

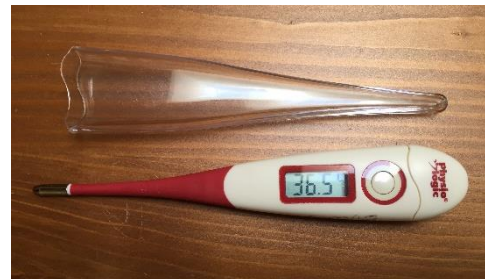
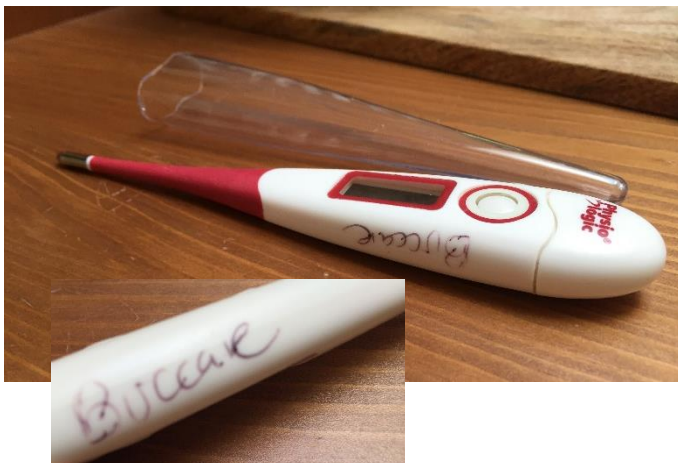
Etude 1 - Stranger Things

CART 360 - Physical Computing and Tangible Media
Concordia University

Adèle Bédard
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My first object is a buccal **thermometer**. This thermometer hangs on my bed side table since the last time I was sick, which was a couple months ago already. However, I think it was the first time that I had seen this thermometer, I don't know where it came from, but I found it in my bathroom cabinet at that time. It's like it came out of nowhere. It is used primarily by putting the tip in your mouth, under your tongue, and then pressing the button and waiting. The number equivalent to the temperature in Celsius of your body appears on the little screen. Let's describe a bit its form and materiality. Its exterior is mainly made of plastic. It has a transparent plastic cover, that covers from the tip to almost all the way to the top. This is also an interesting part, because it allows to cover and uncover it, acting almost as a stress reliever, like these stress balls, when done mechanically with one hand. It is white and red. I feel like this is not a normal color for this kind of medical instruments, which in my head are either white or blue. I find that the red adds this sense of urgency and drama to it. The fact that there is the word "buccal" handwritten to it adds a sense of mystery. Also, I don't recognize the handwriting, so I don't know at all where it comes from. Is it a pharmacist's or a nurse's handwriting, or is it the one of an anterior proprietary of this object? Did we even buy this thermometer, or did it belong to someone else before? This handwritten word really allows to think of stories behind it, making this object mysterious and interesting.

For me, apart from its usual function, this thing is meaningful because it reminds me of sickness. In fact, every time my throat is sore and I feel like I might be sick, I have to regularly take my temperature, because if I have fever and a sore throat, I have to head straight to the hospital, because it could be a recidivism of the rheumatic fever I had a couple years back. This was kind of a traumatic experience for me, or maybe life growing experience, having to spend a week in the hospital at 10 years old, and now having regular medical check-ups and having to take medication every day. It also scarred me in a bad way somehow because that is when I started to become more sensitive to blood and other things related to the mutilation of the body. So, this thermometer reminds me of all this experience, as well as more futile sickness experiences from my childhood, like many other kids have. Some people liked being sick as a kid, because they got treated well and got to miss school, but I didn't. So, this thermometer reminds me of mostly bad feelings. That is also why I think that this object is interesting, because it can remind many different things depending on the person, and situations where you are most likely vulnerable.



My second object is a small **sculpture of a ballerina**. It has been given to me by a classmate when we were in second grade. I was not particularly close to her and there was no special occasion. It was simply an act of kindness. Also, she had just put it inside my desk, without ever explaining why and where it came from. I assume that her family was cleaning their house and they found it and asked her who she knew could like it, and I was the only one she knew who did ballet. However, I always see it as this random act of kindness between children. I think that this needs to be celebrated and encouraged more, so that it continues as we grow up. For what it represents to me, for sure the ballerina herself is meaningful to me. I have been doing ballet since I am four years old. I often wanted to quit, do only other styles of dance that I preferred, but I never ended up doing it. I felt like I needed the technique that ballet procures to be able to be good in other styles. So, ballet for me is like the necessary evil, that starts becoming less and less evil as I start to become better at it. This sculpture represents a ballerina that is adjusting her leggings, which is I think more powerful than the ballerinas that we find in music boxes for example, where they are dancing constantly. I feel like this ballerina represents more of what it is really like for me doing ballet, the effort and dedication, even more than the dancing itself. Ballet has taught me a lifestyle and a work ethic, and that is what this sculpture represents.

Technically, this figure does not serve any other purpose than to decorate. It is green, which is unusual for a ballerina sculpture, which are usually pink. I think this emphasises the fact that being a ballerina isn't always easy: it's not always like we picture, the pink ballerina turning non-stop. Therefore, this sculpture is the most representative that I have seen and it's really comforting. It shows that I'm not alone in feeling like this. The ballerina has a relaxed face though, so it shows that even with all this effort it is still worth it and pleasing.



My third thing is a set of white **juggling balls**. I bought them for the first performance I did in solo in Cegep. As ironic as this is, this performance was about timidity, and how I can be fine in life even if I am not extroverted. I often feel like the world is made for extroverted and that I must fit in, but it's not always necessary and I have to learn that. Whenever I see these balls hanging around in my room, it really reminds me that I can be who I am and it's fine. Juggling balls in general also are an important symbol for me. This is the thing that I've learned by myself and that I continue to practice for fun. In opposition to dance, which I talked about earlier, juggling is something that I have learned mostly by myself but having them mixed in this performance was important to me. It means that I can merge what I've technically learned dancing and my own experience, my own interests. From that point on, I started to really try to mix my interests that are outside of the type of dance that I've learned and build on this. The fact that these balls are white is super important to me too. Normally, we are used to see coloured juggling balls or circus accessories. The fact that it is white for me represents a white canvas, where I can mix anything I want, and not be stuck in the boundaries of circus. Also, they allow any performance to not be impressive or spectacular only. That is the part that I don't like about circus, is this expectation that the spectator has that they will be impressed. I would like for it to be just beautiful, human, and that is something that not many circus troupes do.

Whenever I see juggling balls, or any kind of round objects of this size, I have a physical urge to juggle with them. And if I restrain myself and I don't, there is really this feeling of discomfort that occurs. The feeling of juggling is so different from anything I've done. Depending on my level of confidence with what I'm juggling with, a bigger or smaller part of my brain is occupied, but I can still function, with that rhythm given by the juggling pattern. It's a form of meditation I feel like. Trying new things with juggling is also interesting, pushing the limits of what gravity can hold.

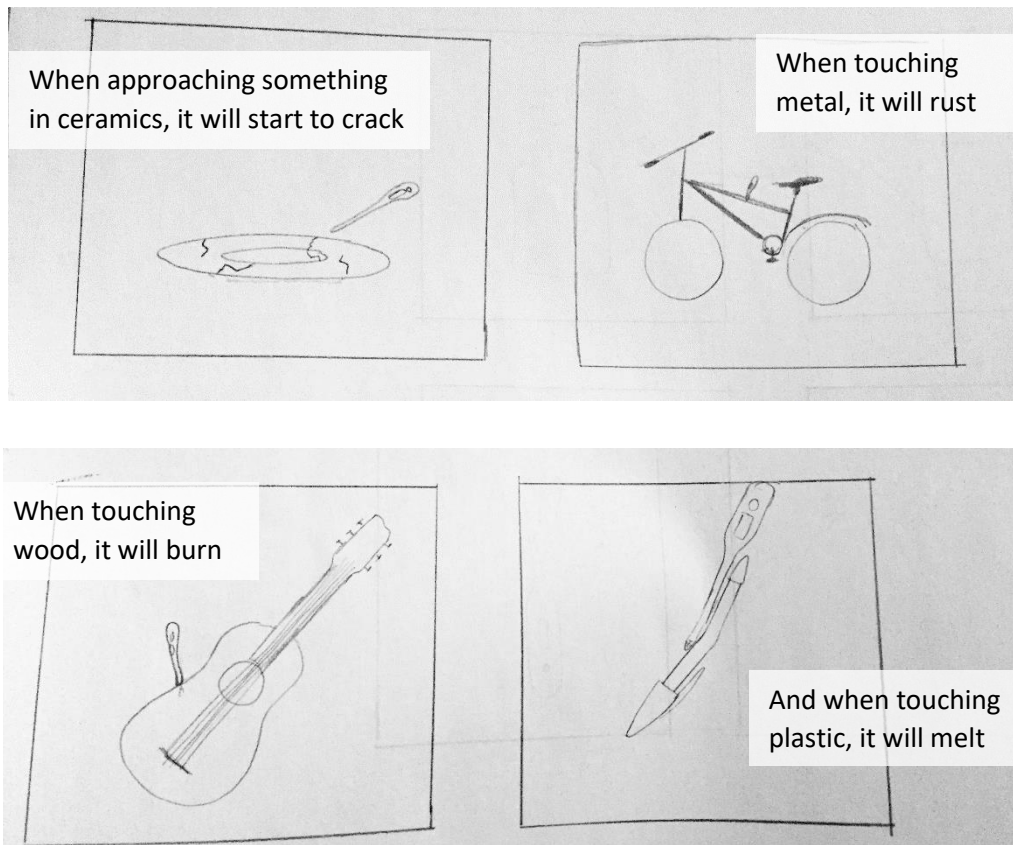
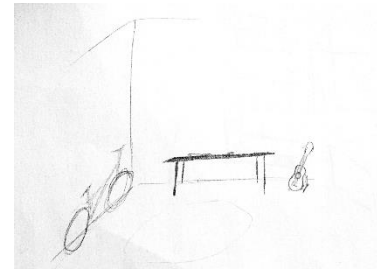


My favorite thing would be the thermometer

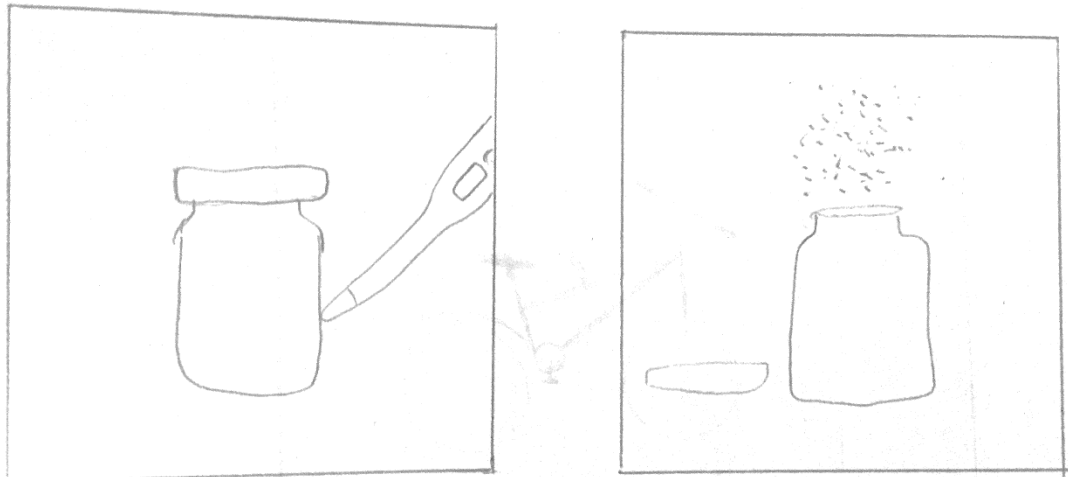
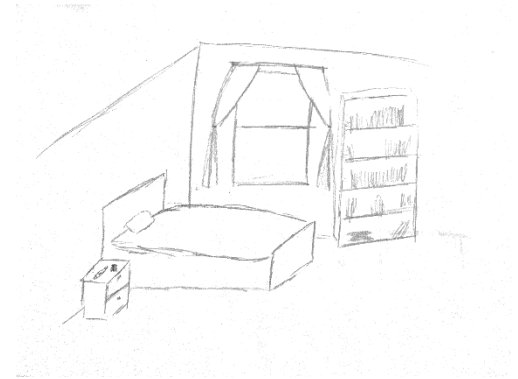
I did a storyboard for the last two concepts, since I wanted to develop them both, but I think that the last one is my favorite.

The **first concept** would be that the thermometer would measure the temperature of the whole planet instead of a certain body and would beep to tell you if you are in the wrong direction to help reduce it. It would raise users' awareness to climatic change and really make them remember it on a day to day basis. Concretely the object would be on you all the time, in your pocket, and it would beep when for example you take the car alone, keep the lights open or let the sink run. I don't really know how to draw this, so I think that the explanation only is better.

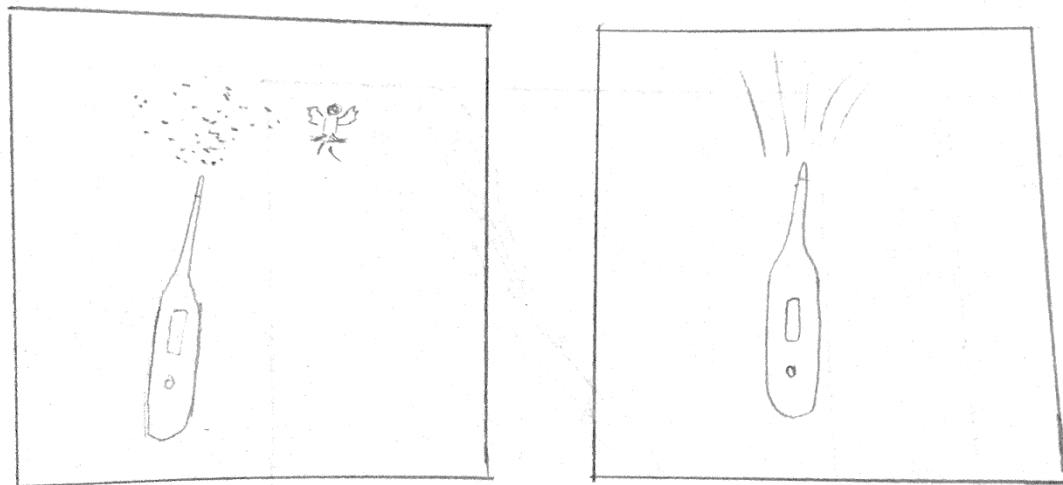
The **second concept** is that instead of measuring heat or temperature, the thermometer transfers heat, or energy, that will do different kind of modifications to objects in a certain room. For this to be feasible, all the objects in the room must be designed to respond to the thermometer's touch. It would explore this idea that observation can sometimes change the proprieties of the object, that something "au naturel" doesn't act the same way as when observed and explore the reason why we need to observe and perturbate. This kind of interaction would be a linear input (the touching of the thermometer) that would change a self-regulated mechanism. (0-1).



The **last concept** is an interactive room where the user will be transported into a child's imagination of their room while being sick. Augmented reality is used, to transform places and walls into an enchanted place, since when we are sick, our mind is sometimes a strange place filled with things from our imagination, especially as children. The user enters the room and opens the thermometer, which acts as a wand. The position where the end of the thermometer points will be affected. Some objects will also transform into something more ferric when directly touched by the thermometer. Specific movements can also trigger some effects.



When touching the medication container with the thermometer, it opens, and fairy dust comes out
(0-0 interaction → a linear input, the touch, gives a linear output, the opening and activation of fairy dust)



When turning the thermometer, fairy dust also comes out of the thermometer.
(2-0 interaction → human (learning machine) that interacts with a linear machine)

The area pointed by the thermometer is illuminated with multiple colors which animate.
(0-0 interaction → a linear input: position, gives a linear output: lights/video)