Using Social Media to Engage Students in Online and Blended Learning Environments

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**Guest Speaker**

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Session Aims

1. Discuss the **benefits** of using Social Media in online and blended learning environments

2. Discuss how Social Media can **facilitate learning**

3. Discuss common tasks conducted **before and after** social media-enhanced activities.

4. Discuss how to **align** assessment with instruction
What do you teach?

**POLL**

A. Humanities (e.g., history, art, music, etc.)
B. Sciences (e.g. biology, chemistry, etc.)
C. Education (e.g. instructional design, etc.)
D. Languages (EFL, Spanish, French, etc.)
E. Other
Introduction to Social Media
Which social media tools have you used for teaching and learning?

**POLL**

A. YouTube
B. Facebook
C. Twitter
D. Wikis
E. Blogs
What’s Twitter?

- Twitter is a micro-blogging tool
- It enables users to send and read short 140-character messages called ‘Tweets’.

With Twitter, teachers can...

- Notify learners about assignments and due dates
- Post supplementary material
- Facilitate discussion

With Twitter, learners can...

- Ask and answer questions
- Share information
Finding People on Twitter
Following People on Twitter
Best Practices in Education: Twitter

We are going to watch a video about best practices in Twitter: [http://bit.ly/1CpvnY3](http://bit.ly/1CpvnY3) (01:49 – 05:44)

While watching, note down ways in which Twitter facilitates communication and increases engagement.
How Twitter Facilitates Communication

• Encourage students to ask questions about the course.
• Share relevant material such as blog posts, articles, photos and videos.
• Use Twitter as a forum to discuss class assignments.
• Communicate with experts in relevant fields.
• Create a list of scholars in relevant fields for students to follow.
• Use Twitter to remind students of assignment deadlines.
Which communication practice do you find most relevant for your classroom?

**POLL**

A. Encourages students to ask questions about the course.
B. Share relevant material such as blog posts, articles, photos and videos.
C. Use Twitter as a forum to discuss class assignments
D. Communicate with experts in relevant fields
E. Use Twitter to remind students of assignment deadlines
Making Twistory
(How to Use Twitter to Promote Creative Learning*)

1. Identify a historical figure who you would like to use with your learners (e.g. Benjamin Franklin @BenFranklin). The historical figure should link to a topic you already teach (e.g. US History).
2. Prepare a list of questions that you would ask that historical figure.
3. Alternatively, students can tweet as a historical character.

Note:
This is a great activity for the study of history (historical figure), language and literature (authors), science and technology (inventors), geography (explorers), etc.

*Source: Steve Wheeler’s Blog
Making Twistory

Benjamin Franklin
@benfranklin
I have sometimes wished it had been my destiny to have been born two or three centuries hence.

Joined May 2007

Tweet to Benjamin Franklin

Tweets

Benjamin Franklin @benfranklin · Jul 4
(3) And so I conclude she has lost them forever.

Tweets & replies

Benjamin Franklin @benfranklin · Jul 4
(2) one opportunity more of recovering the friendship of the colonies, which however I think she has not sense enough to embrace.
How YouTube Facilitates Language Learning: Examples from the Field

YouTube is Transforming the Way We Discover Information Via the Web

Founded in 2005 by three former PayPal employees

Bigger than Bing, Yahoo, Ask and AOL combined

It processes more than 3 billion searches a month

Bought in 2006 by Google for $1.65 billion

Fastest growing video sharing website in the world at the moment
### How YouTube Facilitates Language Learning: Examples from the Field

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1 billion</strong> unique monthly visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nearly 1 out of every 2 internet users are on YouTube</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 100 hours of video are uploaded every minute |

| YouTube reaches more US adults ages 18-34 than any cable network |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 billion hours of video are viewed every month</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50% increase in one year</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| If YouTube were a country it would be the largest in the world after China and India |

| Mobile makes up more than 25% of YouTube's global watch time with more than one billion views a day |

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How YouTube Facilitates Language Learning: Examples from the Field

- Instant gratification
- Children are teachers
- Flipping the classroom
- Video bank of lessons
- Stage fright
- Too many kids in class – The YouTube solution
- Cellphone + Selfies
- Green Screen Effect – Making it real
How YouTube Facilitates Language Learning: Examples from the Field

• **Recipes and cooking** – Fifth Grade kids cook for their class.

• **EDPUZZLE** – Reflection and feedback

• **Introduction of families for long distance Key Pals**
Basic guidelines for social media activities

- Remember, the purpose of social media activities is to **fulfil a set of learning goals**, never the other way around!

- Social media activities should always lead to a **meaningful outcome**.

- Social media activities should **promote active learning and collaboration** whenever possible.
Grade 8 Chemistry: Acids and Bases

Learning objectives:

1. Identify the differences between acids and bases
2. Identify common acids and bases
3. Match pH numbers with commonly found acids and bases
4. Promote communication and collaboration

How could you assess learners on this topic using social media?
Assessment Activity

Learners will create a wiki* which includes the following information:

- Key differences between acids and bases
- Examples of common acids and bases and their pH numbers

Learners will work in groups of 4 to complete the task

*A Wiki is a type of content management system which allows users to add, modify, or delete content in collaboration with others.
Procedure before the activity

1. Divide learners into groups of 4.
2. Assign each learner with a role e.g. designer, content researcher, writer and proof-reader.
3. Ensure learners understand what their role entails e.g. designing the layout of the wiki, compiling class notes to fulfil the task objectives etc.
4. Instruct the learner in the role of designer to visit http://bit.ly/1Dneayl to sign up and create the wiki. The site will guide them through a series of steps to set up their wiki.

Instructions for the activity and learner roles can be posted in a Facebook group or class blog.
Procedure during the activity

1. Now the wiki has been set up, learners can add information by clicking on the Edit button on the home page of the wiki (see Edit button on next slide).

2. Set clear learning objectives and outcomes for the activity, and make sure learners know what they will be assessed on using an assessment rubric.

3. Learners may communicate with each other using social media tools. They may also be encouraged to contact domain experts for further information and advice.

   Social media tools which could be used: Twitter (public or private messages), Facebook (groups or private messaging), blogs.
How the Wiki looks…

**Acids and Bases Wiki**

Welcome to the Acids and Bases Wiki

This wiki will explain the key differences between acids and bases.

Describe your topic

Write a description about your topic. Let your readers know what your topic is about and add some general information about it.

Latest activity

---
Procedure after the activity

Encourage learners to reflect on their learning. This can be through tweeting self-reflective comments or writing a short blog entry:

- What did you enjoy most about the activity?
- What did you enjoy least about the activity?
- How well did your group work together?
- What would you do differently next time?

If using summative assessment, you may choose to use the self-reflection as part of the learners’ grade.
## Sample Rubric for Assessing the Wiki

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of subject matter</td>
<td>Learners show exceptional understanding of the differences between acids and bases.</td>
<td>Learners show solid understanding of the differences between acids and bases.</td>
<td>Learners show some understanding of the differences between acids and bases.</td>
<td>Learners show little or no understanding of the differences between acids and bases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>The content of the wiki was relevant, no content was plagiarized, and it fulfilled the lesson objectives.</td>
<td>The content of the wiki was relevant, most was not plagiarized, and it fulfilled the lesson objectives.</td>
<td>The content of the wiki was generally relevant although much was plagiarized. The content mostly fulfilled the lesson objectives.</td>
<td>The content of the wiki was either not relevant or fully plagiarized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and collaboration</td>
<td>The group worked well together and communicated frequently via a range of social media tools.</td>
<td>The group worked well together and communicated via social media when necessary.</td>
<td>The learners worked as a group at times although little communication via social media took place.</td>
<td>Learners did not collaborate effectively as a group and there was little or no communication via social media tools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity Analysis

- What do you think of this assessment activity?
- Does the assessment match the learning objectives?
- Does the activity promote communication and collaboration?
- Do learners have the opportunity to be creative and express themselves?
To effectively implement a social media-enhanced activity, you should:

1. Set measurable learning goals.
2. Design a social media activity which is aligned with the intended learning outcomes.
3. Promote active learning and collaboration.
4. Assign each learner with a role and ensure learners understand what their role entails.
5. Use assessment rubrics which match the learning objectives.
Effective Learning Process

Objectives

Assessment

Instruction
How Edmodo Facilitates Learning: Examples from the Field

- Edmodo is a great LMS
- Brings together all parts of the triangle Student, Teacher, and Parent
- User Friendly
- Full collaboration with Google Apps
- Easy to use.
- Has a “Facebook” feel to it (Important for the young learners)
- Teacher controlled. Can be monitored by selective students
- Assignments are issued, online participation and online notation
- Interactive quizzes and polls built in
How Edmodo Facilitates Learning: Examples from the Field

- 3 Examples
- 1) Classroom Use
How Edmodo Facilitates Learning: Examples from the Field

2) Across the seas

shira v. to Gesher Hartuv 2012 -2013
thing you should bring to Israel.
-swimsuit
-Al-tosh
-Sunscreen
and ofcourse CHOCOLATE :)

idan b. to Gesher Hartuv 2012 -2013
The Hermon site fun place !!
By Idan Brinder, Ori Schwartz, Tomer Masuri and Sahar Noyman.
How Edmodo Facilitates Learning: Examples from the Field

• (Teacher Development)
Can Twitter be used to enhance the process of learning? What Research Shows

1. The use of Twitter for teaching was considered.
2. 252 undergraduate students were encouraged to use Twitter for communicating with their tutor and each other during a 12-week course.
3. Their involvement was evaluated using a survey considering amount of Twitter usage and students' attitudes and experiences.
Summary of Main Findings

1. There is a strong correlation ($r=.55$, $p<.005$) between Twitter usage and student engagement in course-related activities (e.g. sharing information and thoughts).

2. Twitter was well received. The vast majority of students (59%) would like to see its use extended.

3. Using Twitter does not make students less likely to attend lectures.
Questions?
Thank You!