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Using Digital Tools

• Choose tools supported by your school or that are free

• Select tools that can serve multiple functions (e.g., Google Docs) and use frequently instead of overwhelming students with many different apps

• Provide links to video tutorials in case students/caretakers need help using the tools

Connectivity Challenges

• Identify the challenges that students/caretakers are facing

• Promote local resources

• Offer a variety of instructional resources at least some of which can be downloaded

Managing Teacher Workload

• Keep specific hours for your teaching routine.

• Set aside time for yourself to avoid burnout

• Use personal learning networks (**PLNs**) for support, inspiration, ideas…etc. Twitter is a great place to start. Explore how with this video

  ‣ Twitter has an amazing community of educators with an abundance of focus areas. Here's a starter resource

  ‣ See this discussion about online cheating for example

• Use *Open Educational Resources* from sites like **OER Commons**

Tips for Online Teaching

As teachers approach digital and blended learning for the school year, the College of Education at Clemson University wants to support you. We have developed this guide, which offers quick tips and best practices in online education. If you are a SC educator interested in an **Endorsement in Online Teaching**, click here.

Remember the Fundamentals

Prepare Students

✓ Present clear learning objectives and stimulate recall of students' prior knowledge

✓ *Benefit:* Students have an idea of where they are going & remember where they've been

Instructional Variety

✓ Provide multimodal instruction - use a variety of video, text, images, & narration

✓ *Benefit:* Appeals to modern learners & keeps students interested in content

Key Components of Teaching, Online or F2F

Application

✓ Provide low-stakes opportunities to practice & apply new information. Have students create & collaborate with digital tools (e.g., infographics, websites).

✓ *Benefit*: Promotes cognition & allows learners to internalize content in a manner meaningful and personalized to the individual.

Assessment

✓ Use frequent formative assessment to gauge effectiveness of instruction & student understanding

✓ *Benefit:*Provides prompt feedback to students before formal assessments; encourages metacognition.

Course Management

Communication

- Be very consistent with your communication strategy

- Provide relevant details, but be as concise as possible

- Use personalized streaming video, when possible, to help students & caretakers get to know you, but be mindful that some students may have poor internet connectivity

Multimedia Learning

Did you know that we learn better from words and pictures than from words alone? Learning is further enhanced when words are presented as narration rather than on-screen text. As a result, videos can be a great way to learn.

Considerations:

- Create personalized videos with your own narration.

  ‣ Easy screencasting tools are **Screencastify** and **Screencast-O-Matic**.

- If instruction requires writing (e.g., writing out math/science problems; sentence diagramming), use a stylus & writing tablet (Wacom)

  ‣ We love the **Show Me** and **Explain Everything** apps for when we have to write

- You don't have to reinvent wheel by creating all of *your own* videos.

  ‣ Organize *existing* videos using your LMS or **Edpuzzle**.

Platform Efficiency

As with all teaching, online or hybrid classes require careful planning. Because you may not be seeing your students every day, it's especially important for you to use your Learning Management System (LMS) wisely. It should serve as your virtual classroom, and you should plan to use it for almost everything you do, from contacting students and their caretakers about class developments to collecting and grading student work.

You may want to take some time now to explore all of the features your LMS has to offer (check out teacher-created YouTube videos!), then brainstorm with your fellow teachers to see how you might use those features to connect with students and to help students connect with one another!

Keep It Consistent

Consistency is essential in online learning, and *establishing routines* will provide your students with some beneficial structure. Plan to release content and activities at the same time and in the same place on a regular schedule so the **students always know what to expect**.

Likewise, make your announcements in the same manner so that students and caretakers know when and where to expect communication from you. Many LMS platforms even allow you to schedule communication so it gets released at times of your choosing.

If you need to adapt your strategy to better serve students, you should; just be sure to communicate any changes to everyone involved!

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Building Connections

Instructional Video

• Make content streamable for students with poor Internet connectivity

   ‣ Ask your district the best option for video storage

• Present content in short, digestible "chunks" to avoid cognitive overload (5-10 min)

• Create videos with audio (narration) and _relevant_ visuals to maximize learning opportunities

• Avoid text-heavy slides and _do not_ read what's already viewable to the students on screen. This can cause cognitive overload. Rather, use phrases or bullets on your slides and _use narration to elaborate_ on the bullets

• Provide opportunities for students to practice applying content from videos

   ‣ Use tools (e.g., **Socrative**, **Wizer**, or **Google Forms)** that can provide _automatic_ feedback to students

• Use a conversational tone to help put students at ease and get to know you. It's ok if you mess up during narration (mispronounce words, get tongue-tied, cough..etc.). Most of us do this in the classroom, too.

   ‣ Invest in a decent headset/ microphone - audio quality matters!

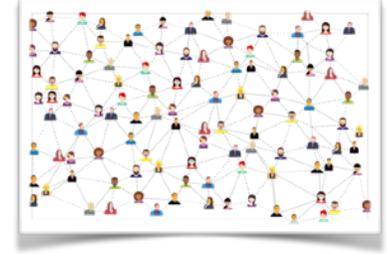• Encourage students to take notes by hand - they learn better that way!

Foster Community with Digital Tools

Fostering a sense of community is especially important in online settings.

Help students feel present in your class by offering ample opportunities for them to work and bond together through the use of collaborative tools. In addition to discussion forums, tools like **VoiceThread** and **Flipgrid** provide students with opportunities to engage with one another using multiple forms of media.

Community building doesn't stop after the first few weeks of class! Use digital community-building tools throughout the year to help students apply what they're learning in fun and creative ways while also engaging with each other, with you, and with the course content.

Be "Visible" in the Online Classroom

Teachers should "show up" often and in a variety of ways when teaching online. This lets students and their caretakers know that you are engaged and present.

• Use video conferencing & recorded lessons for instruction.

• Have consistent availability (think office hours!).

• Consider using quick, informal video announcements to accompany text updates to let everyone get to know you.

• Offer follow-up questions and responses on students' work, whether they submit it publicly or privately.

• Employ audio/visual feedback. It's quick, more personalized than text and can help students interpret your comments as being more constructive than judgmental.

• Call/email students and their families _just to check in_

• Offer informal video conference sessions in which you and your students can just talk and hang out!

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Assessment

Assess across all Six Levels of Bloom's Taxonomy

- Facts & Concepts: Low-risk assessments
- "Doing" Tasks: Short assignments with active tasks
- "Creating" Projects: Complex major projects (individual or group)

Assess Core Concepts in Lesson

- What are the core concepts of the lesson?
- What standards are being assessed vs. simply addressed?
- What experiences can help students integrate core concepts?
- What assessment tools measure these?

Help Students Succeed on Assessment Tasks

- Be transparent in teaching
- Provide models & samples of successful assessments
- Offer practice opportunities
- Provide frequent and prompt feedback
- Allow peer editing and support

How Do You Frame Your Students?

Are you viewing your students as co-learners with you in the classroom — and do your assessments reflect this?

In your own learning process, you probably use reflection, metacognition and deep learning techniques; why not encourage students to do the same through ongoing and integrated assessment?

Digital tools such as **Quizizz**, **formative**, and **Poll Everywhere** are fine substitutes for assessments used in traditional classrooms. However, there is no need to limit yourself to traditional approaches in a non-traditional class. Consider using **Hyperdocs** or tools like **Nearpod** or **Pear Deck** to *embed assessment* into your instruction. All are easy and fantastic ways to teach and learn.

Rather than focusing on rote learning and recall, design assessments in ways that encourage students to *apply* and *synthesize* their knowledge. Doing so encourages deeper learning and results in a more meaningful reflection of student understanding.

Non-traditional Assessment Ideas

Presentation/ Demonstration	Data/Information Visuals	Dramatization & Creative Projects	Collaboration & Brainstorm
Adobe Spark, Google Sites, Wix	Infographics (Canva, Infogram, Piktochart)	Podcasting (Synth, Audacity, GarageBand)	Padlet, Popplet, iBrainstorm
We Video, iMovie	Google Slides/ PowerPoint	Green Screen (DoInk, Zoom, iMovie)	Google Docs, Wakelet, Group Me

Resources

Online Learning Resources for Assessment

Academic Integrity Vodcast

7 Approaches to Alternative Assessments