**WEEK 3**

**THE CONNECTED HOME  
KATIE BROWN**

This week I addressed two main factors of my prototype, firstly how will it work? And secondly, what will it look like? To recap on last week I decided that I wanted to encourage conversation around politics. Following examples like the prayer companion, I want to create something that will fit into the home, without being intrusive. Both in the way it appears and functions. The prototype should resemble a household object and be subtle in the way it projects information. I decided this week that the information would be written and communicated via an LCD screen. (I would have loved to have been able to play with spoken audio, but I was unable to source the parts and code required.)

The information that the LCD screen would ideally display, will be political news feed ‘stories’ from the RSS news feeds. This would provide a “topic” for conversation and personal research. At this stage I am simply exploring the arduino code and wiring setup required to make the LCD screen display text so this may change, depending on the processing element of this design.

I want to make a prototype that creates conversation without drawing focus away from the topic by being an ‘alien’ object. After brainstorming ideas including, but not limited to, an ornamental head, a clock and a salt shaker. I thought, “where would an lcd screen look at home, in the home?” And decided that this would only be, on an existing piece of technology that you expected an lcd screen to be a part of. So I thought, “how does someone interact with an LCD screen?” And I decided “well, you would read from an lcd screen.” This led me to the theme of books. I decided to create a false ‘book’ casing that would hold the LCD screen within and function when opened to be read.

In reflection of this decision, I have realised that a book is probably not a conversational object in the sense that it’s not inclusive. Reading is something often done alone. Although, the content of a book is something that you would often discuss when with friends. Recommending reading something that moved you, or quoting something memorable. This is perhaps the area that I need to focus on and develop what ‘story’ I want my book to tell.

