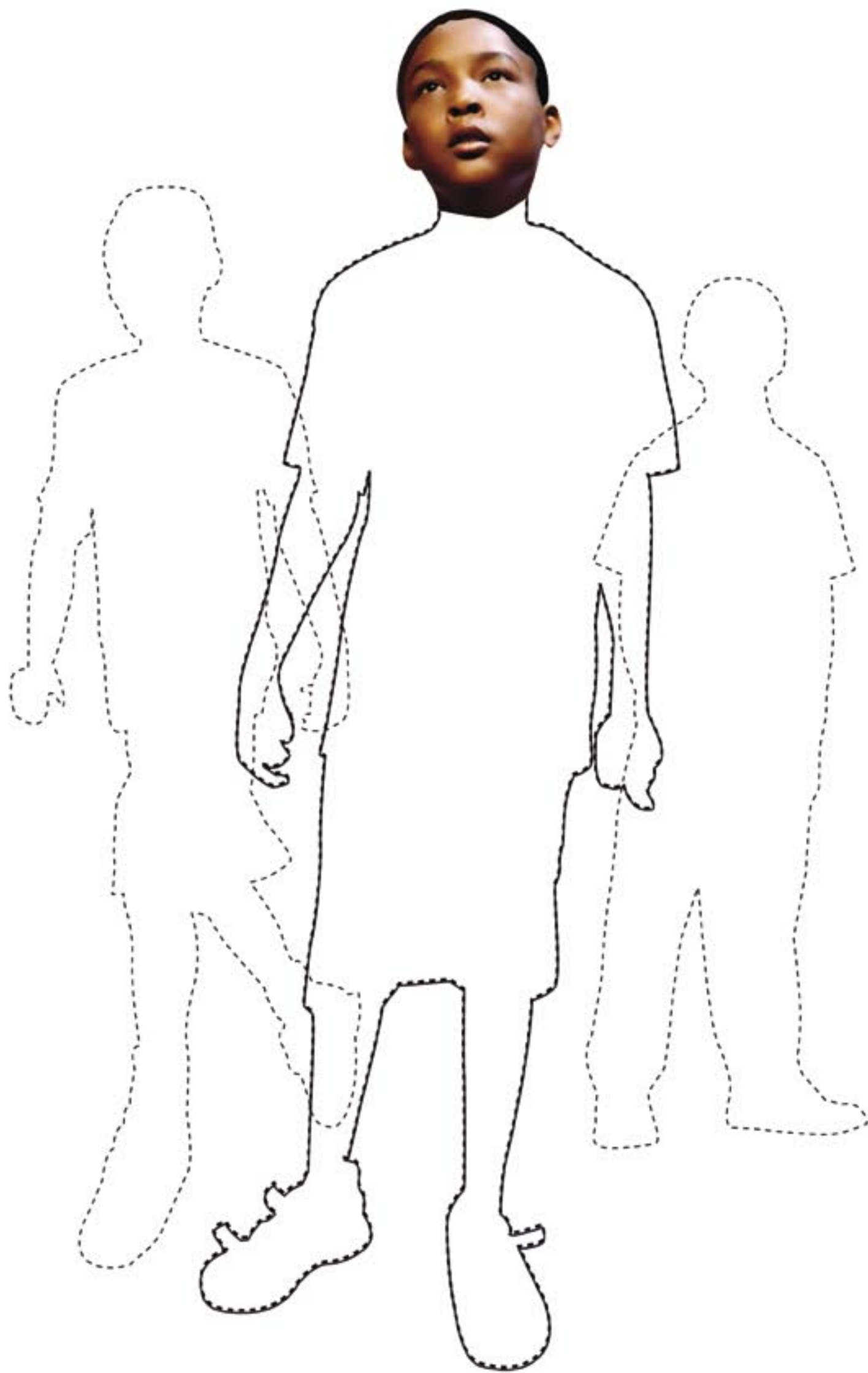
- LAYERS:**
- 1. Technology
 - 2. Aspirational
 - 3. Social
 - 4. Psychological



Technology layer: a craving for the fantasy of a virtual world



Aspirational layer: comfort that knowledge and commitment will lead to a bright boundless future





PAM, AGE 12

HOMETOWN: **Venice, California**

SIBLINGS: **Two sisters**

Pam resides in Venice, CA and attends school in Santa Monica.

She is a straight-A student and the youngest of two. Her older sister has just gone off to college.

She works very hard in school so that she can keep her 4.0 GPA and go to a top university and hopefully earn the lifestyle she desires.

Pam looks up to her sister and other high-school kids who take her to school in the mornings.

She loves shopping and can't get enough of it. She has a tendency to always want more, and is never satisfied with what she has.

Pam loves surfing the web to look at purses. Her latest addiction is checking out diamonds — she gets a rush from it.

She wants to live the life of the rich and famous. She is dying to get a pink Marc Jacobs purse and a pink blackberry.

Pam c
friends, who's dating whom, who said what, and who has the latest Juicy article of clothing.

She gets into arguments with her parents a lot over spending too much money and wants more buying power.

Pam comes across as having a lot of self-confidence; she checks herself out in the mirror 24/7 and is into technology such as her pink camera cell phone and other gadgets.

She sends many SMS messages to her friends, and loves being in touch with them.

Her phone is right by her bed at night so that she can get to it fast if someone calls.

She hates being home alone and being bored.

STATUS + INDEPENDENCE = PAM

LAYERS:

1. Social
2. Aspirational
3. Technology
4. Psychological









JAKE, AGE 13

HOMETOWN: **Santa Monica, California**

SIBLINGS: **Two younger brothers**

Jake lives with his mom and two brothers.

He cares a lot about his mother, but doesn't speak much to his brothers.

He obeys his curfew and is very responsible when he is at home.

Money has always been tight in the household so Jake is aware of its value.

He wears casual clothes and is aware of brands.

He is not comfortable showing his emotions.

He is a silent communicator.

Jake loves being outdoors and spends most of his time skating with his seven friends on the weekends.

Skate-boarding allows him to hang out with his friends, and for him to release his energy into something he is passionate about.

He takes his board with him for the most part because it is his most prized possession, and he never lends it out to anyone.

Over the years he has collected stickers from his favorite skaters.

SKATING + FRIENDS = JAKE

- LAYERS:**
- 1. Social
 - 2. Technology
 - 3. Aspirational
 - 4. Psychological



Social layer: a heart closed off to the world, unable to express the powerful emotions concealed in its core







AMANDA, AGE 14

HOMETOWN: **Pasadena, California**

SIBLINGS: **None**

Amanda is an only child from Pasadena.

She is a kind and sweet young tween with a big heart when it comes to others.

She attends private school with her best friend Sally.

Her friends are a huge part of who she is.

Amanda is "happy" but feels pressure to make sure that her friends are ok.

She is a people-pleaser who wants the best for those around her. In reality she prefers to be at home by her computer or watching TV.

She uses her phone mainly to text (SMS) her friends when she can't be at home.

Amanda feels that she can be herself when she is in her own space.

She is into boys big time, but is extremely shy around them. She has disagreements with her parents (like any other tween who is trying to find their own identity).

Her room is decorated with a variety of stuff from Eminem poster to cute girly stickers and drawings. She is a bit messy and into fashion big time.

CONTROL + CHOICE + HOME = AMANDA

LAYERS:

1. Social
2. Technology
3. Aspirational
4. Psychological



Social layer: a heart receptive to the needs of others, absorbing like a sponge



Technology layer: staying connected, a unified voice

*love
security
comfort*



**world's
best mom**



Aspirational layer: finding that balance between the comfort of home and the needs of a family;
that nurturing healing support



PERSONA 1

AT HOME WITH STEVIE



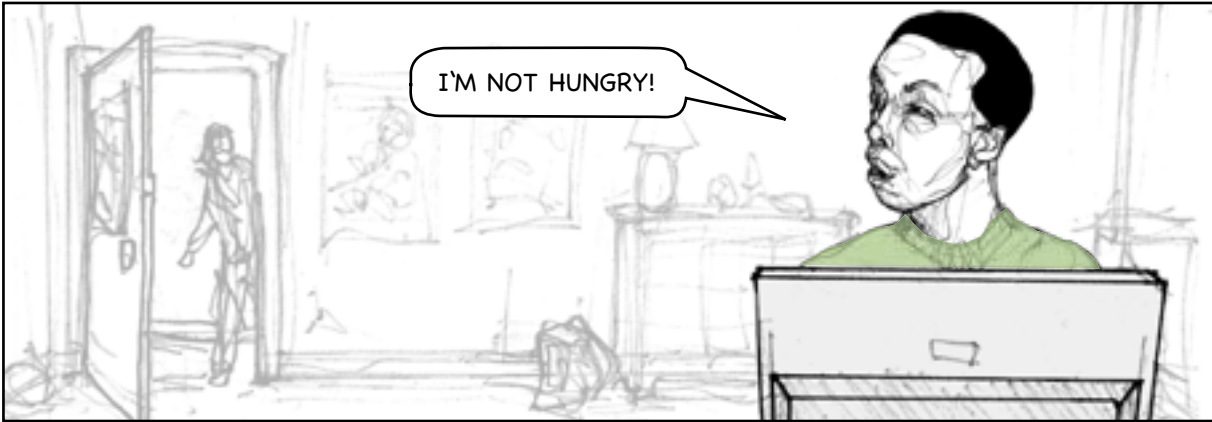
Stevie arrives back at home...



Drops his bag ...



Stevie turns on the computer.



I wish I could hang out with my friends.



Upset, he logs on and starts his homework.



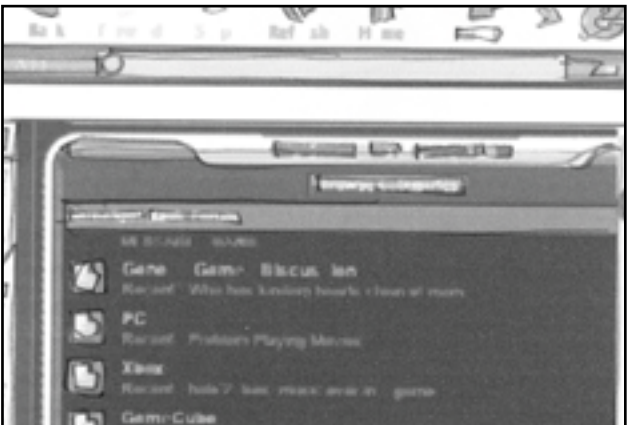
Leafing through his CD collection...



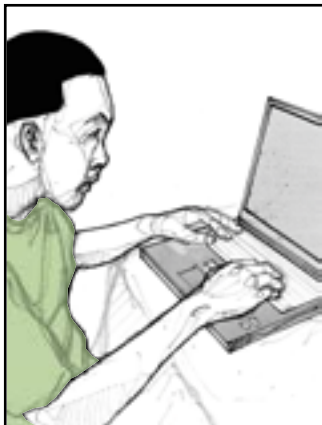
Stevie logs into Instant Messaging...



Then sees 4th place ranking on website...



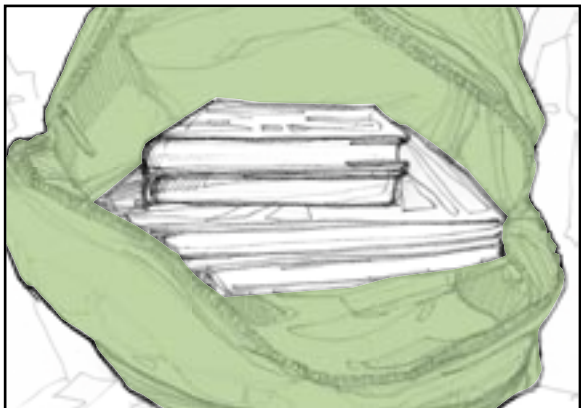
Always a good student, Stevie returns to his school project ...



But, is soon instant messaged by a friend.



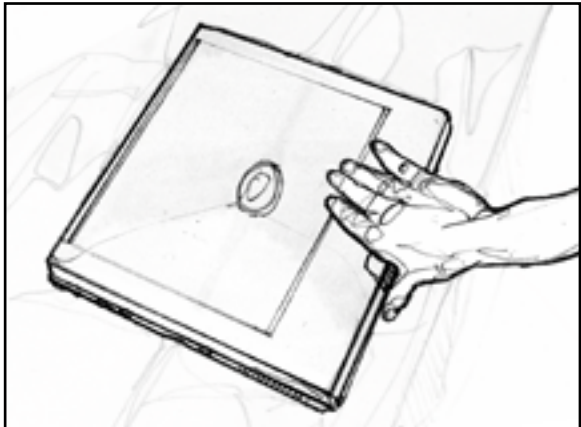
Finished with his homework, he packs his bag.



Stevie enjoys his gameboy because he can play alone.



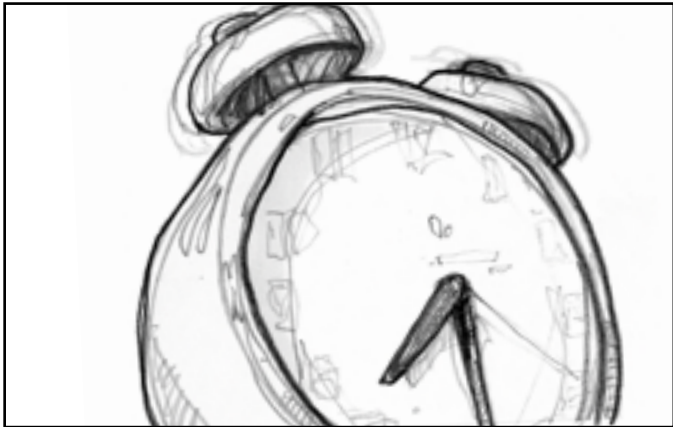
He closes his laptop and grabs his gameboy.



PERSONA 2

PAM PURCHASES AN IPOD

Alarm rings at 7:40 Saturday.



CD Starts playing JoJo.



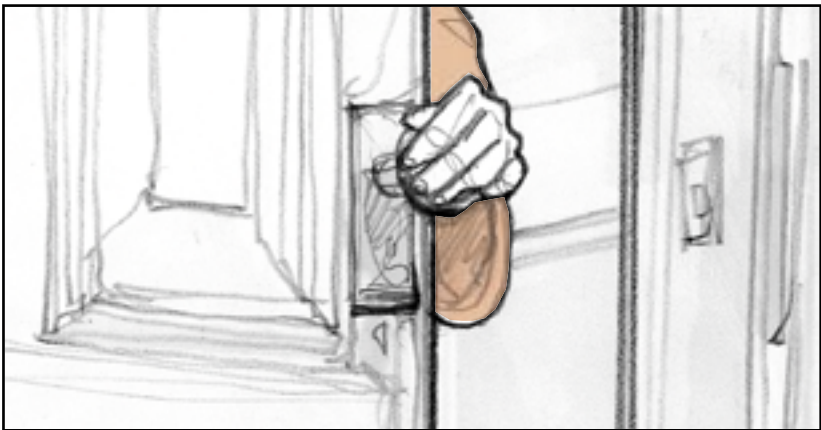
Turns over and hits the snooze.



She pulls herself out of bed.



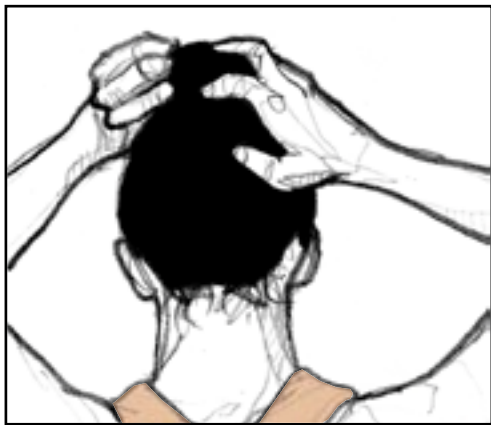
Grabs her soccer uniform and heads to her personal bathroom.



Washes her face.



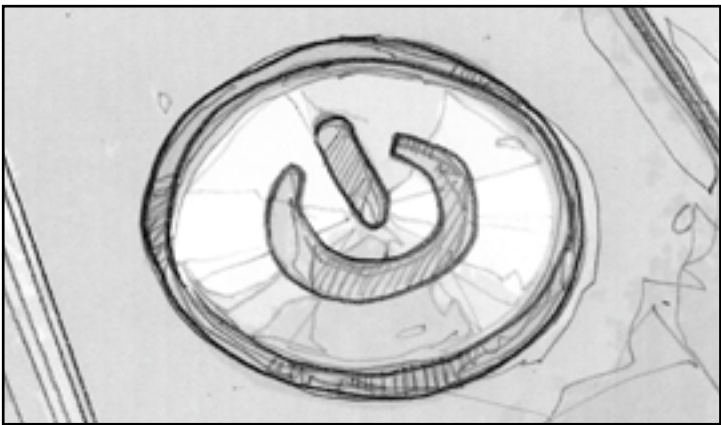
Puts on uniform, pulls back her hair.



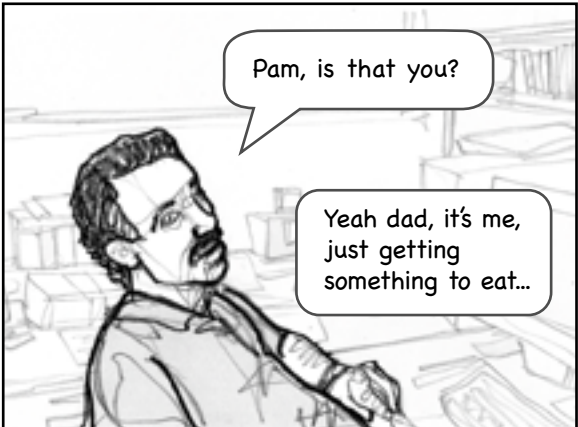
SMS friend Crissy to make sure she is awake and getting ready.



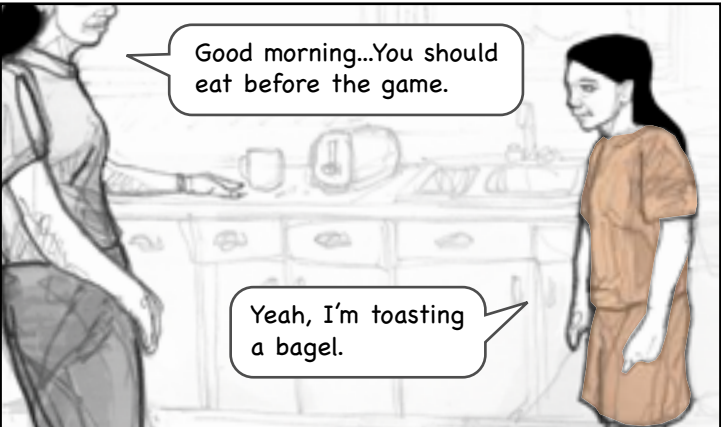
While she is doing that, she turns on her computer.



Goes downstairs to grab bite to eat.

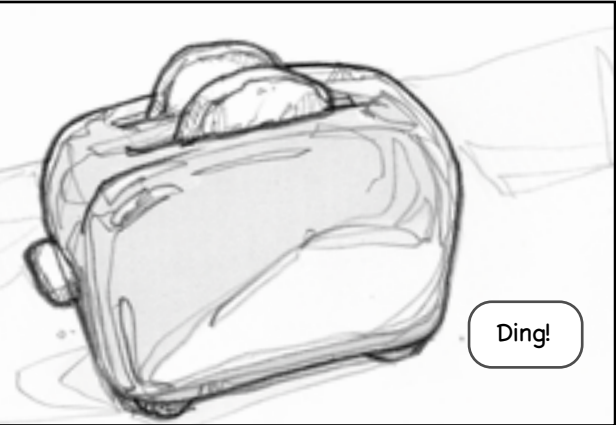


Goes into kitchen puts bagel in toaster. Mom walks in with coffee.



PERSONA 2
PAM PURCHASES AN IPOD CONT'D

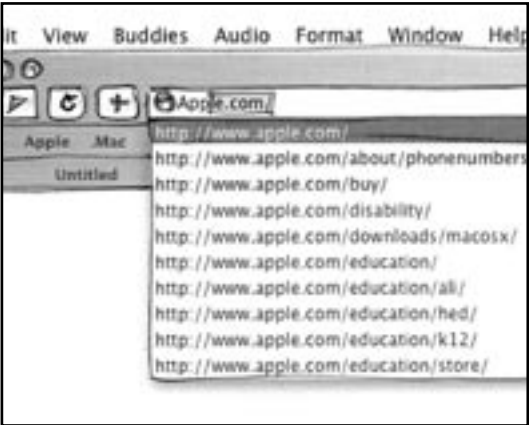
Toaster finishes.



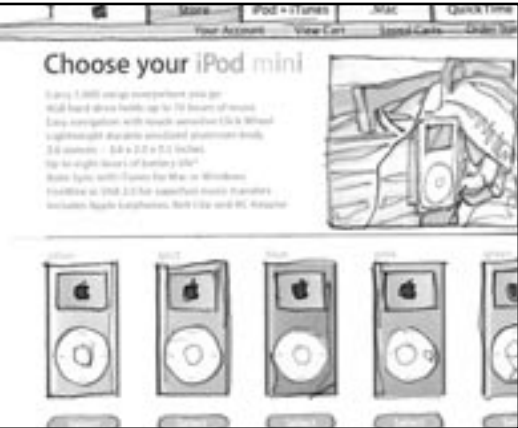
Pam heads up to her room...



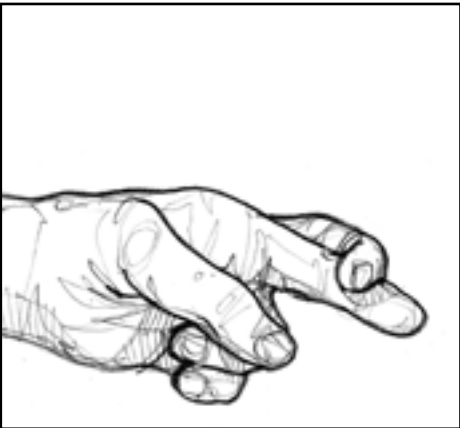
Makes a b-line to computer. Starts web browser and types "Apple.com."



Clicks iPod mini link. Compares viewing the pink, green and silver.



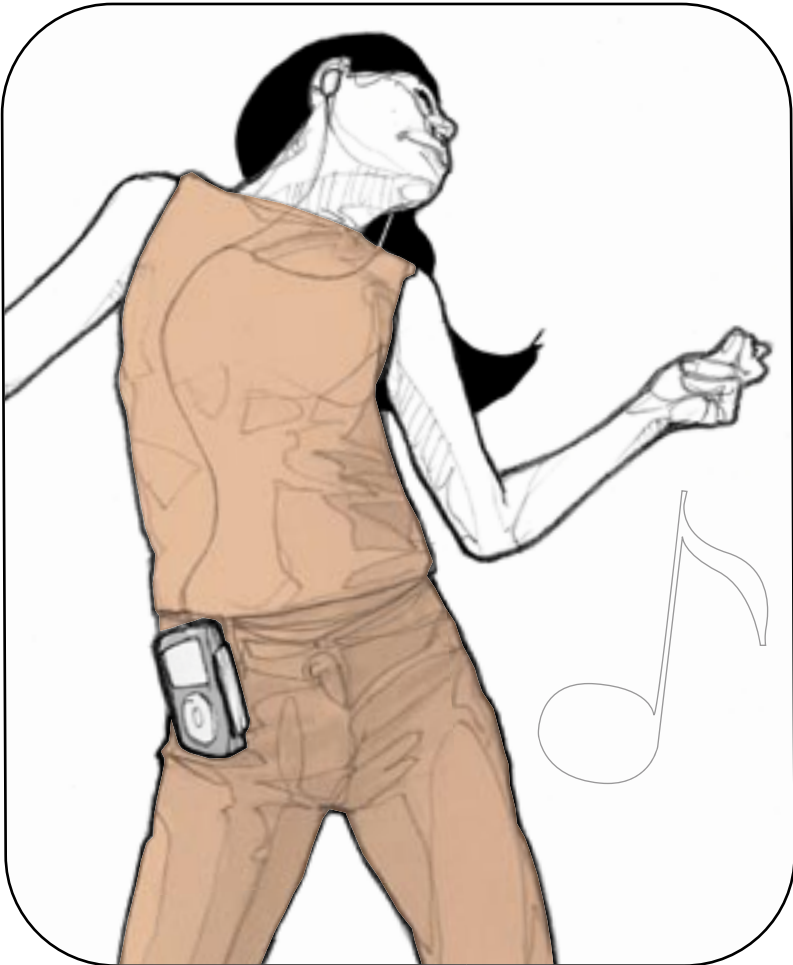
Checks to see if she can get an educational discount.



Gets excited that she can get a \$30 discount.



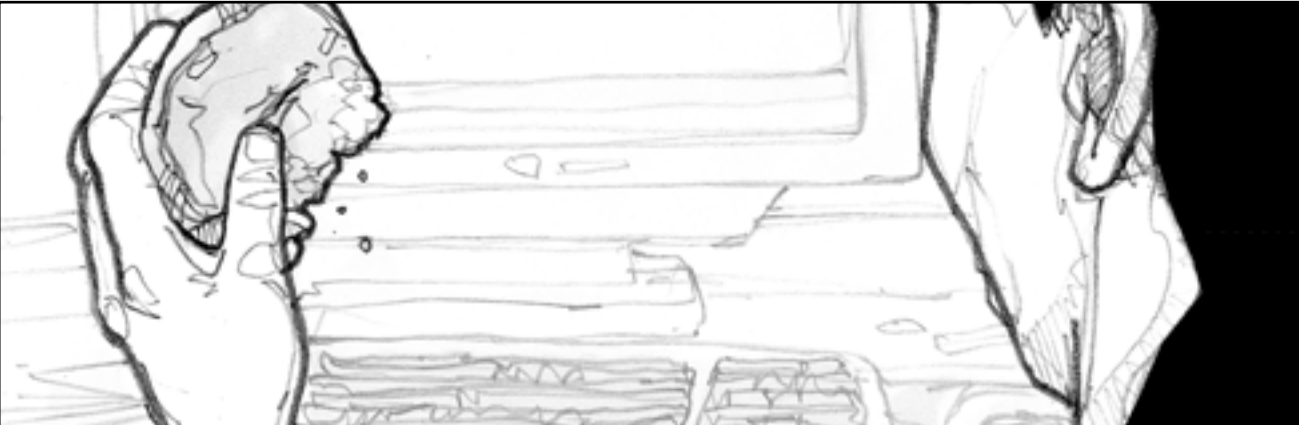
Sees herself using the iPod mini.



As she takes a bite from her bagel, sees that Crissy has responded.



Finishes bagel as she surfs through the rest of Apple.com.



Continued

Grabs her soccer bag and purse and heads down stairs.



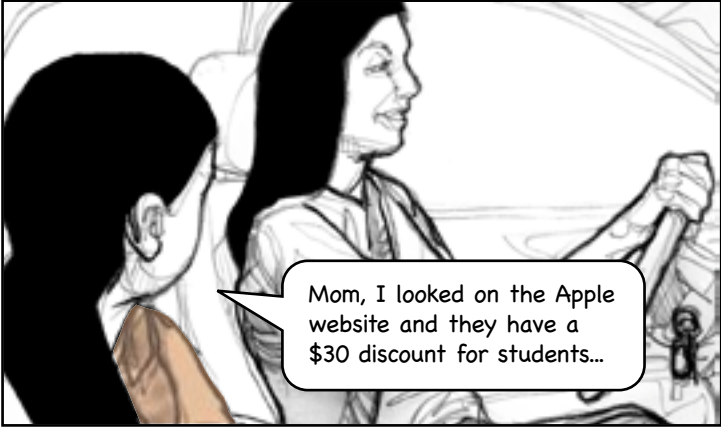
Dad meets Pam and Mom at the door, wishes her luck.



All agree to meet up after the game.



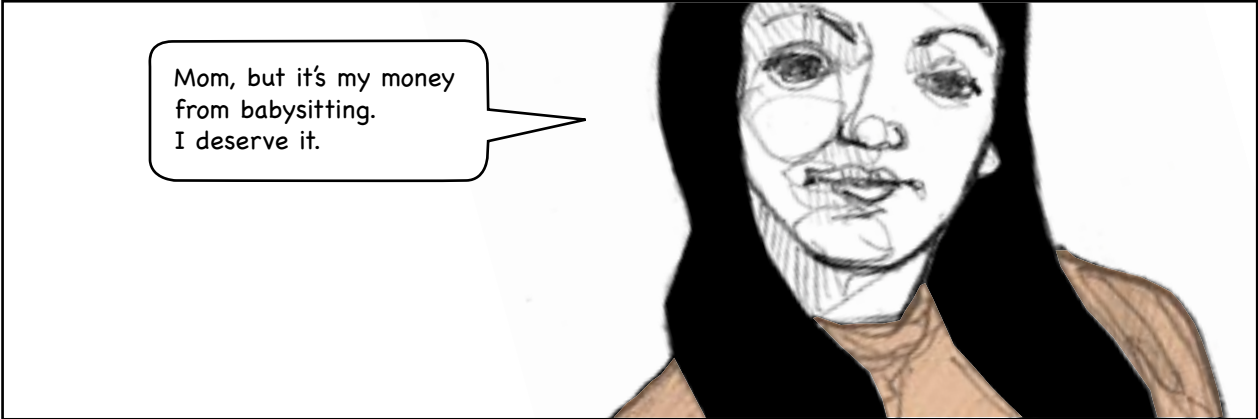
Get in car, head toward soccer game. Talking about school, friends, and boys.



Mom says she doesn't know, gets flustered.



Pam gets annoyed.



Plays a good game, scored a goal and feels very proud.



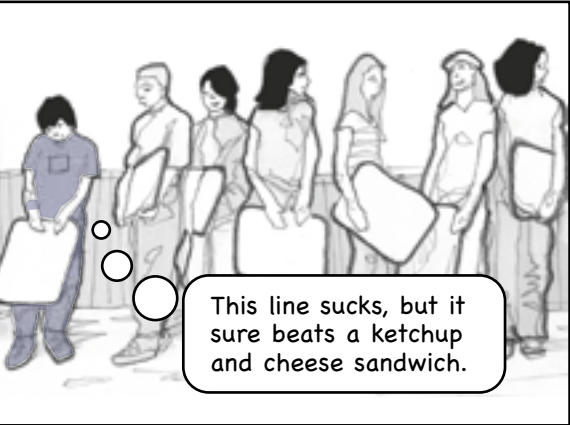
At the end of game Mom congratulates Pam for the goal and a good game.



PERSONA 3

HANGIN' OUT WITH JAKE

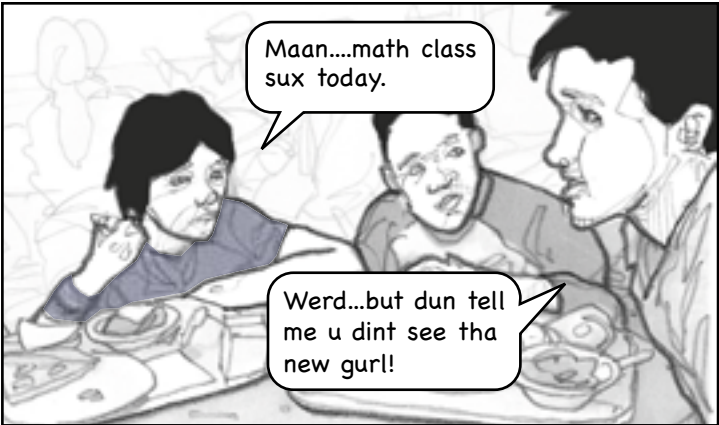
Jake buys food cuz he wouldn't bring anything to school.



Gets out of line and walks past a table of girls.



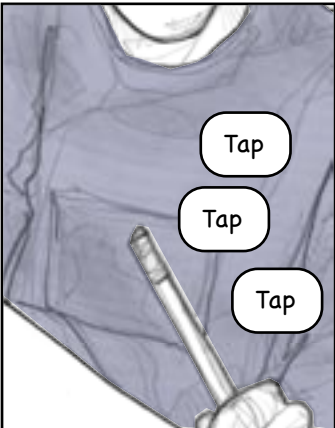
Hangs out talking about a variety of things.



Tries to stay close to best friend max, but it gets tricky sometimes in the halls.



Takes pencil out, starts tapping it as he waits for class to start.



While trying to stay calm, his friend starts talking, taking his mind off his science worries for a bit.



Thinks he will do well on test, since he was up til 12:30am studying.



Meets up with Max outside school and they both grab skateboards and head to Jake's.



The bell rings and he is out of there.



Chats with friends about the test, and how they're planning to meet at 3rd Street.



Continued

Jake asks Max a few questions on the science test, and then the conversation changes to meeting at the promenade.



Get to Jake's house, throw their bags down. Go to Jake's room to call his mom.



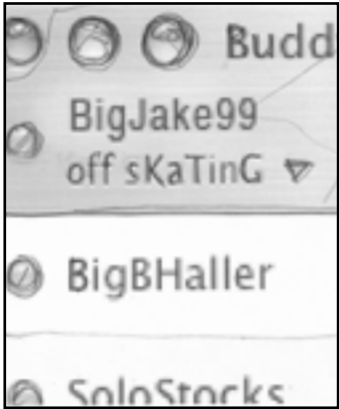
Mom asks about the test, he says he did ok. She says he can skate til 5 and then he has to come home.



While he is on the phone, he logs onto IM while Max flips through his cd's.



Puts up message saying he is off skating.



They head for the kitchen to grab a bite and their boards.



Skate and take the bus to 3rd Street. Hang out at corner skating for a few minutes before the crew arrives. Zane brings the camcorder and they begin filming.



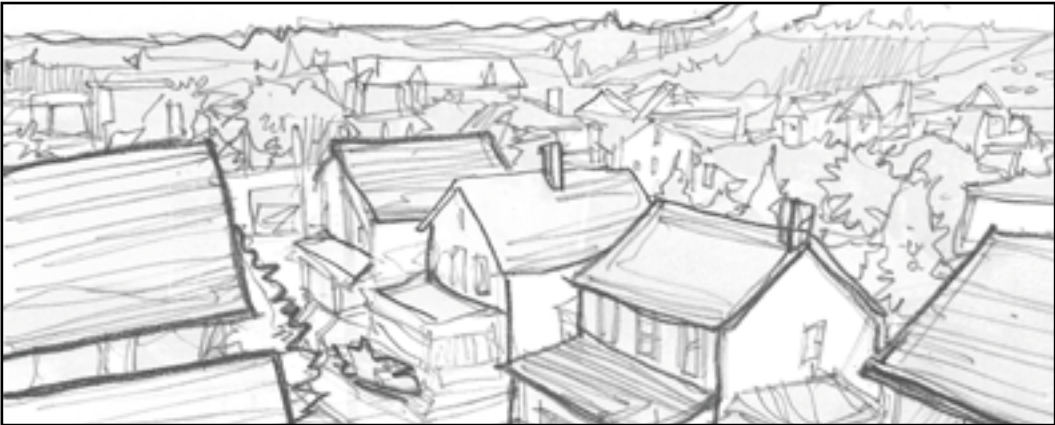
PERSONA 4

AMANDA'S NIGHT IN

A bunny or an elephant. Amanda is trying to see what she can create from the clouds in the sky.



She likes checking out the view from the top of her house while hanging out on her roof.



Charlie, her dog, comes to greet her and bring her inside.



She runs inside and sees her Mom and Dad cleaning up the dishes from dinner.



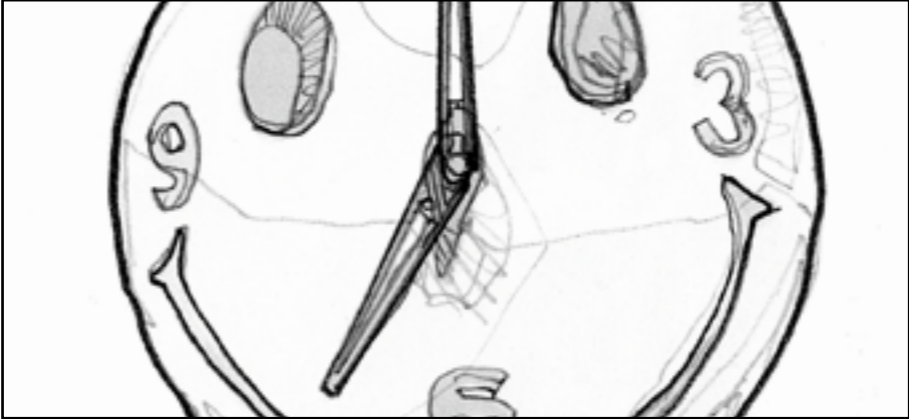
Amanda flops on her bed and picks up her Dave Barry book.



She reads through the next three chapters before she gets bored.



It's almost 7 o'clock so she heads to the living room to watch One Tree Hill...



...and her heart throb Chad Michael Murray.



Continued

At 9 o'clock her parents remind her to practice her flute for 30 minutes.



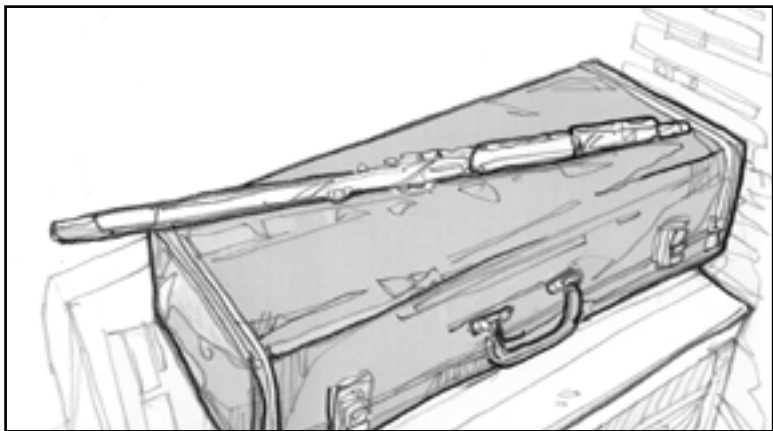
She enters her room and glances at her computer making sure she is still signed on to AIM before practicing.



While playing the flute...



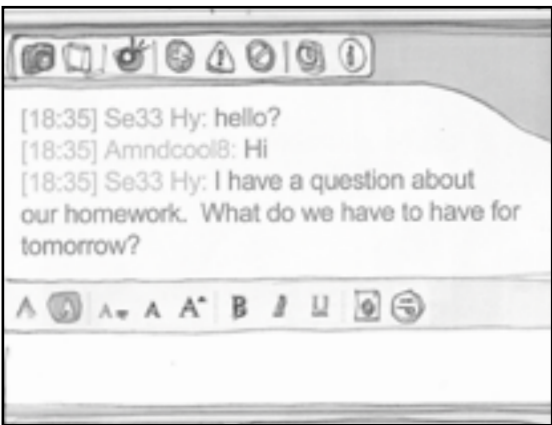
...she hears an instant message alert and puts her flute down as she heads to the computer.



Her friend, Allison, asks her a question about the English homework.



She writes back and then the conversation develops from homework to TV to Scott the new boy at school.



More screens pop as people see she is no longer idle. She answers briefly because she really just wants to talk to Allison.



Her dad walks in and tells her she needs to get off now. She has already gone over her two hour limit.



She says ok, but keeps typing for 15 more minutes until...



Her dad shouts a second time to get off after walking past her door to go to bed.



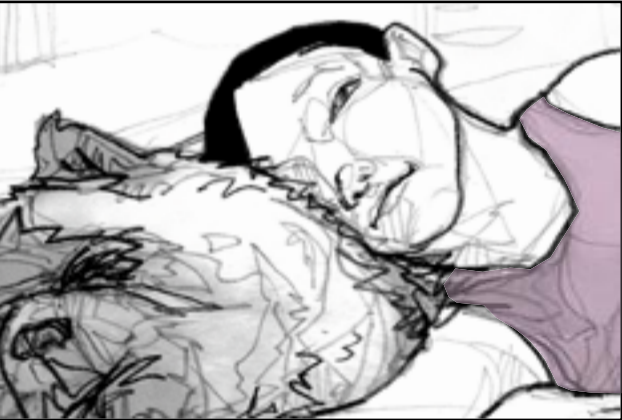
Flops back on her bed and cuddles up with Charlie. She hopes Allison was right about Scott liking her.



Grabs one of her fashion mags and flips through it.



Puts her cell phone near her side out of habit and lays back on Charlie.



Land line rings, she answers hoping it is for her, but it isn't. It rings again and it's Allison.



Her eyes get heavy, she's about to fall sleep. They hang up, asleep with the cell still in her hand.



Talking about Scott for 35 minutes, fiddling with the phone cord.



VIBRATIONS

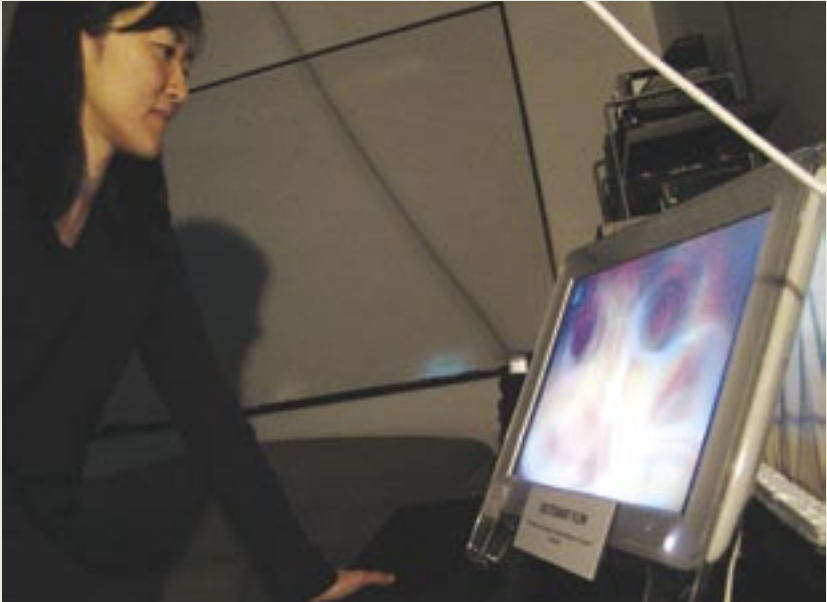
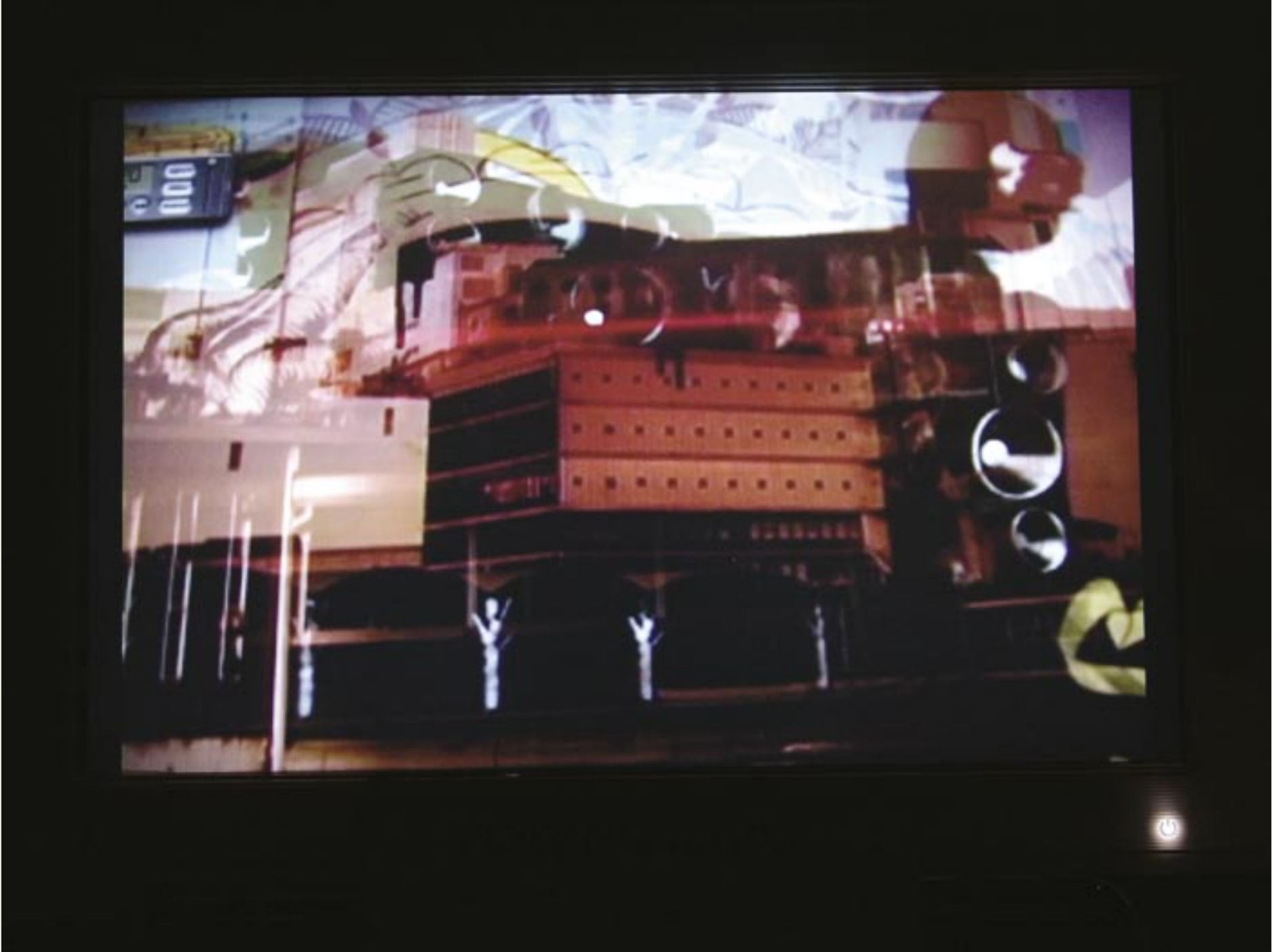
EXCITEMENT FLOW

EXPERIENTIAL STATE

A state in which a tween is completely and actively engaged, for example, when they are competing in a sport, playing a video game, or shopping.

SAMANTHA: "The guitars. I love playing. I've been playing for 2 years."

ASHLEE: "Basketball is my favorite sport."



Participants watch a montage of videogame f

VIBRATIONS

SLOW FLOW

EXPERIENTIAL STATE

A state of flow in which a tween is passively engaged.
For example, when they are watching TV.

ZANE: "I watch a lot of TV when I'm bored."



Participants watch a TV show that is slowed to 15 frames per second to simulate what it is like to engage in the slow flow of watching TV.

VIBRATIONS

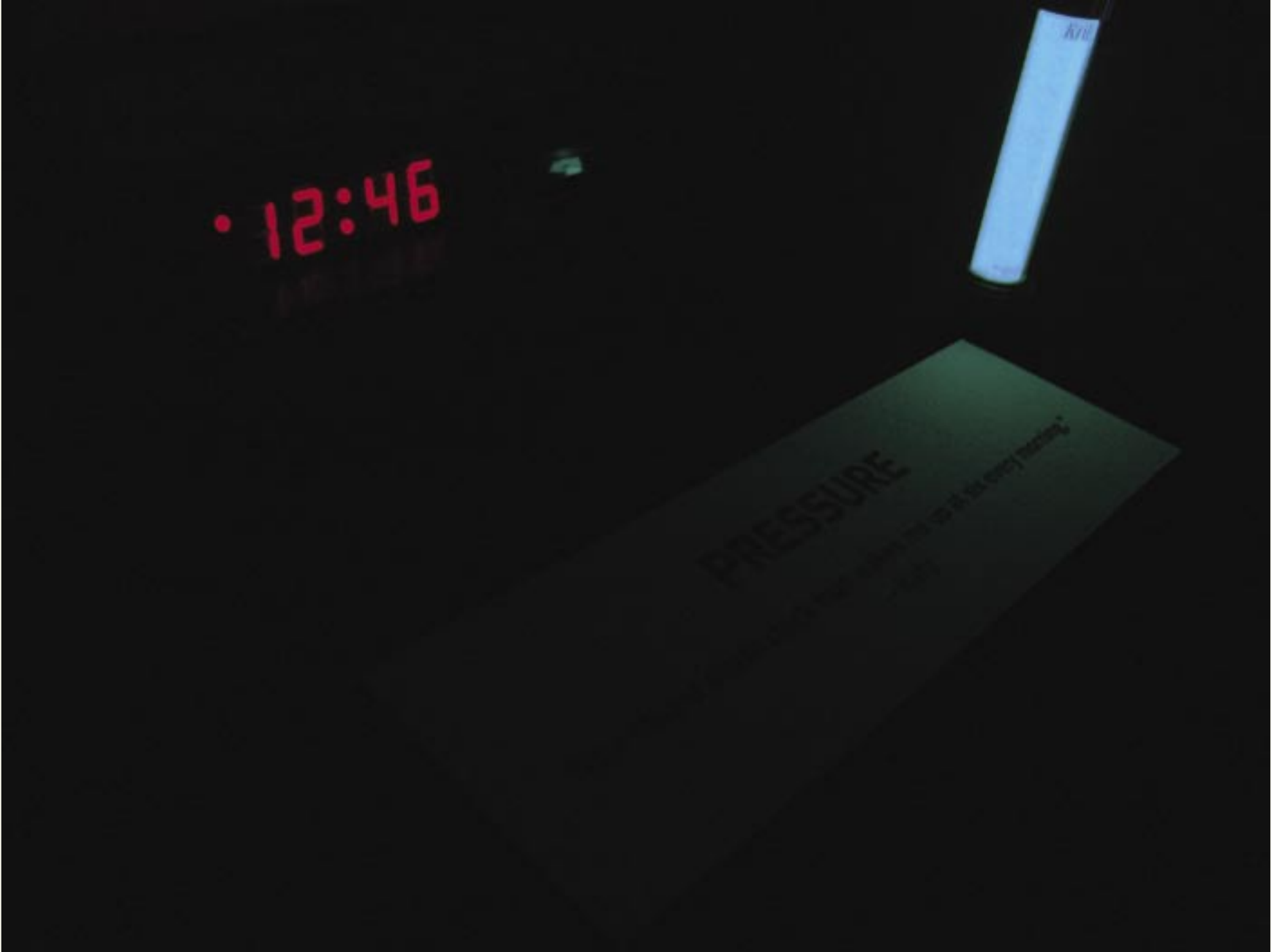
PRESSURE

EXPERIENTIAL STATE

When tweens feel the stress or burden of adversity, such as the daily load of homework.

JENNIFER: "That's all my homework that I have to do. And I wonder why I'm so stressed?"

NATASHA: "My lovely, annoying math homework."



The sound of the alarm clock repeats during the installation.

VIBRATIONS

FRUSTRATION

EXPERIENTIAL STATE

A feeling that occurs when tweens are being hindered or criticized, for example, when they want to make a purchase on their own or when they are reprimanded by their parents.

KATY: "The stupid alarm clock that wakes me up at six every morning."

NATASHA: "My massive, billion pound backpack I lug around everyday."



Participants wrap the chain around their leg and pull the cinder block of frustration.

VIBRATIONS

INSECURITY

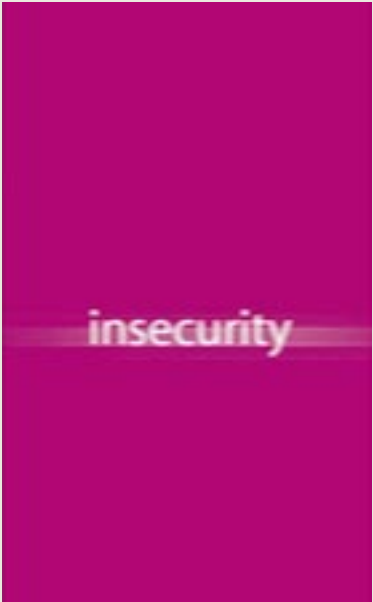
EXPERIENTIAL STATE

The feeling of uncertainty or lack of confidence that arises, for example, when tweens are concerned about not fitting in, such as when they do not have the latest cell phone.

ASHLEE: "Cell phones are cool."

NATASHA: "The vanity that I do my make-up in every morning."

MARVEL: "I always wanted one because everybody I know had one."



Participants listen to the thoughts and feelings of insecurity. They experience the insecurity of not having the latest cell phone.

VIBRATIONS

COMFORT

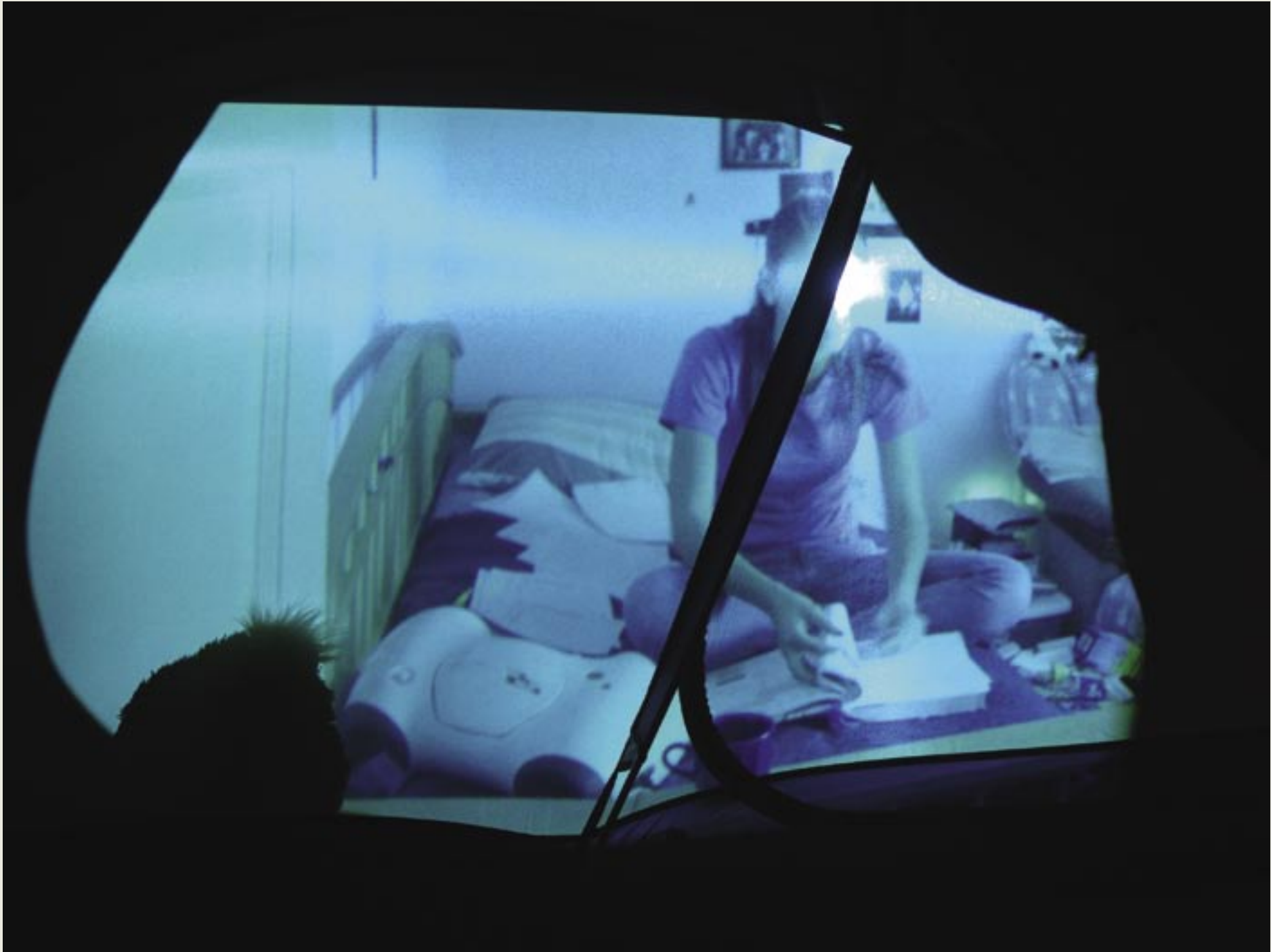
EXPERIENTIAL STATE

When tweens are in a state of well-being, such as when they are doing something they enjoy, like reading a book or talking on their cell phone.

SAMANTHA: "My boom-box. Couldn't live without it."

ROSEMARIE: "This is a picture of when I sleep. As you can see on the bed is my stuffed animals that I like the most."

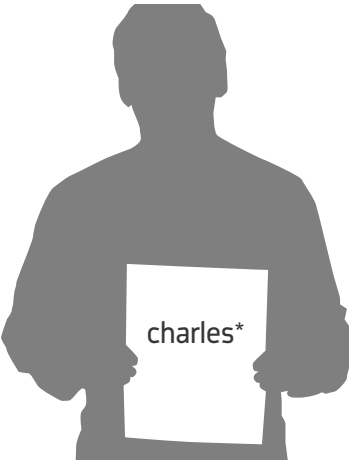
KATY: "Books...I love to read."



Participants explore the comfort zone of a tween.

DESIGN RESEARCHERS

GRADUATE STUDENTS



* Industrial Design Graduate Students (not pictured: Charles)

“I was amazed at how adult they were, and how smart. They really were great to talk to.”

– Amy, age 30

“The future relies on the vision of tweens.”

– Sarah, age 26

“The tweens research has given me great insight into this dynamic market that is floating between child and teenager.”

– Valerie, age 29

“I was surprised by
how creatively charged
they were.” – Angel, age 23

“There is a well-established,
younger generation that has
replaced our own.” – Nikhil, age 22

“They seemed to be very
politically aware. Most
of them had watched the
presidential debates.” – Susan, age 34

“I felt kind of intimidated when they told me only losers wear striped shirts, since I was wearing one.”

– Theo, age 24

“The tweens research has made me ponder the nature of why kids are becoming more consumer conscious at an earlier age.”

– Han, age 30

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SUPER STUDIO, FALL 2004

Faculty: Dr. Brenda Laurel, Lisa Nugent, Anne Burdick

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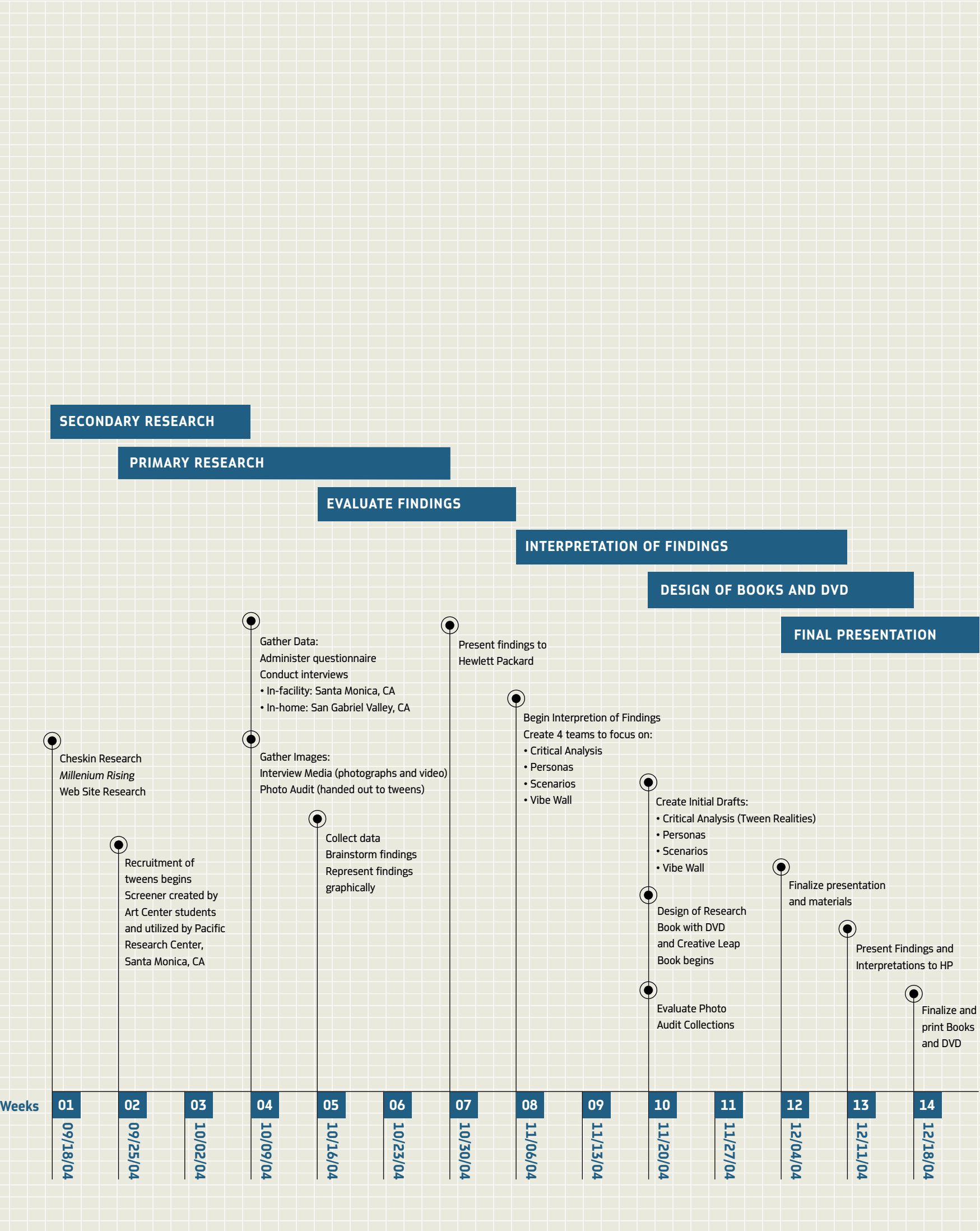
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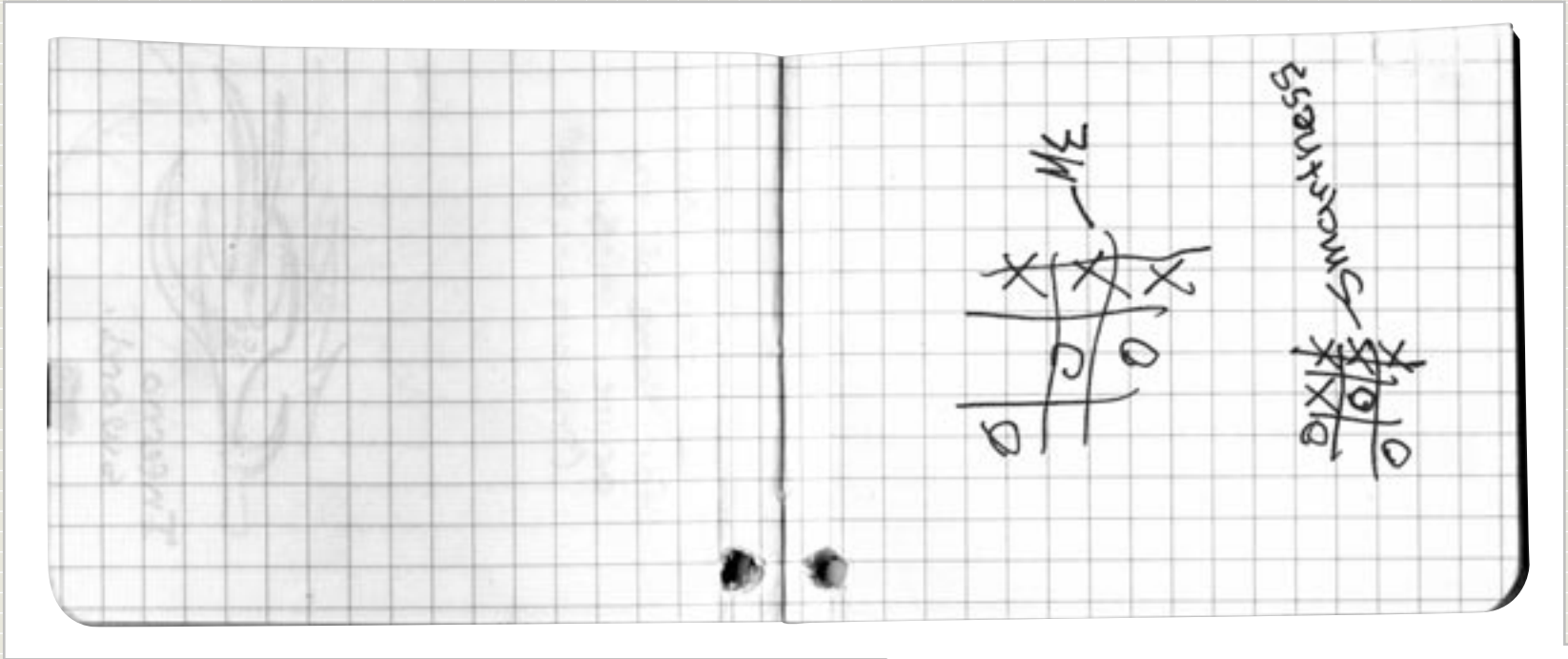
DESIGN RESEARCH

RESEARCH TIMELINE

The design research process was accomplished in fourteen weeks.

The timeline below details the schedule.





Connor, age 14