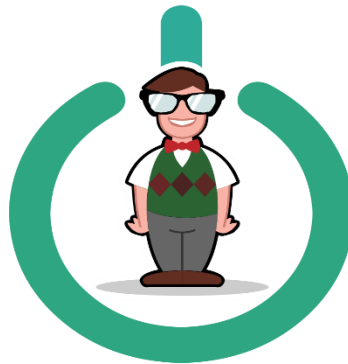




**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Teaching in the Digital Era

Guide on teacher-student-parent cooperation



PreEdTech

**Improving the Pedagogical
and ICT skills of Pre-School
Teachers and Educators in
the Digital Era**

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Introduction

About the Guide

The present guide is developed in the framework of the project PreEdTech - Improving the Pedagogical and ICT skills of Pre-School Teachers and Educators in the Digital Era, co-funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme, Cooperation partnerships in school education, Ref. no.: 2021-1-RO01-KA220-SCH-000027894.

The PreEdTech project main aim is to provide pre-primary teachers and educators with the means of adapting their activities to the online environment.

In the current pandemic context, schools (including the private sector) were oriented towards online teaching. There was a significant discrepancy in the resources and effort put into teaching based on the children's age/level. Children from primary school up to high school benefited from more resources, time allocated, and teacher implication. The groups at risk of being left behind were (and still are) kindergarten children in the public sector and to a lesser extent in the private sector of learning. This is largely caused by the lack of a methodology in teaching young pupils in the online environment. This, in turn, is caused by the lack of insight in what concerns the potential of some tools, websites and other software of improving the online learning experience of pre-school children. Moreover there is a stereotype which says that using technology and the internet for young age is not suitable. In fact the counterargument here is that these kids are digitally natives, and their parents usually use the internet and the mobile phone as 'modern pacifiers' with their children. The solution to this problem is likely to be provided by an informative document, detailing useful approaches and tools to online teaching in the case of educators and caregivers. The Teaching in the Digital Era Guide is considered to be, in the framework of the current project, a starting point in developing all the other intellectual outputs planned. The partners from the countries involved in the project development and implementation contributed in creating a guide-type handbook for teachers and parents. This guide forms the basis of the future training sessions with teachers, and an Online Interactive Annual Plan.

The Guide is divided into three sections, one oriented towards the pedagogical approach providing hints, tips and tricks necessary for developing a suitable teaching process for online teaching. This section aims to approach topics such as online classroom motivation, online assessment, online teaching principles, managing online classes planning and wellbeing etc. The second section is oriented to technical aspects of online teaching (skills and tips, account creation, online classroom administration, modifying settings, ensuring security, creating digital resources and using interactive platforms etc.). The third section is oriented towards parents/caregivers and delve into both teacher-end and student-end aspects and issues of online teaching and learning, as to provide the parents the means to assist and intervene whenever one of the other two parties should need it.

1. Pedagogical competences in Online teaching

1.1. The main principles of online teaching and activities to implement



Abstract

The process of digitization, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, led to new opportunities, but it is important that the teaching staff are aware of key best practices when transferring offline content into an online course. Their approach should remain student-centric and, in order to do that, additional competencies should be gained and used.



*Online teaching
Distance education
Digital tools
Engagement
Accessibility*

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Online teaching

Educational institutions in many countries have been thrown into confusion by the outbreak of COVID-19. Many schools suspended classes and struggled with ways to engage pupils and provide them with education while keeping them off campus. Such situations and the need to find solutions for better online teaching have led to better online education. Institutions responded to the situation by operating a quick pivot to online teaching/learning as well as exchanging experience between each other, concentrating all efforts to find better ways for online education.

School administration staff were working hard to find the best solution for online teaching tools, and teachers were working hard to transfer content onto selected digital platforms, assessing new tools and deciding whether to leverage existing technologies or find new ones. It was not simple at all going online, but everyone, from parents to kids, including teachers, was focused on better online education. With time, it was understood that hard pandemic situations have led to new opportunities, such as online, hybrid, and distance education, and opened better ways to learn for those who cannot attend classes face-to-face every day, due to health issues or other. It is important that teaching staff should be aware of key best practices when transferring offline content into an online course. Their approach, competencies as it is the case when designing offline classes, should remain student-centric, as well as additional competencies, should be gained and used.

Distance learning is defined as “planned teaching-learning that presupposes physical distance and eventually temporal distance” (Rolland Sobral, 2020). It is an educational process that takes place on the Internet that allows access to education from remote locations or for those who, for various reasons, cannot attend the school physically. In fact, distance education addresses issues related to geographical distance, but also to many other reasons that prevent in-person class attendance (Kim, 2020).

Depending on the device used, the availability of face-to-face lessons, and many other factors, distance learning is called in different ways: “the electronic model (e-learning), the blended or mixed face-to-face and distance model (b-learning), the version with mobile devices (m-learning” (Rolland Sobral, 2020) and several others.

Online learning experiences through distance learning can be asynchronous or synchronous. Asynchronous learning occurs when learners can choose the time to participate in the learning through different tools, and they can connect to carry out the activities when they want and at their own pace. Synchronous learning activities take place through live video and audio conferencing with immediate feedback (Kim, 2020).

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, most children and students experienced online learning, which was introduced to limit the spread of the virus. The educational system, the students of all ages, and the children's caregivers had to adapt to the distance learning. Each actor involved in the process made his or her own contribution to implementing an effective distance education, capable of offering adequate content and teaching materials to stimulate the learning and curiosity of even the youngest children, supporting and helping them to integrate into this technology-based school system.

In the international context, governments around the world have begun to introduce distance learning policies based on a combination of broadcast media, online platforms, and the delivery of print and virtual materials. However, decisions regarding distance learning solutions have been influenced by a country's income: countries with low- and middle-income were and are at a much greater disadvantage for a successful transition to online learning platforms (Unicef, 2021).

A number of issues have emerged regarding online learning and the quality of the curriculum, especially for pupils in pre-school and primary school; among them, there are concentration, self-regulation, and motivation to be active and interactive. Other important factors to success have been parents' beliefs and attitudes about online learning compared to traditional learning, parents' time and knowledge requirements to support children in online learning and accessibility to digital technology tools (Kim, 2020).

Principles of online teaching

Principles are general and fundamental provisions according to which the educational content, its organisation, and the pedagogical technologies on which pedagogical activity is based are developed. Didactics is a section of pedagogical science that examines the content, organisation, and techniques of the educational process and their effectiveness. From these two concepts we derive the meaning of didactic principles, designed so that teachers can achieve the most significant results in education and students can acquire knowledge more effectively. They express the basic requirements for educational objectives, their content, methods, forms, and techniques of teaching. The **main principles of teaching**, valid for all school levels that are valid also for online teaching are:

- **Visibility.** The teacher supports the pupil in developing perception of the world around him, through the sense organs, including feelings.
- **Systematicity and coherence.** A person forms a scientific worldview when it is integral, organic, and inclusive of the complex interrelationships and interactions between things.

- **Scientificity.** The content of education is based on scientific knowledge, which enables a critical understanding of the surrounding reality.
- **Accessibility.** It means that the organizational forms of the educational system and the ways of teaching are adapted to the age and psychophysical characteristics of the students. Today's technological education, with its variety of tools, significantly increases the resources for ensuring the availability of education.
- **The principle of the connection of theory with practice.** One of the foundations of the entire educational system, it suggests that teaching is aimed at the socialization of the individual, at his adaptation to the complex and dynamic processes of society.
- **The principle of strength.** The more interesting and stimulating the educational process is, the stronger is the motivation for learning and the greater the knowledge gained.

The following list of **principles of e-learning** have been developed in the context of higher education and of e-learning courses, but some of them can also be valid in other learning contexts, such as primary school.

<p>Principle 1: Student-Faculty Contact Clear guidance and policies regarding communication, regular communication with students thoughts the course, and using proactive course management strategies enhances students-faculty interaction.</p>	<p>Principle 2: Cooperation Among Students Student engagement in the course, and with each other, is increased when instructors design coursework which facilities cooperative “meaning-making” among students.</p>
<p>Principle 3: Active Learning Student-to-student sharing of completed coursework provides motivation and encourages peer discussion.</p>	<p>Principle 4: Prompt and Meaningful Feedback Students benefit when instructors provide two types of feedback: information feedback and acknowledgement feedback.</p>
<p>Principle 5: Deadlines and Consistent Patterns of Course Activities Clear deadlines and consistent patterns of course activities help students manage busy schedules and encourage regular communication.</p>	<p>Principle 6: High Expectations High expectations are established through challenging assignments, discussions, and examples of good work.</p>
<p>Principle 7: Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning Making courses and documents accessible, allowing students to choose project format and project topics, and integrating student led discussions helps incorporate diverse views into online courses and accommodates all students.</p>	<p>Principle 8: Course Quality Online courses are best when instructors continually monitor and improve the quality of their online courses.</p>

Fig. “Principles of effective online teaching”, developed by Great Plains Idea

Together with the above mentioned one, we can also consider the following as ***fundamental principles for the online teaching***:

- ***Summative assessment.*** It should be valid, reliable and understandable to teachers, learners and parents; able to address a range of levels of achievement and free from negative emotional effects on the student.
- ***Coherence, consistency, and transparency.*** Pedagogy must be internally consistent and coherent in the way its objectives, content, student activity and assessment relate to each other (Anderson & McCormick, 2005).

Methodologies of online teaching, activities and digital tools

The formal education system is based on the curriculum (content), which has to be learnt by the students. The technique of learning or teaching this content is the method, and each method has advantages and disadvantages for both learners and teachers. The most widely used method by educators is lecture because it is advantageous in terms of time, although it is instructor-centred, usually one-way (from instructor to students), and therefore it is boring for students and creates motivation problems (Awad, 2002).

With the spread of COVID-19, classical teaching methods, the role of teachers, pedagogical techniques and teaching practices, used in face-to-face learning, need to be modified for virtual settings. The 'virtual' teacher therefore has to integrate classical content with virtual tools: their responsibility is to select and coordinate technology, pedagogy and content. The adoption of new online teaching strategies related to technology, pedagogy and curriculum requires teachers to undergo some key changes and move away from what they have experienced while teaching offline (Taimur et al., 2021)

Three themes of success emerged from the voices of teachers who experienced a transition to virtual education without much preparation, and they are: 1. adapting to digital instruction; 2. connecting during the pandemic; and 3. familiarising students with virtual platforms.

(1) *Adapting to digital education.* For many teachers, the transition to virtual teaching was a positive 'learning-by-doing' experience, both in the use of technological platforms and in the improvement of teaching techniques (e.g. by adding quizzes and using more tools for explanations). Teachers made use of several platforms, depending on the pedagogies implemented and the learning needs of students. According to the teachers, [Zoom](#) facilitated crafts and interactive projects; [Kahoot](#) was good for motivation and engagement, while [YouTube](#) videos facilitated understanding. Overall, a combination of platforms was needed to create an effective learning environment (Taimur et al., 2021). When the adaptation to digital education was complete (among teachers, students and caregivers) the learning process was smoother.

(2) *Connecting during the pandemic.* Most teachers believed that virtual education was important during the Covid-19-induced school closures. Virtual education allowed students to connect at a very critical time when they probably felt a lack of interaction with their friends, teachers and peers.

(3) *Familiarizing students with the virtual platform.* Teachers considered it a key learning element. Once students become familiar with them, teachers can focus more on implementing teaching practice and less time is spent addressing technological challenges encountered by students during the lesson (Taimur et al., 2021).

Another key element to address is the role of the student in the learning process. In fact, if the paradigm is the 'knowledge reproduction model' (consisting of verbal lectures, printed handouts, practice sessions, and structured classroom activities), the student is seen as a passive learner. In this case *"the aim of teaching is to transfer a static body of knowledge from sources, such as the instructor and books, to the students"* (Awad, 2002). However, learning is facilitated when teaching methods promote active learning, i.e. when, for example, students are engaged in solving real-world problems. Computer-mediated communication and online learning generally support this kind of active learning (Awad, 2002).

Websites offer a lot of templates and tools for the implementation of online activities, and about how to implement them in the online teaching step by step, such as brainstorming, simulations, role-play, playful-pedagogical activities etc. Educators usually prefer play-based and project-based approach when teaching pre-school and primary schools' students. Examples of play-based online learning suitable for pre-school and primary school are:

- Providing meaningful alternatives to screen time. In early childhood (between the ages of 2 and 7) pupils are in the pre-operational phase, and it is wrong from a developmental standpoint to expect their education to be exclusively screen-based. For this reason the teacher can invite children to continue the activities off the screen, providing games and giving directions to do them independently or with their caregivers.
- Use the music. *"Children respond well to online singing and dancing"* (Edutopia, 2020). In fact, dancing and singing are easy for even the youngest children because they can follow the leader, the rules of interaction are clear, and they are adapted to the online context. Singing alone will be useful to engage distracted children during a virtual meeting (Edutopia, 2020).

Other activities that are promoted with e-learning are the distribution of didactic materials to be used for autonomous work and the provision of bibliographies, filmographies, and discographies. Also, case studies, group research, visualization methodology, connecting personal experiences with disciplinary topics, peer education (Benedetti et al., 2020), project-based learning, problem-based learning (Rolland Sobral, 2020) are methods that can be used. Among them, the methodology of visualization expresses the absolute potential of online teaching. It consists of the use of films and images. Visualization refers to seeing as a mental process for selecting, recognizing and interpreting. *"The function of the image is both substitutive because the image arouses an emotional reaction as a surrogate for reality, and documentary: the image has a cognitive purpose, which is at the service of reality; finally, it is also aesthetic: the image has an artistic purpose. The use of images stimulates a high level of activation of the person, both in terms of thought and emotions. It is precisely this order of stimulation that creates the conditions for the start of a significant learning process"* (Benedetti et al., 2020). Online teaching therefore allows the use of flipped classes in which the student has access to different materials before the lessons (or synchronous classes), using the time with the teacher to ask questions and do tasks.

“With distance education, each person learns differently: some like to read text, some like to watch videos, some like to see images, some like a mixture of images and text, some like serious games” (Rolland Sobral, 2020). When teachers organize the lessons, they have to think about who the recipients are: what is shown to children is very different from what is shown to university students.

For primary school students, a very useful and commonly used tool is the 'hot potatoes' crossword module, <https://hot-potatoes.en.uptodown.com/windows> (Rolland Sobral, 2020). Preschool kids and primary school students are enthusiastic about technology, and it's important to provide early learners with time to play, create and use their imaginations. Integrating technology not only reinforces key technical skills children need to thrive in the 21st century, but it also increases student engagement and enhances learning. There are more websites providing lists of trending tech tools and activities that an early childhood teacher can use to attain better outcomes in the classroom. Some examples of stimulating activities are:

- *Syllable games*. It consists of showing a card and clapping the syllables.
- *Rhyming games*. Show a card or object and say words that rhyme with it.
- Sensory Tub. Hide letters, numbers, or shapes in a sensory tub. Pick one and students have to identify it.
- *Mystery Bag*: Put letters in a bag, give clues about what it is, and students have to guess.
- *What's missing*: Show a tray of items, cover it with a blanket, take one item off the blanket and students guess what is missing.
- *Simple Directed Drawing*.
- *Challenge share*. Students show in a camera their project from a challenge. A challenge could be a sculpture, a favourite meal, a drawing, etc. (Pocket of preschool, 2022).

Interesting tools that can be used are:

- Interactive Whiteboards. Electronic whiteboards such as the SMART board (<https://www.smarttech.com/en/education>) allow users to manipulate elements on a large screen through the use of electronic pens. Promethean Planet (<https://prometheanplanet.com/>) and SMART Exchange (<https://exchange.smarttech.com/#tab=0>) offer over 60,000 free teaching resources and activities for the board.
- Digital Storytelling. Several websites encourage children to tap into their creative imaginations to produce digital stories online. Story Bird (<https://storybird.com/>) supports children in creating visual stories with artwork, while Little Bird Tales (<https://littlebirdtales.com/>) provides a means to design and narrate their own work. Digital storytelling not only keeps children engaged but also stimulates abstract thinking (Reinen, n.d.).

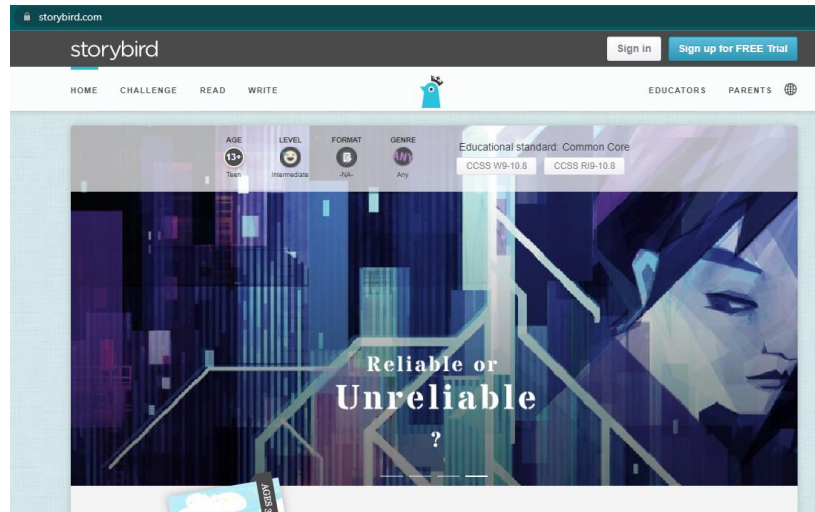


Fig. Storybird website homepage

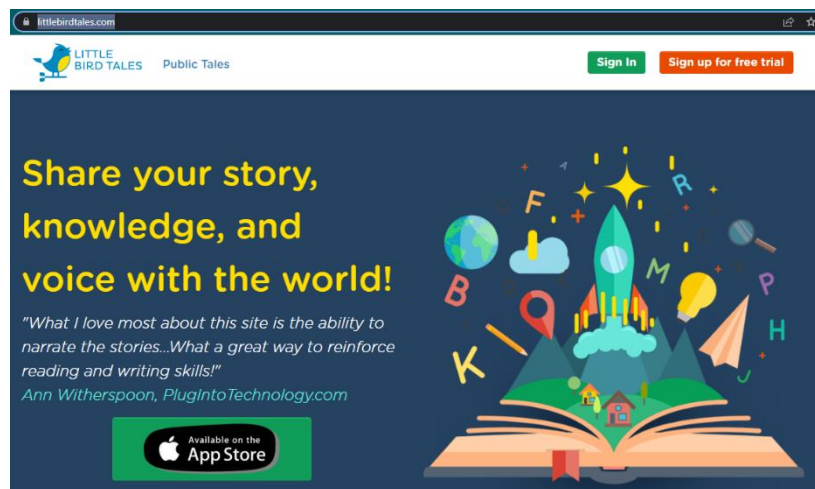


Fig. Little bird tales website homepage

In conclusion, COVID-19 forced online teaching: actors had no alternative and had to reinvent themselves, giving a lot of impetus to the e-learning sector. In distance learning, although the student is the centre, the teacher must be the engine of efficient teaching-learning, always keeping in mind the motivation of the students and the development of diversified strategies (Rolland Sobral, 2020).

Challenges to the online teaching and learning

Technology-mediated learning has many advantages and promises for educators and students, but it is not suitable or available for all students or in all learning situations. There are social, economic, and physical barriers to learning, and schools do not always have the resources to make computer/telecommunication systems available, thus denying educational opportunities to some disadvantaged groups of students (Berge and Mrozowsk, 1999). With regard to primary and pre-primary schools, the need for teacher and parental cooperation emerged. Younger children need parental assistance for

successful participation in online education, as they do not have technological skills like adults, (typing words, sharing files or uploading homework), but can perform simple actions such as turning off the microphone, turning on the camera or leaving the meeting (Kim, 2020).

In her work, Gayatri (2020) reveals that caregivers of young children are fundamental for the success of online learning, and therefore they should be taken more into account by teachers and institutions. Lack of parental time and technical skills and some negative beliefs (i.e., distance learning is less effective than traditional learning, vision problems such as myopia in early childhood due to increased screen time, and limited physical activities) can impact on the learning process. If governments would assess this and commit to finding workable solutions, as has been done with teachers (equipping them with the knowledge to use and deliver lessons using ICT), more barriers that currently hinder online learning could be overcome.

Despite the fact that, due to the pandemic emergency, institutions have acted promptly to ensure education for the younger generation, and this has given impetus to the development of technological infrastructure in primary and pre-primary schools, there are still significant obstacles. Lack of access to the network, student and teacher resistance to new methods, lack of support services for students and teachers, and lack of adequate training and technical support are all common problems faced by both students and teachers in distance education (Kim, 2020).



Reflect

Teaching online does not just mean transferring the tools used during in-person classes to a digital platform, but it means searching the best solutions to make what is taught online engaging and interactive.

1.2 Stimulating children's motivation



Abstract

Students tend to participate less in educational activities when they are delivered online. This chapter provides some practices and tips on how to capture their interest and help them feel motivated.



*Motivation
E-learning
Teachers' training
Active learning
Digital skills*

Authors: Carlotta Maria Crippa, Elena Mori, Vida Drqsutè



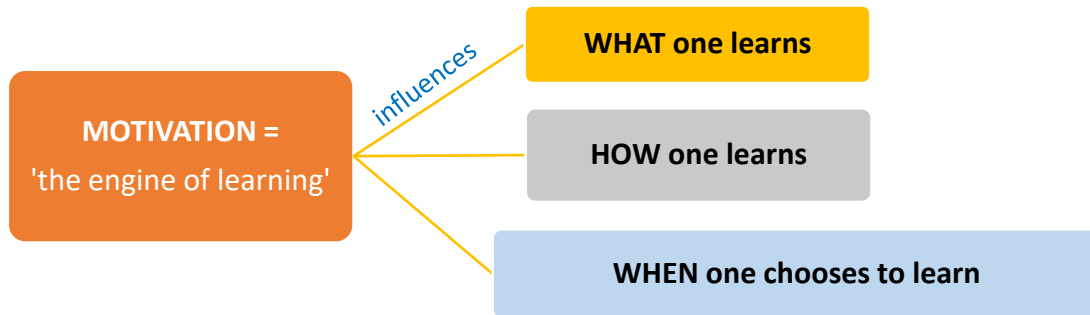
Learning motivation in the COVID-19 era

Online learning potentially performs better than conventional learning because students not only receive 'traditional' knowledge but also learn how to use technology. Students can learn the use of computers, they develop digital skills, and they can study anywhere and anytime with a click. The advantage of online learning is that it is a fun medium that gets students interested. Despite this premise, online learning for very young children was characterized by some challenges: difficulties such as the lack of attention and interest, interruption of virtual activities by other family members, limited resources and materials, and many other factors hindered online learning. Especially for pre-school children, it was very difficult to maintain concentration. *"Children's behaviors such as jumping on the chair, rolling on the floor or bringing their pets or toys to the online class are unavoidable during the virtual classroom"* (Gayatri, 2020).

Teachers, educators, and parents had to deal with a completely new experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, when they had to cope with all the changes imposed by the emergency and by some issues in children's behavior. In fact, the stress experienced by very young children during isolation has caused detrimental effects on their health, well-being, and behavior. Stress can change the structure and function of the brain, affecting children's ability to learn, including cognitive development, language ability, social and emotional skills (Gayatri, 2020). The stressful impact of COVID-19 led to negative effects also in terms of student engagement. In a study conducted through the collection of responses from 141 teachers from all over the world (teaching kindergarten and primary schools), data revealed that the shift to virtual education led to reduced student engagement in classrooms, with less ability for interaction between teachers and students compared to face-to-face teaching. This lack of interaction made it difficult to convey concepts and engage each individual student, especially the youngest (Taimur et al., 2021).

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Motivation is an issue that requires in-depth analysis when it comes to online learning environments, and it has been the focus of attention in recent years. It is a complex phenomenon, which is worth exploring because online learners tend to participate less and to be less motivated if the courses or the activities they attend are not carefully designed, and if strategies to keep learners motivated are not considered.



Motivated learners are more likely to engage in challenging activities, to benefit from learning and to have a profound approach to it. They are more resourceful, persistent, and creative. The relationship between motivation and learning is significant, especially when it comes to pre-school education and primary education, when children need to be stimulated with a set of different tools and methodologies to absorb new knowledge and develop new skills.

In the past, motivation had been seen as a relatively stable personal characteristic and studies were more focused on identifying characteristics of successful learners, but more and more attention has been dedicated to this topic with time, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic's beginning. It is now commonly known that without motivation, students may not start learning at all, and those who have started learning may not be able to continue their learning if they have difficulties in the process.

How can students' motivation be increased? First of all, it is good to distinguish between various types of motivation and various motivation triggers in order to understand what actions are best to take. In fact, it has been underlined how important it is to create the right type of motivation in the child. In fact, there are *two types of motivation*:

- *intrinsic*, which refers to doing an activity just for the sake of doing it.
- *extrinsic*, which refers to doing an activity not just for the pleasure of doing it, but for another purpose.

Studies have shown that when people are driven by intrinsic motivation, their engagement is higher and the result of the action is better (Li, 2022). That is why rules, threats, or rewards that are used as methods to stimulate children's motivation by teachers and parents, as extrinsic motivations, do not always have the desired effect.



Fig. "Extrinsic vs intrinsic motivation". Cherry K. (2022). Extrinsic vs. Intrinsic Motivation: What's the Difference? image by Verywell / Joshua Seong. Verywell Mind ([source link](#))

This doesn't mean that extrinsic motivation is something to avoid *per se*. Conversely, in cases of lack of intrinsic motivation, the extrinsic one, and in particular the so-called "integrated regulation", can still come to our aid. In fact, it is important to note that there are 4 types of extrinsic motivation:

Extrinsic motivation	1. External Regulation	2. Introjected Regulation	3. Regulation through identification	4. Integrated regulation
Characteristics	Intentional behavior or activity but controlled by external sources or factors.	Doing activities because of internal pressure.	Intentional behaviour or activity done because of a self-selected goal.	The person self-reflects, understands the reason, sees if it matches their values and needs. Finally, they take action.

Tab. "Types of extrinsic motivation"

Table developed by the authors of this article, based on: Brown E. (2022). 4 Types Of Extrinsic Motivation. Learn from blogs. ([source link](#))

This classification is essential for understanding how to act both in the classroom and in the online environment to fruitfully stimulate students' motivation to learn.

After understanding which type of motivation is the desirable one, it is necessary to try to imagine how to encourage it and figure out who and how can do it. The key adult figures during online learning are teachers and parents.

In fact, the level of parental involvement was also a determining factor in the benefit of virtual learning for their children. Actually, if the role of the parents is already commonly considered crucial in their children's learning process, it is even more so during online learning. On the one hand, the lack of basic knowledge and skills to adapt to the whole virtual education program made some parents uncooperative and frustrated. On the other hand, some other parents managed great strategies to keep their children engaged in virtual learning. It is important to mention that stress and frustration can be contagious and, therefore, to stimulate children's attention, it is necessary to create a "stress-free environment" (Li, 2022). That is why it is important for the parent to be a positive presence in the child's learning process, such as by being encouraging and supportive.

Additionally, teachers play a fundamental role in influencing students' motivation (Che Soh et al., 2021). The same as stress, motivation is something "contagious". In fact, teachers' lack of motivation, caused by a variety of different factors (lack of online teaching experience, necessity to change their teaching methods etc.), can lead to students' lower motivation. But in a reciprocal and opposite way, students' lack of motivation was a critical factor also on teachers' motivation (Meşe and Sevilen, 2021). But how can a teacher increase their students' motivation during online teaching? The next section will outline some tips that might be helpful in achieving this goal.

How to enhance motivation during online learning

As we have already mentioned, students' motivation to learn is essential for the achievement of pedagogical goals and learning outcomes and the attitudes and skills of early childhood's teachers in the use of technology also affect children's motivation and learning (Kim, 2020). In this context, teachers should be able to maintain and increase their students' motivation to learn and self-learn, and to find ways to foster students' enthusiasm (Dwijuliani et al., 2020).

One strategy that is usually adopted by teachers in an effective way is to use a combination of different learning methods, in order to keep students engaged. For example, game-based learning and play-based learning have proven to be effective ways not only for enhancing both cognitive and non-cognitive skills, but also for fostering motivation to learn (Loveless, n.d.). Another important role is played by the VARK model and its 4 learning styles, which are Visual, Auditory, Reading and writing, and Kinesthetic (Loveless, n.d.).

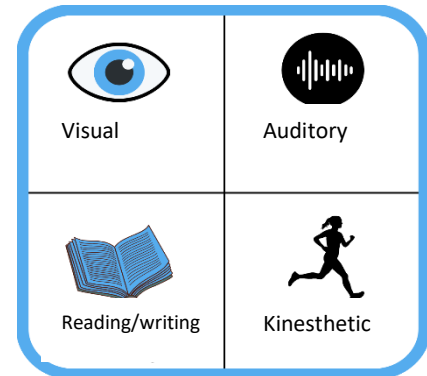


Fig. "The VARK model"

Each child learns best through the adoption of one or more of the learning styles listed above. That is why using them together in the same lesson and providing stimuli belonging to these 4 learning styles can make sure that motivation increases and concepts are better understood by children (Sphero team, 2020).

Most of the teachers suggested using practical and interactive activities for online lessons by modifying their teaching techniques in a creative way. Avoiding monotony could be done by using different digital platforms, tools and applications. The data collected showed that social interactions, discourse and relationship building are an important element of virtual education, recognizing that digital learning already creates a physical distance. Therefore, the teachers recommended reducing class size in the virtual context to ensure interaction (which they cannot do in the huge classroom) and student engagement. In this way, the reduction of the teacher-student ratio could not only promote student-teacher interaction, but also student-student interaction.

According to the teacher's perspective, organizing a virtual one-to-one meeting with each student, especially in uncertain conditions, increases interaction and engagement in class. Some teachers mentioned the use of social media platforms to upload learning materials and share learning content with students and their parents (Taimur et al., 2021).

Some tips for more engaging e-Teaching:

- Remove barriers. Address the issues of access, cost, technological skills, literacy, and portability of courses in advance.
- Provide a pre-course self-assessment tool to students to prepare them for online teaching.
- Guarantee helps. Anticipate common problems, offer solutions that fit students' contexts, and ensure that help is provided when students (or parents) requests arise.
- Keep it simple. Prepare a learning environment that is welcoming, inviting, and easy to access and navigate, uncluttered, easy to use.
- Create a community of learners. Encourage peer interaction and support, enable co-operative learning and collaboration (Donohue et al., 2007).
- Collaborate with families. Ask parents to keep a preschool kit with materials for lessons, commonly found in children's homes. This can help keep children's learning spaces at home organized.

- Make activities short. When in person, children may be able to remain concentrated in a circle or in a whole group for up to 10 minutes, but the same activity may not hold their attention when looking at it on a platform such as Google Classroom or Zoom. So, it is useful to split the lesson into several parts.
- Get children moving. Alternate between active and passive activities to help keep children engaged. This can be group movement activities such as dance, or a treasure hunt in their home. The activities should then be shared online and discussed (Edutopia, 2020).



Reflect

Moving teaching activities into the virtual world forces teachers to rethink how they conduct their lessons. The right mix of digital, didactic and creativity skills will allow teachers not to lose the attention of their students, even online.

1.3 Classroom management and online planning



Abstract

There is huge difference between managing an online classroom and managing a face-to-face lecture. Teachers need to wary of the differences set in place by digital tools to effectively teach online. This chapter provides some useful information and tips on how to better plan and manage online lessons.



*Online teaching
Digital tools
Classroom management
UDL
Blended learning*



Authors: Elena Mori, Carlotta Maria Crippa, Sigita Drąsutis

Evidence suggests that online education operates best as a system of dynamic, interrelated components, which may vary in terms of implementation by context. Together, these components foster a learning community that is driven by pedagogy and incorporates a range of activities, which enables flexible delivery. Constituent components can be adapted, combined or excluded as required, allowing teachers to customize their content delivery in order to achieve their specific curriculum goals. Evidence also indicates that collaborative learning in online environments enhances student learning more so than individual learning, and that interaction is essential (Simonson et al., 2011). Technology can help learning move beyond the classroom and take advantage of learning opportunities available in other out-of-school settings.

There are some general principles that have been successfully implemented in online learning, which are important to consider when planning and managing online learning in a classroom:

Universal Design

All learners, including those with special needs, should have access to technology-enabled learning experiences. The hardware and software of the digital tools adopted should already guarantee the accessibility of learning by default. The idea that tools should adapt to the users' needs comes from architecture, where this concept is called "**Universal Design**". This concept translates into the construction of buildings that present multiple access opportunities, such as ramps, automatic doors or signs written in braille. In this way, modern buildings are made to be accessible to everyone. This practice in the education sector becomes "**Universal Design for Learning**" (UDL) and it consists of the adoption of educational tools suitable for all students. In terms of educational technology, this could include the adoption of features such as *text-to-speech*, *speech-to-text*, *enlarged font sizes*, *colour contrasts*, *dictionaries*, and *glossaries*. To guarantee universal access, such features should be built into both hardware and software.

Three main principles drive UDL's application:

1. **Provide multiple means of representation** so that students can approach information in more than one way. Examples include digital books, specialized software and websites, and screen readers that include features such as text-to-speech, changeable colour contrast, alterable text size, or selection of different reading levels.
2. **Provide multiple means of expression**, allowing all students to demonstrate and express what they know. Examples include providing options in how they express their learning, where appropriate, which can include options such as writing, online concept mapping, or speech-to-text programs.
3. **Provide multiple means of engagement**, ensuring that all students feel interested and motivated to learn. This principle is implemented through, for example, the offer of different didactic activities, which give all students the opportunity to learn as they prefer, or through the presentation of different content that may stimulate individual interests. Equally important is the offer of opportunities that increase collaboration and scaffolding.

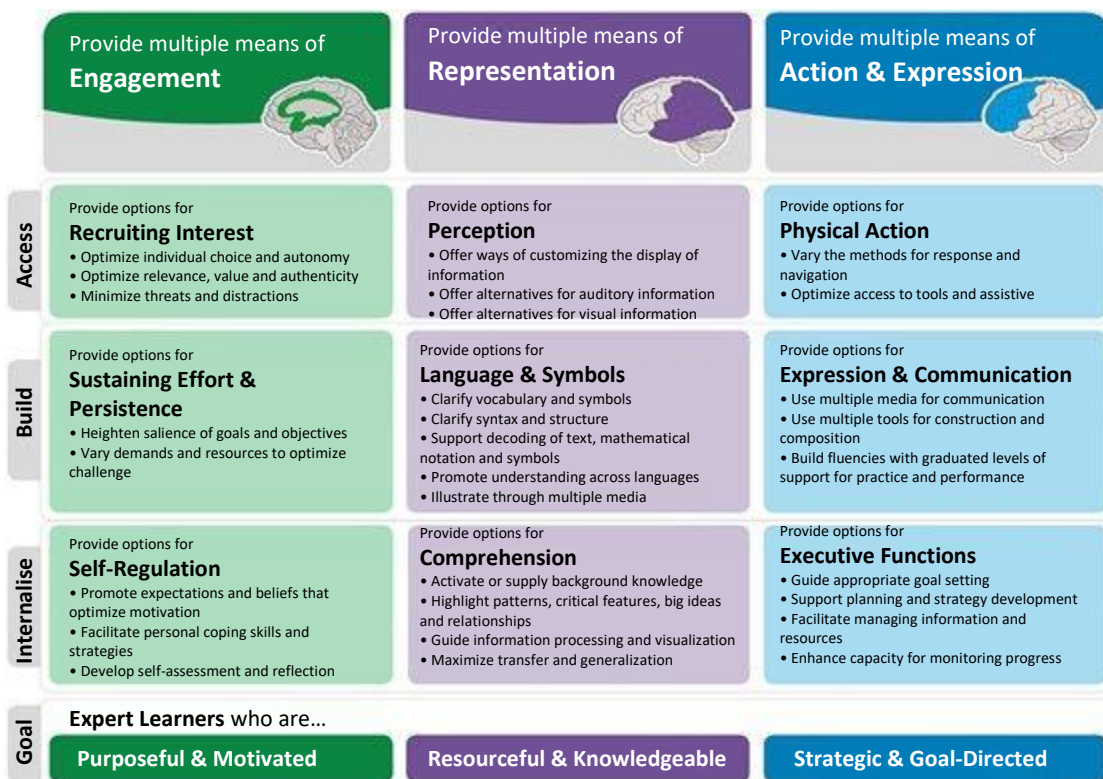


Fig. The 3 principles of UDL (Source: [Teaching Gateway](#))

Personalized Learning

When learning objectives and needs are put at the centre of technological tools, they can create more engaging and relevant experiences, adapted to each student. This practice is called “**Personalized learning**”, which refers to teaching adjusted to the learner’s pace and specific needs. In this way, learning

activities are made meaningful and relevant to learners, who are driven to them by their personal interests.

It is important to use this information to build an online classroom management plan that is tailored to the students and provides multiple opportunities for interactive learning.

Blended Learning

“Blended learning” refers to the simultaneous adoption of digital and classroom teaching. Although in a more limited way in comparison to personalized learning, this approach allows students to regulate their own study. What blended learning does is to provide different teaching settings, making students spend face-to-face time in large groups with teachers or in small groups with tutors and sometimes to confront their perspectives and ideas with their peers, giving them the opportunity to learn from each other. In blended learning, spaces are reconfigured to provide a variety of technology-enabled learning zones that allow for collaboration, informal learning and individual-focused study. Through this and other teaching methodologies, teachers are required to reimagine the way physical spaces are organized in order to facilitate collaborative learning through digital tools.

Some considerations that teachers should make in order to implement blended learning are:

1. Is the environment flexible enough to accommodate the use of the technology-enabled learning models and practices selected?
2. Can a space in which an educator delivers whole-class instruction also be shifted to facilitate individual online practice and research?
3. Do the physical spaces align in their ability to facilitate individual and collaborative work?

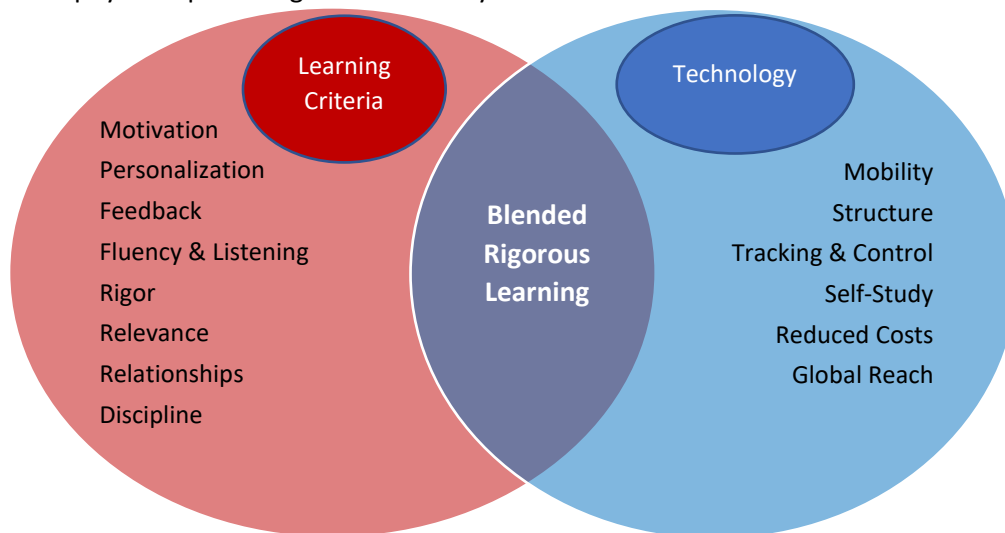


Fig. Graphical representation of Blended Learning

The engagement of students of all ages in blended learning educational activities requires the establishment of interactive and captivating virtual classrooms. Teachers can manage their online classroom by preparing and creating these systems with these characteristics beforehand. If they do so,

teachers will not have to concentrate their efforts to redirect behaviours in online classes, but rather they will spend more time focusing on students' outputs and academic achievements.

Recommendations for online classroom planning and management

When it comes to online learning for preschool children, there are some elements to take into consideration in order to incorporate digital technology in their activities. The following are some strategies that teachers can use to implement online learning when planning and managing their activities:

- **Keep activities short**

Pre-schoolers' attention spans are short and they are even shorter when children have to be on a videoconference. In fact, it is well known that people need more time, effort and attention to take online classes than to attend traditional classes.

Children are the same. When in person, they could sit in a circle for up to 10 minutes and carry out the activities proposed. However, in online, those same activities cannot be performed in the same timeframe, as the attention span shortens. The best way to avoid this issue is to break up your lesson into small chunks, with lots of movement embedded. Children will feel happier and more involved without even noticing it!

- **Get kids moving**

It is very important to break the rhythm of the lesson from time to time with physical activities. By doing so, teachers will improve the rhythm of the class and help children feel more motivated for other activities. A good example of a physical activity to do in the classroom can be a dance pattern, as children really appreciate singing and dancing online. For children, this is a great way to engage with a screen, as it provides simple and fun instructions. Moreover, they are easy to translate into an online format. It could also be organized like a school-wide sing along, or teachers may simply play some music to capture the attention of some more distracted children.

- **Set up a routine**

Just like in face-to-face teaching, children need a routine to have a smoother transition between activities. Teachers are free to set up the routine they prefer. They could start the day by singing a song and then reading a book, or start the day with more "serious activities" and schedule more dynamic tasks to recharge the children's batteries. A good idea is also to show the schedule on the screen or to share a copy the day before. This could help children understand what to expect during their virtual class.

- **Make your lesson do double duty**

Many preschool activities could be designed to support children in the development of multiple skills, such as literacy, language, executive function skills, logical thinking and even socio-emotional skills.

Topics such as "the 4 seasons" could be a great opportunity to discuss with children about science, ecology, math, literature and many more subjects.

- **Display books directly on the screen**

Instead of reading aloud and holding up a book, teachers should display it directly on the screen, as most children prefer to see the pictures for themselves. Using an e-book is a good way to achieve this, you could also make a virtual book from children's work using a platform like [Book Creator](#), which can also be viewed easily onscreen and shared electronically with the entire class.

- **Implement Incentives**

Incentives are good way to promote interest and actively engage children and students of any age. The incentives should be chosen according to the students' age and interests. Coupled with fun and engaging activities, tactile or digital rewards help boost students' enthusiasm and self-esteem. Some examples are: Kick-board points, virtual classroom field trips, show and tell, and virtual lunches.

- **Digital Games**

Well-designed games can provide powerful interactive experiences that can foster young children's learning, skill building, and healthy development (Lieberman, 2006; Thai, Lowenstein, Ching, & Rejeski, 2009). Unlike other forms of interactive media, digital games are rule-based systems that involve challenges to reach a goal while providing feedback on the player's progress. Play provides opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and manipulation that are essential for understanding basic concepts and constructing knowledge (Bredenkamp & Copple, 1997). Through play, children also develop imagination and creativity, which are key skills for the effective development of cognitive and emotional skills, as well as academic success. When digital games are designed to serve children's interests and abilities, their desire to play and explore, and their internal need to know, young learners will be more likely to develop and strengthen their initiative, curiosity, attention, self-direction, industriousness, competence, and love of learning (Bredenkamp & Copple, 1997; California Department of Education, 2000; Dodge, 2004; Kagan, Scott-Little, & Frelow, 2003)

Here are some considerations to be made for teachers when using digital games:


- The interface should be clear, intuitive and easy to use. Teachers need to estimate the time required to complete challenges to ensure that pupils will have enough time to finish the game levels and benefit from their educational features
- Teachers should ensure that the objectives of the game are stated clearly, so that children know exactly what they are required to do.
- Feedback provided to players should be gentle. In particular, verbal guidance could be a very important addition, as it helps maintain children's focus.

Beyond practical considerations, teachers should determine if the content of the digital game is suitable for the pupils in terms of age and content. Today's rating standards, such as the PEGI (Pan European Game Information), help in this choice. The PEGI is supported by most game publishers and developers in Europe, and it helps to ensure that the content of a game is suitable for its target audience.

**Reflect**


One of the most important things to keep in mind when planning online classes is that video-conferences are more tiring than face-to-face lectures. Teachers should keep things short and make some breaks with more fun physical activities

1.4. Synchronous and asynchronous activities. Face-to-face, blended and hybrid lessons



Abstract

This chapter shares the experience of distance learning in organizing activities for children from 3 to 7 years of age in a synchronous and asynchronous way. Synchronous and asynchronous activities, face-to-face, mixed and hybrid lessons, a weekly curriculum, and a hybrid lesson plan are discussed.



*Synchronous lessons
 Asynchronous lessons
 activities
 Children
 Teachers
 Parents*

Authors: Virginija Paužienė, Daiva Barkauskienė



Distance learning

Distance learning is divided into three types according to the time of education:

Synchronous distance learning	Takes place at a fixed time and sometimes at a specific location, such as using video or audio conferencing
Asynchronous distance learning	Takes place anywhere and anytime, using information and communication technologies or ordinary mail
Blended distance learning	Has elements of synchronous and asynchronous learning


Pre-school and pre-primary teachers, after starting the online teaching, also faced many other questions and uncertainties: how to conduct lessons remotely, how many daily or weekly synchronous and asynchronous video lessons should be prepared, how to use digital teaching aids correctly and efficiently, how students will receive instruction material, where they should upload their work. The transition from classroom to distance learning does not change the goals and outcomes of education, but changes the organization of education. The involvement of students and parents in the educational process and the feedback and assessment of learning achievements became the biggest challenge.

Synchronous and asynchronous activities

Pre-school and pre-primary teachers draw up a plan of educational activities for the week: the tasks included in the plan are sent to the children's parents by agreement on a daily or weekly basis, and the children complete the tasks on their own or with the help of an adult, sending the results to the teacher at the agreed time and in the agreed manner.

The teachers and the children's parents agree on synchronous and asynchronous education:

- the choice of a distance learning environment;
- the provision of feedback;
- individually agreeing with parents on the timing of virtual communication;
- integrating educational activities into daily activities at home or outdoors.
- creating (or using existing) closed Facebook groups to host educational material or using an e-diary and inviting the parents of the group to join;
- educators plan the educational process and record children's achievements using the e-diary;
- children with special educational needs are given individual educational tasks by a speech and language therapist in the e-diary. The provision of tasks and feedback is agreed individually with the pupils' parents;
- communication and cooperation with parents via the e-diary, email, telephone, Messenger, Facebook;
- teachers of artistic education (dance, music, theatre, ceramics) send the weekly distance learning tasks to the group teachers via e-diary, Facebook or other means.



Below there is a plan for the pre-school week for parents, which guides parents in the transmission of information and tasks to their children.

Every Monday, the children briefly discussed the week's topic and activities when they joined the online class, and every Friday the children shared their experiences. Therefore, Mondays were devoted to introducing the topic, and Fridays to reflection.

KAUNAS SCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN "ŠVIESA"
PRE-SCHOOL "DRAŠUČIAI" HOMESTEAD
WEEKLY ONLINE EDUCATION PLAN FOR CHILDREN

An interesting challenge awaits us - online learning. Together, we will experience many new challenges and experiences. Together, we will learn, make mistakes and improve.

It is important to plan your time so that you complete all tasks on time and without compromising your rest time.

TOPIC: SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Day of the week	Topic of the lesson	Work in a worksheets/ exercises	Additional material, links	Reflection, questions
-	-	-	EASTER CELEBRATION (2nd DAY)	-
TUESDAY	HARE'S EASTER	Complete YGA GA exercise 49. Cut out the hare, bee, chickens and puppies at the bottom of exercise sheet 04.14 and glue them at the top where they should be.	<p>Prepare the tools you will need to make the hare: a spare sock, a felt-tip pen or marker, buckwheat, yarn, scissors. Before watching "Kakė Makė getting ready for Easter", ask the children to remember how Kakė Makė made the hare together with the Clutter Elf. Point out that when you have finished watching, you will be making a hare just like Kakė Makė, but the child will have to explain to you what to do, you can find the Kakė Makė video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGfgFSYAhlA</p> <p>Pakartokite eilėraštį „Velykų kiškis“ Eina kiškis takeliu Su pintiniu krepšeliu. O krepšelyje margučiai, Duos kiškelis jų vaikučiams. Kiekvienam dalins po vieną, Kad Velykų šventės dieną Būtų linksma ir smagu Su kiškučio margučiu.</p> <p>Repeat the poem "The Easter Bunny" The hare walks along the path With a wicker basket. And in the basket are Easter eggs, The hare will give them to the children. He'll give one to each, So that on the day of the Easter holiday To be merry and fun With the bunny's Easter eggs.</p> <p>Ask if the child knows the difference between a hare and a rabbit? The weekly video on the Drąsučiai Homestead Facebook group will give a brief explanation, but if you want to take a closer look and explain it to your children, you can find more information here: http://www.technologijos.lt/n/mokslas/gamta_ir_biologija/S-36037/straipsnis/Kuo-triusiai-skiriasi-nuo-kiskiu or https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/gyvenimas/13/225995/m-cepulis-apie-triusius-ir-kiskius-komentaras.</p> <p>Ask the children to think and remember which dishes can be made with eggs? Photos of egg dishes in the Facebook</p>	

			<p>"Drąsučių sodyba" group photo album "Egg dishes".</p> <p>Introduce the children to dishes that use an egg, you can give your own examples. You can also make an egg dish with your child. During the cooking process, explain to the child what you are doing and why in a coherent way that will enrich the child's vocabulary.</p>	
WED NESD AY	NATUR E AWAKE NS	In the worksheet 04.15, circle the balls, colour them in different colours, how is a ball similar to an Easter egg and how is it different? Do exercise 45 of the YGA GA exercise.	<p>Remember the poem about beetles, which you can find on Facebook in the "Drąsučių sodyba" group photo album "30 March 2020". Look for beetles when you go for a walk. Make a bee, a worm or another beetle, you can let the children come up with their own ideas, or use the ideas in the Facebook "Beetles" photo album of the "Drąsučiai homestead" group. When making, notice the shapes similar to an egg - oval, round.</p> <p>Use plasticine to make different kinds of beetles, let the children think of ways to make them. You can find and show pictures of the bugs you want to mould.</p>	
THUR SDAY	SUNDA Y AFTER CHRIST MAS, WHAT IS IT?	Complete Tasks 48 and 50 of the YGA GA exercise.	<p>Remember the tongue exercise https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HD74XUG6RIg</p> <p>This week, the ceramics teacher invites the children to discover whether it is possible to make something at home out of bread or a bar. "Yes, yes, the teacher didn't quack. It really is possible! And it's very interesting what you'll get. How to do it? Just cut off the crusts and knead the rest of the crust with your fingers after wetting your hands, so that the bar is almost like plasticine. Do not add too much water, otherwise the bread will melt. When the bread (or the baton) is just moist enough, it will stick together and you will see that it is possible to mould something out of it. Come on, will anyone be able to get a chicken out? Start trying, there are no mistakes, it's all about the process! Good luck."</p> <p>Ask the children what is SUNDAY AFTER EASTER and when does it happen? You can listen to it again in this week's video on the Drąsučiai Facebook group.</p> <p>Suggest that your child paints a watercolour or gouache Easter egg. When painting with gouache, instead of a brush, you can use earplugs, a stick, etc., and instead of printing ornaments, you can use stamps made from potatoes. And with watercolour, an egg can be painted by blowing through a straw.</p>	
FRID AY	WHAT HAVE I	Complete YGA GA	A music teacher recommends watching a fun Tom and Jerry film and getting to know the royal piano during the week of	

LEARNT ?	exercise 47. Circle the numbers on worksheet 04.17, name the number as you go, colour the picture.	Easter https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1JKd1C7izQ&fbclid=IwAR0mWwT2zmLwuc6OfdRUvRTbSanpkXXL2NjX2K5kRGKGpw_aFmXvIVSvZjhQ&app=desktop Remember the song about beetles https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnGe74a2OB0&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3jOUXa5FuFTUVaska0Z2nW-DWLQI7qr9XhAwMgt7k-ByMFebdfTpgMI1Q You can watch "Peter Rabbit" or another film of your choice and ask the children if they liked the film and why? What emotions did they notice? Did the children notice the following emotions in the film: happiness, sadness, anger, pity, guilt, love? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-IGcZTGqNxE Discuss with the children what they have learned this week? What did they like best? You can make a crown out of Easter eggs. http://amatukai.lt/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/velykiniu_darbeliu_idejos_vaikams_karuna4.jpg	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-to-one interviews with the teacher take place in an interactive way of your choice, at an agreed time, with up to 10 minutes per call. • Classroom conference call - ALL participate, Monday 12 noon. • Classroom conference call REFLECTION: ALL are present, Friday at 12 noon. 			

At the end of the week, the teachers create a reflection video of the week's activities from the photos sent in by parents, which they post on a pre-agreed online space with parents. Children access the photo film at the time of their choice. For a sample of the film, click on the following link:

<https://animoto.com/play/plOJE02NwAgr5UKtAfACaA>

Face-to-face, blended and hybrid lessons

After the first quarantine in 2020, the school communities realised the importance of common agreements on distance learning, clear communication, time management, peer support and feedback. Therefore, when we went back to hybrid teaching in the autumn, it was easier to organise activities and to involve the children in the educational process.

In Kaunas school-kindergarten "Šviesa", during the quarantine period, distance education was implemented in pre-school and pre-primary school groups. There is a mixed approach to education: children attending the school/kindergarten receive education in the usual way, while children at home are provided with distance education according to annual and weekly activity plans.

In the case of blended learning, the following distance learning environments are used by teachers and parents/guardians by mutual agreement: chat rooms: Facebook closed groups, Messenger, Zoom, Teams, email, SMS. At the beginning of each week (Sunday evening or Monday morning), the teachers send the curriculum plan and lesson log-in times to the parents in the e-diary and email, during which the children

log in to the video lessons via ZOOM. Tasks and filmed material are sent during the week. For a closer cooperation with parents, we ask for feedback: upload photos of children's work or other cognitive activities, comments, filmed material, writing down children's thoughts, leaving a comment so that teachers can see and evaluate the results, and adding them to the general folder of children's achievements. Parents are also involved in the education by suggesting ideas for the week's educational theme. The art teacher and speech therapist work remotely via Skype, Zoom, email and various digital platforms (Padlet, Animoto, Youtube etc.) Pre-school children receive Zoom education twice a week for 25 minutes and pre-primary children three times a week for 30 minutes. When working with pre-school and pre-primary children in blended lessons, children's lack of concentration was a problem. Without the help of parents, online lessons are a problem (preparing for the lesson, switching on/off the video lessons). The curriculum for an open mixed lesson, where some children worked from home and a larger proportion studied in a group is attached. The children used Kahoot, an online tool for creating quizzes. The children like this ICT tool and look forward to these lessons with great interest.

How to improve synchronous, asynchronous and blended distance education

- Teamwork;
- A detailed, specific, clear and interesting plan of weekly activities;
- Sharing best practices with each other;
- Workshops, training for teachers on how to teach and assess students effectively at a distance;
- Ensuring that all teachers and pupils have all the appropriate technical tools to participate in distance education;
- Providing fast, free internet access for all teachers and students;
- Investing in the updating and development of Lithuanian platforms and content;
- Cooperation between parents and teachers is one of the key factors influencing the quality education of children in pre-school institutions. Quality cooperation influences the child's future academic achievement.
- Distance education has enabled closer and more intimate cooperation between parents and teachers. Various virtual education platforms are more responsive to parents' expectations of collaboration, with the most effective communication taking place over the phone.
- The fact that the teacher, who represents the „Light“, helps the child to move up the ladder and experience personal success is very important.



Reflect

By combining synchronous and asynchronous learning, you can guarantee that students are prepared for classes in advance, allowing for more focused and in-depth participation and conversation with the educator.

1.5 Managing online wellbeing



Abstract

ICTs are transforming the whole educational sector. However, sometimes, an excessive amount of screen time can negatively impact on the mental health of students. To avoid this, teachers need to learn new practices to support students' wellbeing online.



*Mental health
e-learning
Teachers' training
21st Century skills
Mindfulness*

Authors: Sarah Rapuano, Carlotta Maria Crippa, Stefano Corradi, Vida Drqsutë



Introduction

When carefully designed and thoughtfully applied, online learning can accelerate, amplify, and expand the impact of effective teaching practices. However, educators need to have the knowledge and skills to take full advantage of technology-rich learning environments to make them transformative.

Unfortunately, there is one aspect of digital technology that is often overlooked in teaching, i.e., its effects on mental health. COVID-19 has led to major changes in schools. Forced to shift educational activities from classrooms to digital channels, schools around the world hastily asked their students to turn on their computers and attend their lessons on Zoom, Google Meet, Teams, or any other videoconference platform, without having enough time to think about what this would have led to.

After more than 2 years amid the pandemic, we have gathered enough experience to better understand the effects of online education on students', teachers', and even parents' mental health. In this chapter, we will address this issue, illustrating what the consequences of misusing online education are on mental health. Nonetheless, as already highlighted above, the application of digital technologies in education brings with it a great potential for renewal and improvement. We do not have to dismiss online learning altogether. We need to learn how to apply it effectively. For this reason, strategies to promote well-being in online classes will also be proposed.

The impact of online learning on mental health

After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden increase in the use of video conferencing software, a new term was coined to define the specific fatigue caused by online meetings: “Zoom fatigue”.

According to Professor Jeremy Bailenson, there are 4 main causes of “Zoom fatigue”:

- **Excessive amounts of close-up eye contact**

The amount of eye contact and the size of the faces on the screen are both unnatural. Usually, when a face appears close like on Zoom, our brain interprets the moment as a conflict or mating situation. Therefore, by using Zoom for so many hours, our mind is in a constant state of over excitation. This, coupled with the several faces that users see at the same time, increases the stress levels of all users.

- **Seeing yourself constantly during video chats in real-time**

Just like the size and number of faces on screens, also seeing yourself for long hours is unnatural. Studies have shown that when people see a reflection of themselves, they tend to be more critical of themselves. Once again, this feature increases the psychological burden of users, who, as a result, feel more stressed.

- **Decrease of usual mobility**

Most computer cameras have a set field of view. Thus, people must stay in the same spot if they wish to be seen. This limited movement reduces their cognitive performance.

- **Higher cognitive load**

In regular face-to-face interactions, nonverbal communication helps people understand a conversation through gestures, expressions, and other means. This aids in comprehension by decreasing the effort of speakers, who do not have to strain to understand every single word. This is not the case during videoconferences, which require all participants to work harder to send and receive signals.

In addition to this, the high number of hours spent on the computer has led to a decrease in social interactions and an increase in social isolation. Several studies have demonstrated that the sense of loneliness and social isolation caused by distance learning can result in severe mental issues (Filho et al., 2021; Kwon, et al., 2010).



Fig. Videoconference software screen

All these issues do not only affect students, but also teachers and parents, too. Just like students, teachers spent hours and hours connected to the PC, having to deal with all the problems highlighted above. In addition to this, there were the difficulties associated with having to reschedule the teaching activities for distance teaching and class management on the videoconferencing platforms, which have brought them additional hours of work and training.

On the other hand, distance learning has involved parents in a different but no less stressful way. Through distance learning, parents have become “proxy-educators”, tutors and are getting more involved with schoolwork to ensure their kids learn well. This is an extra workload that adds to their ordinary jobs. In

the case of parents who work from home, the situation worsens, as they have to manage these two activities almost simultaneously.

Now, knowing all this, what could we do to improve this situation? There is a handful of practical solutions that can help everyone cope with the stress caused by distance learning and increase its effectiveness.

Teacher's professional development

Like Steve Jobs said, "What's wrong with education cannot be fixed with technology." That is why it is crucial to invest in a teacher's professional development. On the day-to-day, teachers are constantly on the front line, assuming responsibility for each child in their care. Because of this, they are often expected to be the first to witness signs of any wellbeing and safeguarding concerns but, as with anything, they have a much better chance of noticing them when they know what it is they should be looking for. To encourage the integration of digital technologies into teaching practice, teachers require professional development opportunities that focus on technology use from a pedagogical perspective (European Commission, 2011, 2013a). Teacher training is more effective if it communicates the pedagogical value of technology, coupled with practical examples of technology-enhanced teaching strategies, and preferably linked to subject-specific and curriculum-relevant learning outcomes. This finding seems to be particularly relevant to the European context given the comparatively high level of digital competence among teachers (European Commission, 2013a).

Have regular conversations

Engaging in discussion with children can enable adults to build an understanding of the child's ability and to purposefully determine how to best guide and scaffold the development of elements that will support well-being such as balancing screen time with non-screen time, critiquing content, self-control, and self-regulation.

Before COVID hit, Professor Stephanie Jones and Lecturer Emily Hanno were already tracking young children's development as part of the Early Learning Study at Harvard. As the pandemic began unfolding, they started to see shifts among the thousands of families and children participating in the study.

In their newest findings, they share that families reported a rise in temper tantrums, anxiety, and a poor ability to manage emotions, especially among the young elementary-aged children during remote learning.

"One strategy is to just open up space for processing and talking about how everyone's feeling, and it doesn't have to take a long time. It can be really quick, but it's really important.

Both families and educators can support children's well-being by creating predictable routines that are going to happen no matter what's happening in the broader ecosystem of children's lives. We have to be ready to support children as they transition between these different modalities and experiences, and support adults in learning about enacting strategies that support children as they navigate these changes."

Jones says. "Those are things that we know about, from work in social and emotional learning, in supporting positive behaviours, and supporting the wellbeing of adults."

Mindfulness

With heightened academic pressure trickling down to kids as early as kindergarten, resulting in less time for play and the arts, children today are faced with an unprecedented amount of stress and anxiety. Many schools have reported how demanding the timetable can seem when lessons are moved online, such early

stress levels can negatively impact learning, memory, behaviour, and both physical and mental health, so it's worth encouraging students to take breaks and reflect on their thoughts and feelings. Some individuals ground themselves by thinking about their feet on the floor, while others concentrate on their breathing; a technique known as mindfulness.

In its simplest terms, mindfulness helps train your attention to be more aware of what is happening in the present moment, instead of worrying about what has already happened or might happen in the future. Some schools are implementing this in the digital sphere by incorporating mindfulness drop-in sessions to break up the potentially demanding online learning schedule.

One of the best ways to promote well-being in schools is to increase awareness and encourage a positive dialogue surrounding it by making support more accessible for those who are struggling, for example, creating activities to help children de-stress and discover new techniques that can support them when they're feeling down.

Building Non-Cognitive Competencies: Providing Opportunities for Practice

To remain globally competitive and develop engaged citizens, our schools should weave 21st-century competencies and expertise throughout the learning experience. These include the development of critical thinking, complex problem solving, collaboration, and adding multimedia communication into the teaching of traditional academic subjects. In addition, learners should have the opportunity to develop a sense of agency in their learning and the belief that they are capable of succeeding in school and life.

Interacting with peers, handling conflicts, resolving disputes, or persisting through a challenging problem are all experiences that are important to academic success.

Digital games can allow students to try out varied responses and roles and gauge the outcomes without fear of negative consequences. Accumulating evidence suggests that virtual environments and games can help increase empathy, self-awareness, emotional regulation, social awareness, cooperation, and problem-solving. Games such as [Ripple Effects](#) and [The Social Express](#) use virtual environments, storytelling, and interactive experiences to assess a student's social skills and competencies and provide opportunities to practice. Other apps help bridge the gap between the virtual environment and the real world by providing just-in-time support for emotional regulation and conflict resolution. Several apps are available to help students name and identify how they are feeling, express their emotions, and receive targeted suggestions or strategies for self-regulation. Examples include: [Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame](#); [Smiling Mind](#); [Stop, Breathe & Think](#); [Touch and Learn—Emotions](#).



Fig. Screenshot from the Social Express

Children’s Agency in Play and Digital Wellbeing

Reports on children’s use of screen-based media showed that children often choose to engage with screens over other activities or are not able to disengage from their touchscreen devices. This is a highly contentious topic, often framed in terms of “technology addiction” and a lack of self-regulation. However, it is also an under-researched topic. It is common for young children to be so immersed in their play that they are unable to disengage easily when they are enjoying what they are doing. To understand children’s experiences with technology, consideration must be given to whether the digital play is viewed differently in this regard to more traditional forms of play.

Another concern with digital technology relates to the virtual, and therefore potentially non-concrete, nature of the resources. Seminal research by Clements identifies that as computers became more prevalent, debates emerged on whether manipulating digital resources provided the same sensory-concrete experiences for children as manipulating physical objects. Studies on block play with primary school-aged children show that both physical and mental handling of blocks had a positive impact on learning, particularly mathematical skills. Similarly, Sarama and Clements report that the use of digital manipulatives had the potential to support children to build concrete knowledge by making their understandings explicit. Further to this, they identified that whether resources are physical or digital, the guidance and support received from educators are more important than the actual tools in developing children’s concrete thinking.

Digital wellbeing itself can be difficult to measure and define in early childhood. However, the Leuven Involvement Scale for Young Children provides a valuable guide for rating a child’s engagement that could underpin further consideration of digital wellbeing. The scale focuses on the role of the teacher and adult and the overall need for a child to feel a sense of belonging to achieve well-being. Laever notes that when a child is at the “highest level of involvement; this is where deep-level-learning takes place”, highlighting the potential for intense engagement in digital play to support learning and development in young children.

Laever presents wellbeing from a strength-based rather than a deficit perspective, providing action points that can help to improve children’s involvement, agency, and sense of belonging, and therefore their wellbeing. Of key importance is that the new model looks at diverse factors that influence well-being such as children’s relationships, their environments, and other experiences, and aims to include children’s voices in the process of measuring and understanding wellbeing. These wellbeing measures provide essential considerations for further development of the concept of digital wellbeing for young children.

It can be extrapolated that understanding the factors that create deep immersion is key to supporting digital wellbeing. Reports indicate that young children are often not able to disengage easily or that it negatively affects their mood or behaviour. However, the focus must extend beyond this to help children develop a sense of agency in their use of digital technology and to build the ability to self-regulate. Self-control relates to being able to show restraint regarding impulses, whereas self-regulation is more complex and involves being able to acknowledge the cause of impulses, take measures to minimize the intensity, and when needed be able to actively resist. For young children, this begins with self-observation, followed by self-judgment and self-reaction. Consideration of young children’s self-regulation in digital spaces must include a strong understanding of these developmental pathways, both in terms of the expectations placed on children’s behaviour as well as in terms of considering the guidance and support required. Further research is needed to investigate and understand the impact of digital media on

children’s nervous systems and how this then affects their ability to self-regulate. Young children are often not able to express states of hyperarousal, and instead, it will show in their behaviour. Parents, families, and educators need to be able to recognize the signals and support effective management. Further understanding in this area is an important underpinning factor in developing measures to support children’s digital citizenship and digital wellbeing.

**Reflect**

Digital technologies are powerful tools that can really improve the quality and efficacy of teaching. However, if adopted without taking into consideration the psychological and emotional needs of all actors, they can be very harmful.

1.6 Assessment in Online Teaching



Abstract

The paragraph presents the main features for the assessment that teachers should follow and adopt with pupils at the pre-school level. The paragraph is structured taking into consideration both analytical evaluation and the usage of digital technologies.



*Formative assessment
 Assessment tools
 Student progress
 Digital technologies
 Teachers' decision-making*

Authors: Elisabetta Delle Donne, Andrea Anzanello



The evaluation of the levels of learning achieved by students is the most delicate action of teaching, both in the reflection of the individual teacher and in the collegial comparison. It is not separate from the evaluation of the quality of teaching offered to them. In the practice of evaluation, attributing value to the results obtained by students provides teachers with useful tools for reflection to adapt their way of working and relating to students and to set the goal of building a project capable of encouraging the full expression of the cognitive potential of each. From this point of view, evaluation takes on a formative character, as it contributes to modifying and making effective the teaching process concerning the different needs of students. Therefore, in the daily practice of teachers, evaluation plays a structural role in the planning phase and allows the constant regulation of teaching/learning processes.

Therefore, the evaluation is also one of the fundamental moments of the students' educational path: it is never a value judgment on the person, but a tool to know one's status and therefore functional to calibrate the activities to be carried out by the teachers and the commitment to be made by the student.

The purpose of the schools is to promote the development of children's identity, autonomy and competence and to initiate them into citizenship. Teachers have the task of welcoming, valuing and extending children's proposals (curiosity and exploration) and of organizing quality environments and relationships that favour learning through direct experience, play and trial and error.

This is a "mild" evaluative practice, therefore, that observes and documents the process of children's maturation over time and not only the result obtained, that detects eventual difficulties, but also talents, the element of surprise to small unexpected emerging competencies, that links the appreciation of children's progress (in very broad terms) with the quality of the educational contexts.

The following are some general aspects for observing, documenting, and evaluating:

- Systematic observation
- Documentation of children's "products" (drawings, posters, photographs, videos, stories, verbalized child reflections, teacher narratives)
- Narrative tools written by the teacher on the activities and goals reached by the children (notes, reflections, profiles, passage document)
- Games for individual observation of the child

Assessment Methods:

- Observation and reflection on emerging data concerning proposed experiences
- Overall evaluation of interaction among peers and with adults

Methods of observation as a function of evaluation:

- Observation of children in spontaneous play situations
- Detection of children's performance in situations of educational-didactic laboratory engagement (guided, autonomous, individual or small group work)

Tools and techniques of detection:

- Documentation of the proposed experiences
- Observation of the works produced
- Shared structured activities
- Structured observation grids (observations at the beginning of attendance, ongoing observations and final per age group)

Verification and evaluation phases

- Initial verification of prerequisites (September-October)
- Ongoing assessment (bimonthly) - Final assessment (May-June)

Formative assessment for effective teaching and learning

Whether we use synchronous or asynchronous online sessions, whether we call it distance or virtual learning, we are all challenged to provide meaningful educational experiences at a distance as the education world grapples with the impact of COVID-19. This type of learning is nothing new, but it is new to many of us and has caused us to quickly shift our practices.

Formative assessment at a distance is challenging but possible, and we still need to check for understanding and provide meaningful feedback. The practices we use will look and sound different than they do in the classroom.

As it is important to have routines and still have variety, select two to four tools that work well for you and your students. Focusing on just a few allows students to experience tools they're used to, while also ensuring that checking for learning does not get boring.

Here is a list of several assessment tools a teacher can use:

<https://www.nwea.org/blog/2021/75-digital-tools-apps-teachers-use-to-support-classroom-formative-assessment/>

Make sure the tools you use fit your purpose. If you need to see students' processes, select a tool that can capture that, such as Animoto or Flipgrid. If you need to check their content knowledge, try Kahoot or Quizlet.

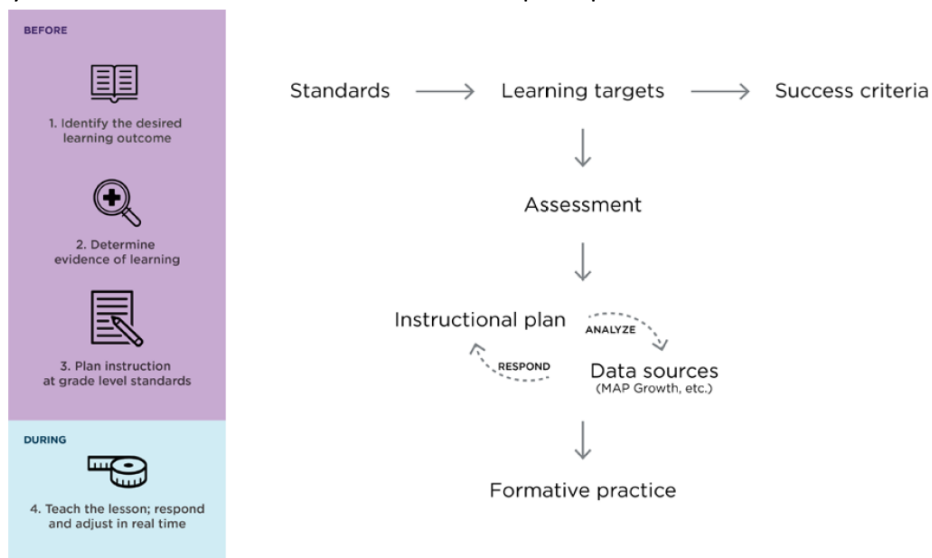
Formative assessment is a process, and it is important to collect evidence of learning over time. While you may teach and dictate which digital tools students can use, work with students to have them document their learning along the way. Give them guides or checkpoints to let them know what they need to submit and when they need to do so.

Focus on feedback: When checking for understanding, it is important to communicate the feedback that comes from it. As a teacher, you can provide written and/or oral feedback through videos or sound recordings. If you are doing synchronous sessions, you can put students in breakout groups to provide feedback to one another - if you do this, you will need to give them clear feedback rules. Asynchronously, students can post work and provide feedback over a longer timeframe.

3 main questions a teacher should ask:

What is working? What is not working well? What would you recommend?

Responsive planning with the end in mind is an approach that challenges us to undertake our practice with more intention. It is designed to respond to students' unique needs before and during a lesson and it relies heavily on formative assessment to create a complete picture.



As described in the image above, there are four steps to well-planning an evaluation for students by having in mind what is the final purpose.

The formative assessment starts previous to the beginning of the lesson. The following steps are to be made before instruction:

1. Identify the desired learning outcome

To determine your desired learning outcome - that place you want to go, as the Cheshire cat would say – you will need to look to your grade-level standards. Unwrap the content to establish student-friendly learning targets and success criteria that explicitly support students in understanding the aims of your instruction and the criteria to measure their learning progress.

2. Determine evidence of learning

Having the end in mind, you should consider how you and your students will know they have met the desired learning outcome identified in step one by establishing the evidence you will accept and how you will collect it. This involves identifying or designing the formative and summative assessments you will use when you are teaching the lesson. These are the assessments that will allow you to continually adjust your teaching.

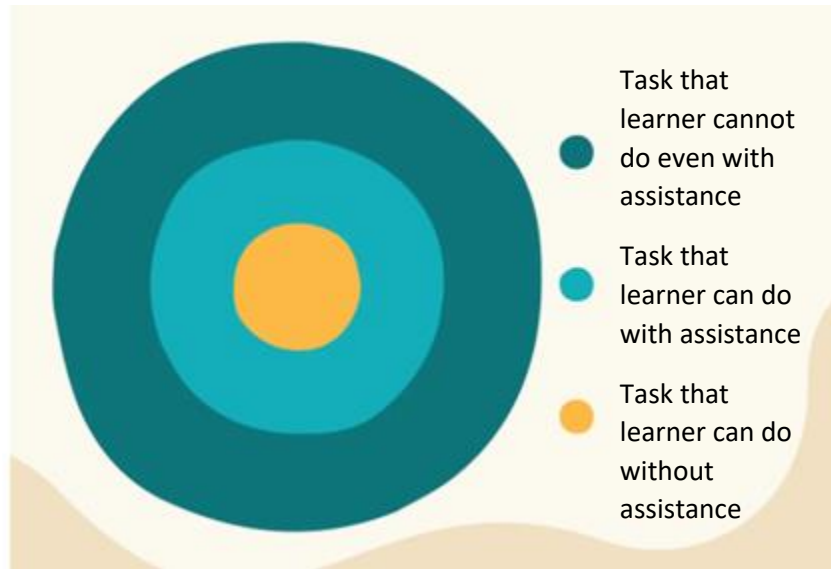
3. Plan instruction at grade-level standards

Once you know your learning outcomes and how to measure learning progress, you can plan the instructional activities that will support and guide students to those outcomes. Begin planning focused on the grade-level standards and rigour, as if all students are ready for grade-level instruction. Then, to promote access to equitable instruction, consult your multiple data sources to determine where students may need additional support or challenge to access the instruction in a way that promotes productive struggle. This is also where you can consider students' social-emotional learning needs. A good way to do it is to use the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which came from a Russian psychologist named Lev Vygotsky in the early 1900s. He believed that every person has two stages of skill development:

- A level they can achieve by themselves
- A level they can achieve with the help of an experienced mentor or teacher

The ZPD can be broken into three stages:

- **Tasks the learner can do without assistance:** This category includes everything a person can do without help from a more experienced individual.
- **Tasks the learner can do with assistance:** This category includes tasks a person cannot work through by themselves but can work through with help.
- **Tasks the learner cannot do with assistance:** The final category includes tasks that are too difficult to perform even with an instructor's help. For example, a young child might be able to spell out their name by themselves but might need help from someone else to write the complete alphabet.

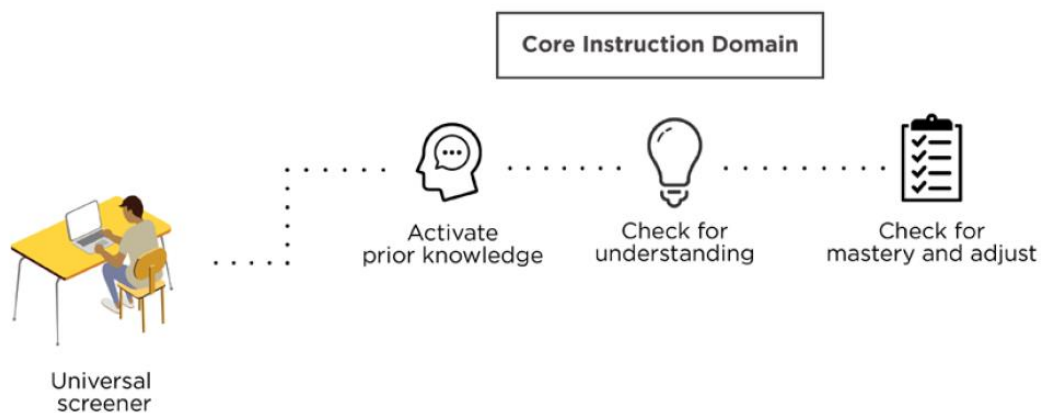


4. Teach the lesson: respond and adjust in real-time

This fourth step is all about instruction. Put your plan to work and use your formative practice to monitor and adjust the plan in real-time based on how students progress. Your methods may look a bit different after COVID19 school closures, but there are countless ways to adjust what you have been used to in the classroom to an online or hybrid learning environment. Be sure to make notes about what works so you can use your reflections to anticipate and proactively plan for potential student needs in the future.

Analyzing existing data sources to inform responsive adjustments to a plan before teaching will save you precious instructional time since you will be proactively anticipating and planning for student needs.

This begins with teachers reviewing the scope and sequence of standards-aligned content, establishing clear learning targets, and using formative assessment data to develop responsive plans for lessons and units.



Lessons and units should start with formative assessment practices in the form of a pre-assessment or a process of activating prior knowledge. The purpose is to understand what students already know and assist teachers and students in understanding the learning path that students will need to take to reach the learning target.

Formative assessment practices should take the form of checking for understanding. In a lesson, for example, this may occur when you monitor small group conversations, review students' quick writing assignments, or listen to how students report on jigsaw activities.

At the end of a lesson or unit, a balanced assessment system will make use of purposeful summative assessment. If the learning targets were clear from the beginning, a summative assessment will focus solely on the success criteria by which students demonstrate that they have learned what was expected.

Digital technologies and strategies to enhance assessment

Research has shown that formative assessment (or assessment for learning), as distinct from summative assessment (or assessment of learning), is a powerful tool that benefits learning and student achievement. Both formative and summative assessments are deeply embedded within current educational systems. Recognizing that both types serve distinct educational purposes, it is also important to note they are not necessarily exclusive processes and are often intertwined in teaching and learning activities. Technology-enhanced assessment may offer some alternatives to suggestions that these types of assessment may be coordinated to provide more useful feedback (e.g., using summative assessment for formative purposes). Technology-enhanced assessment has been used for both summative and formative assessment activities, though it is particularly suitable for formative assessment purposes, as it provides mechanisms for sharing immediate feedback, diagnosing and testing skills and knowledge, peer- and self-assessment, as well as offering private and non-judgmental feedback.

Thus, learning is not seen as a passive or solo venture but rather as one that is active, social, contextual and situated in real-world living. Some studies have connected students' networks to improved learning performance, development of a sense of community and information and resource exchange. Social learning through methods like small group work has also demonstrated positive impacts on performance and shifts the focus from that of content to one of activities and interactions. Many subsequently argue that assessment should reflect these characteristics of learning. It seems unreasonable to separate assessment from learning and for it to take place after the learning has taken place. Since learning is no longer seen as an individual endeavour, there is also a role for the learning community to have some say in this process.

Social or collaborative learning includes a variety of activities and interactions, such as relatively informal interactions online or via study groups or more formalized collaborative activities or group performances.

Digital technologies to inform about children's progress

Schools should consider the pedagogical rationale for how technology will improve learning. The principles of how to use technology successfully are not distinct from questions of how to teach effectively or how children learn.

Without a clear plan for support and implementation, technology is much less likely to have an impact. This includes considering what initial training will be needed, what time and resources are required, and what ongoing support should be available.

Decisions about whether to introduce technology should also include an analysis of the costs of implementing the technology, alongside the expected benefits.

Technology can be engaging and motivating for pupils. However, the relationship between technology, motivation, and achievement is complex. Monitoring how technology is being used, including by checking that all learners have the skills they need to use it effectively, is likely to reduce the risk that technology becomes a tool that widens the gap between successful learners and their peers.

Working on photography, intriguing children through the history of the camera is an opportunity to bring them closer to technology constructively and responsibly and at the same time to experience concretely what it means to photograph.

As for the expressive dimension, the game with the camera becomes a way to work on their emotions, to play "pretend to ...", changing, changing appearance, impressing on digital experiences and moods.

The use of the tablet, through the first knowledge of an educational application. Although tablets and smartphones were born as tools designed for adults, they are very simple to use.

Using technology can increase the accuracy of assessment, or the speed with which assessment information is collected, with the potential to inform teachers' decision-making and reduce workload.

Technology can be used to provide feedback directly to pupils via programmes or interventions, but in all cases careful implementation and monitoring are necessary. Feedback via technology is likely to be most beneficial if it is provided in addition to, rather than instead of, other forms of feedback.



Reflect

Keep in mind to ensure that learning does not get boring for children. They should always feel that to learn along the way.

As a teacher, you should always consider using different forms of feedback to get the whole picture of the improvement of children.

2. Technical Competencies in online teaching

2.1 Skills and tips for using Microsoft Office



Abstract

Word, Excel and PowerPoint are the tools provided by Microsoft to facilitate students in producing written assignments on the computer, creating tables for school research, and creating slides for the presentation of their work.



*Text
 Table
 Scheme
 Presentation
 Image*

Authors: Marco Pandolfini, Edoardo Bacenetti



Introduction

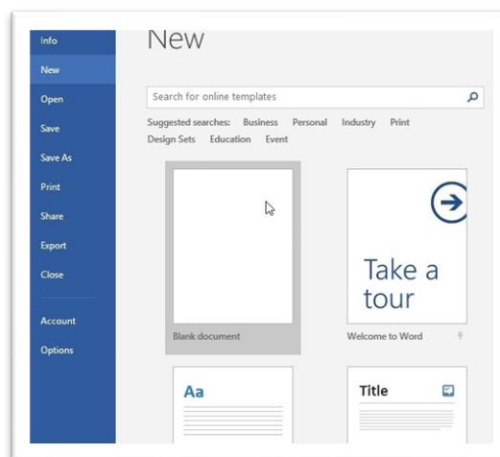
Word and Excel are two useful tools for creating very long and articulate texts or tables and for working on them repeatedly without too much effort and without wasting too much paper (an advantage for the environment). For texts, various calligraphies, various colours and various layouts can be used, and it is very useful to correct different errors in progress in a relatively easy and inexpensive way. Excel, on the other hand, is very useful for easily creating and editing tables and charts for school research.

Many tools are made available for online teaching: both online and offline, you can do homework, write and read papers and books, create drawings, presentations and charts for assignments, tests and group projects. In the next chapter we are going to see the functionality of a specific group of tools provided by Microsoft, the computer company that creates software for computers: the Office package, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

Word

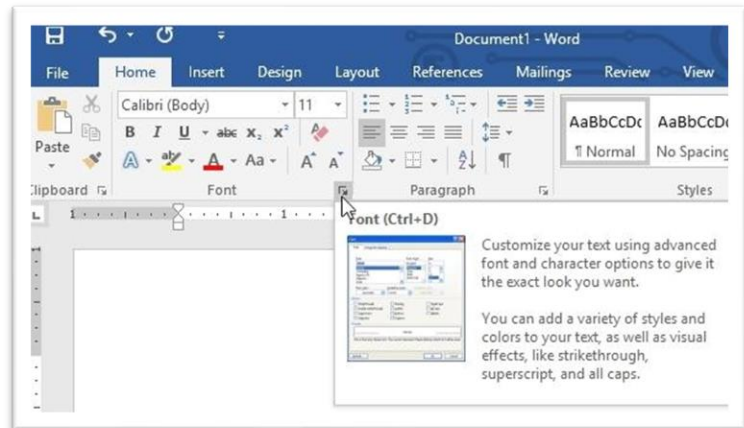
Word is the service for writing text. The program includes the visualization of a digital blank sheet at our complete disposal for any type of mode of text writing, image insertion, table insertion, pasting, highlighting, and hypertext connection with web pages.

To get started, just select New > Blank document mode if you want to create a new text, or Open if you want to retrieve an old text to edit or double-check it. With the Save and Save as options, you can obviously save the new document or the



changes to the old one in a folder on your computer; with the Print option, you can print the chosen document, while with Share, you can share the document with other users or people, via email, Drive, or Dropbox:

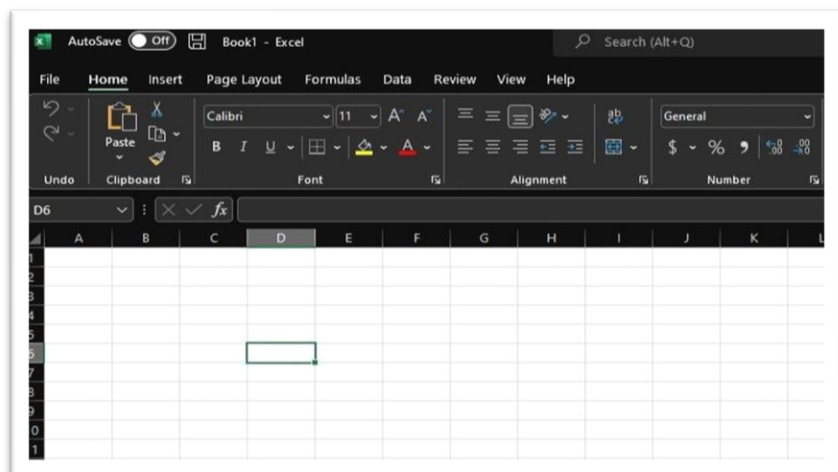
In the selected document, the toolbar will appear at the top. The most important function is Home, where you can select the font of your text (with colour, style, size, effects etc.) and the distribution of the text with Paragraph (alignment, indentation and spacing between words, lines and borders; the creation of lists and titles). Also important is the Find function, with which you can search for one or more specific words within the text:



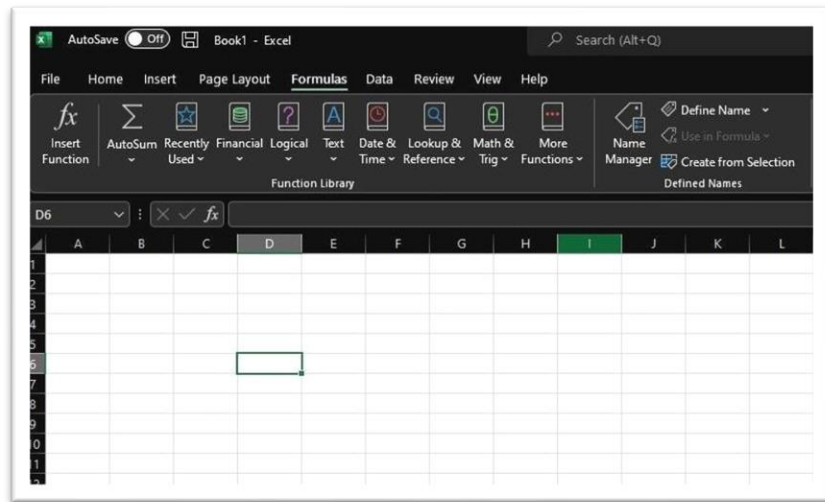
MS Word may help educators build fresh and creative learning and teaching strategies, prepare lessons, make orders, announcements, updates, and reminders. One of the most significant benefits of MS Word in education is its eco-friendliness, since it requires less paper.

Excel

The Excel program initially has a similar starting mode to Word, with Save, Print, Share, and others (and in fact for this reason they are both part of the Office program package). Excel's functionality, however, lies in creating tables and charts, so some options and tools will be different. As you can see from the first image, in fact, already the page on which you are going to work will be different, as it is full of cells to organize by modifying them, joining them, colouring them, filling them as you like:



What characterizes Excel specifically is its ability to carry out particular calculations and modifications on the data inserted in the tables. By clicking on Formulas, it is possible to access all the features for editing text, number, date and time, using sums, increasing or decreasing orders, averages, rounding, shifting and much more. Each operation is identified with a specific acronym, so that it is easily accessible from the keyboard by pressing the right keys:

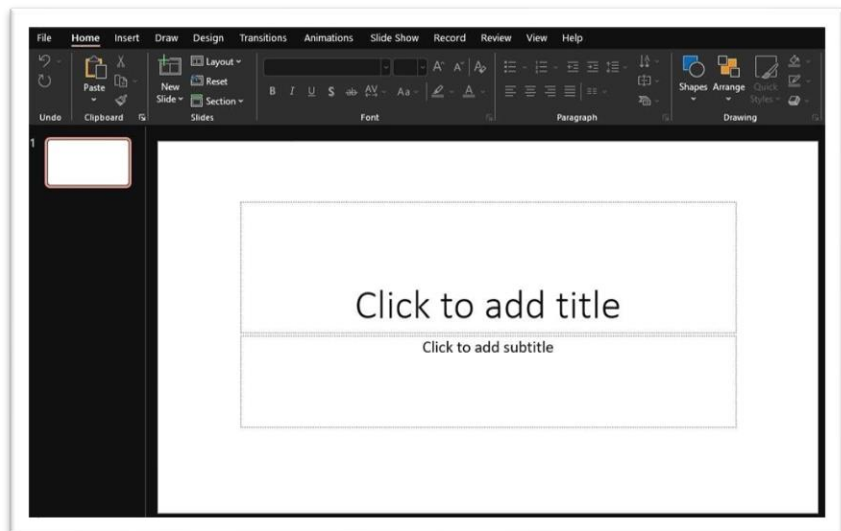


How might educators use Excel in the classroom?

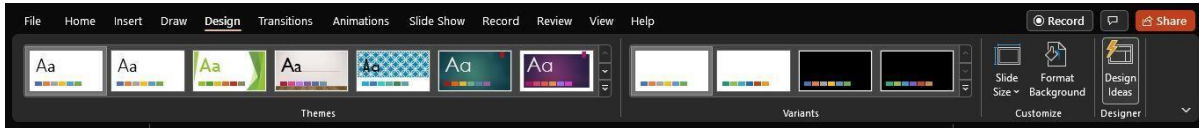
Teachers may use Excel to take attendance, calculate grade averages, construct a lesson plan template and timetable, monitor room inventory, list classroom books, and record student conduct, among other tasks. In class, students may chart their progress.

PowerPoint

A different argument should be made for PowerPoint, the presentation program produced by Microsoft. This application is mainly used to project, and thus communicate on screen, projects, ideas and contents, being able to incorporate text, images, graphics, movies, audio, and being able to present all this with high-level animations. Apart from all the pre-set features that all Microsoft products have in common (which we have seen for Word and Excel), here it is possible to graph and animate the main PowerPoint page, using the colours, shapes, structure, background and foreground, images you prefer:



This tool is very useful if you want to present a very complex project to the class, or if you want to expose your own research, using images or diagrams. It can also be useful for teachers to supplement the lesson with clarifying images, diagrams, or graphics. To facilitate these activities, PowerPoint provides various tools in the Draw, Design, Transitions and Animations sections, with various themes, variants, ways of changing images and pre-set sets for your presentation:



Reflect

It is important to reflect on the tools we use to facilitate our works, to know how to make the best use of them when they serve us well, and to understand their limits when we perceive that they are impeding or damaging us.

2.2. Asynchronous teaching. Creating an online workspace for children



Abstract

Google provides students with the possibility, with a Google Account, to live the classroom experience even with technological devices, with the Google Classroom platform, which allows you to attend explanations, do homework and tests, remotely.



Google
Account
Chat
Classwork
Data

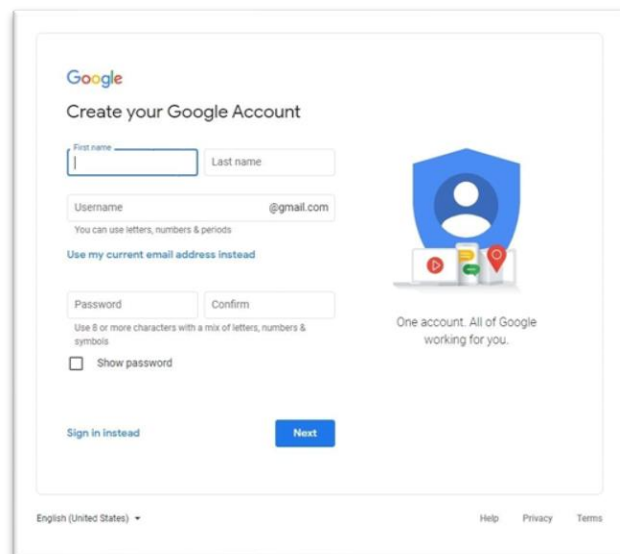
Authors: Marco Pandolfini, Edoardo Bacenetti



Google Account

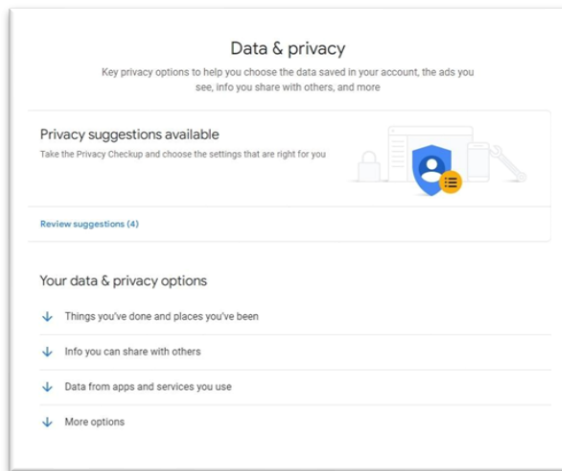
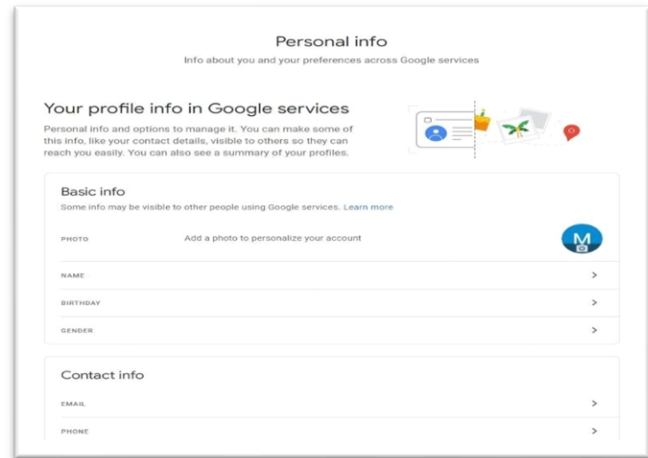
Google offers a wide range of tools to be able to replicate the activity of teaching and the experience of learning even at a distance - a situation that has emerged with greater clarity and need with the health emergency caused by SARS-Cov-2. Among these numerous tools, one is the one we are most interested in right now: Google Classroom. And to do this, we would first need to talk about another Google tool, the Google Account, which is the precursor to all the others.

To use any of Google's features, you must first create a Google account. To do this, simply go to www.google.com and click on the top right button "Sign In". A window will open where you have to enter some data to create your account: First name, Last name, Username and Password. Once you have entered these data (with particular attention to the username, because it must not be repeated with other accounts), you can immediately have access to Google services:



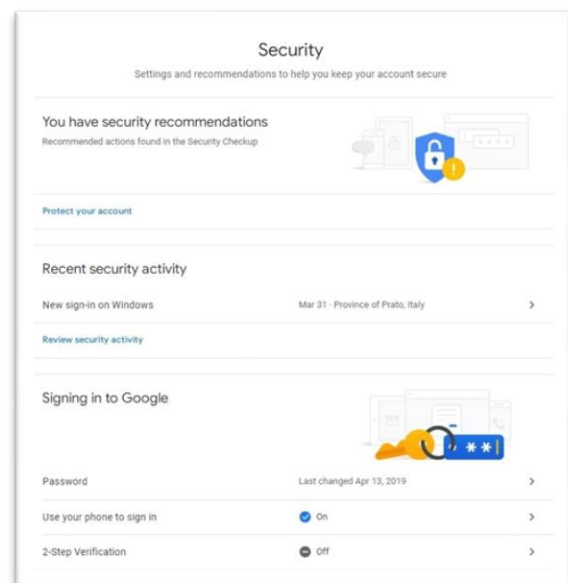
The screenshot shows the 'Create your Google Account' page. It includes the Google logo at the top left. The main heading is 'Create your Google Account'. Below this, there are input fields for 'First name', 'Last name', 'Username', and 'Password'. The 'Username' field has a placeholder '@gmail.com'. There are also 'Confirm' and 'Show password' options. A blue shield icon with a person silhouette is on the right, with the text 'One account. All of Google working for you.' below it. At the bottom, there is a 'Sign in instead' link and a blue 'Next' button. The footer contains 'English (United States)', 'Help', 'Privacy', and 'Terms'.

With Personal Info, you can keep under control, and eventually modify, your newly entered profile data, both the basic ones and those related to your contact, as well as many other info and preferences for Google services, such as password, language, input tools, web browsing accessibility. With the option Looking for something else?, you have the possibility to search for solutions to possible navigation problems:

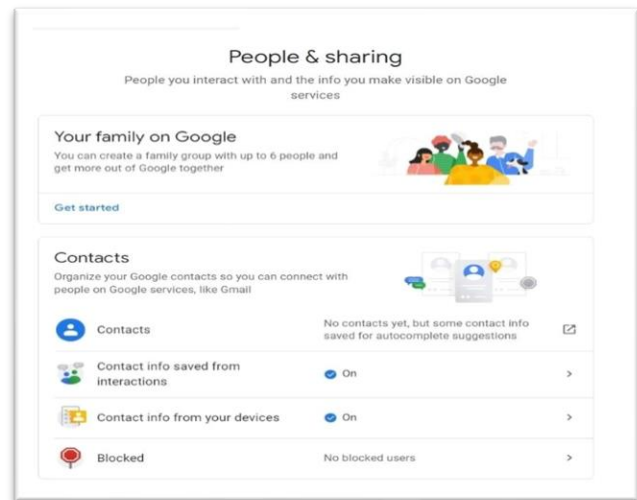


With the Data & privacy option, you can organize the information saved in your account in relation to the advertisements, you will see the material you will share on your social and Google accounts. These options include: options for history, ads, and personalization; history settings (to manage your saves, maps, and relevant search results); ad settings for Personal results in Search (to choose whether Search can show you personal results based on the info in your Google Account): Info you can share with others (like profile and location); and Data from apps and services you use (like social networks):

In Security, you can find the settings related to the security of your account. It allows you to manage all your data securely, change passwords, use tools to verify the user's identity to drive away intruders, programs that have access to your Google Account data, protection against web adversities, various saved passwords, and records made with your Google Account:

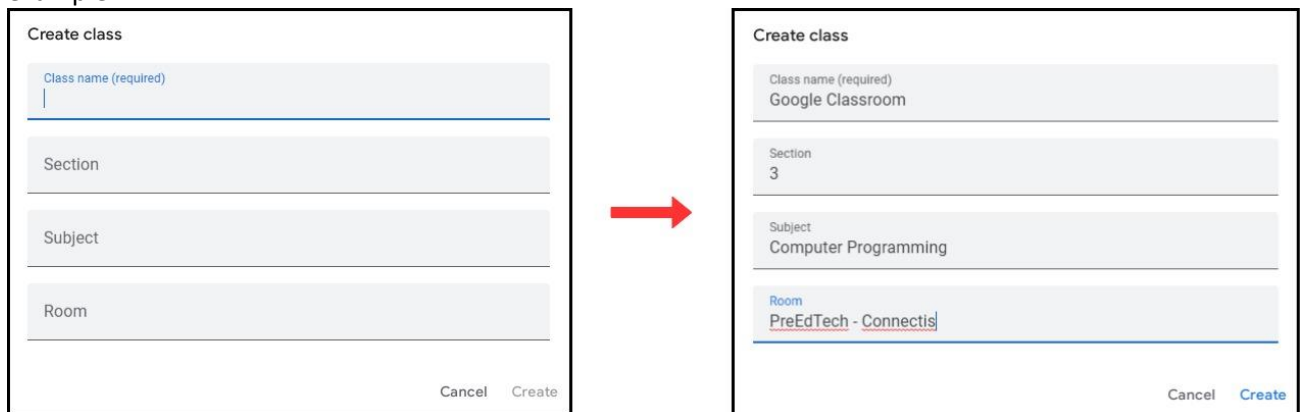


Instead, with the People & sharing feature, you can keep tabs on group activities that involve you, such as your family members, or classmates (which is where Google Classroom comes in). Here you can organize your contacts – both active and blocked – along with the things you're or might be sharing with your contacts:

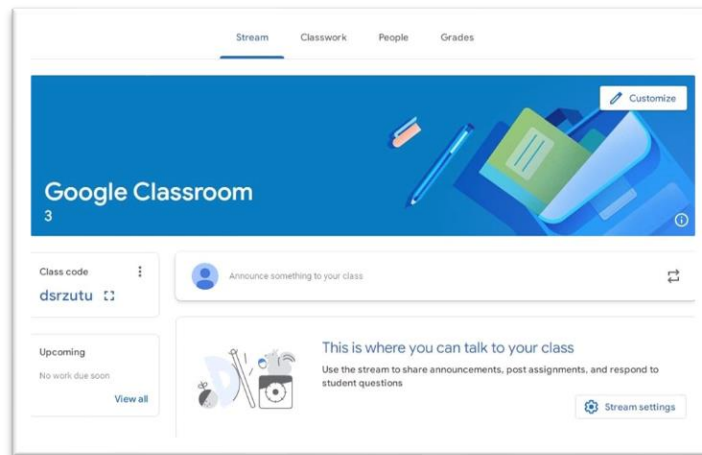


Google Classroom

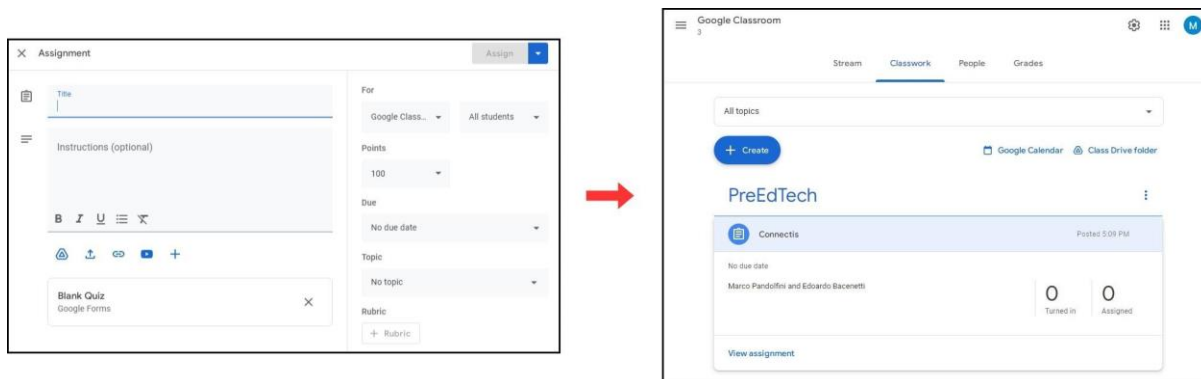
Google Classroom is a LMS, Learning Management System. This platform is a free web service developed by Google, for schools, aimed at simplifying the learning process of students through the sharing of content between teachers and students. You can access Google Classroom from the above Google menu, or by typing classroom.google.com into the toolbar. Once you enter, you already have the possibility of creating a class, that is, a sort of virtual room where you can engage in various activities and telematic relationships with students. To do this (in addition to the preliminary Google Workplace for education license) you must enter Class name, Section, Subject and Room, choosing for each a name, as in the example:



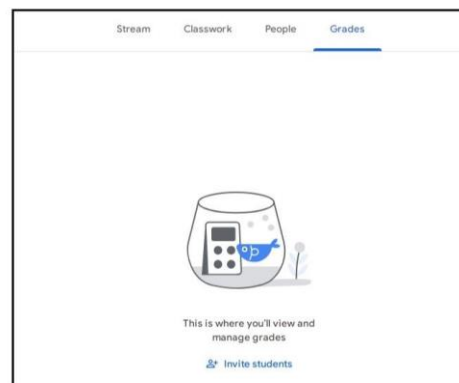
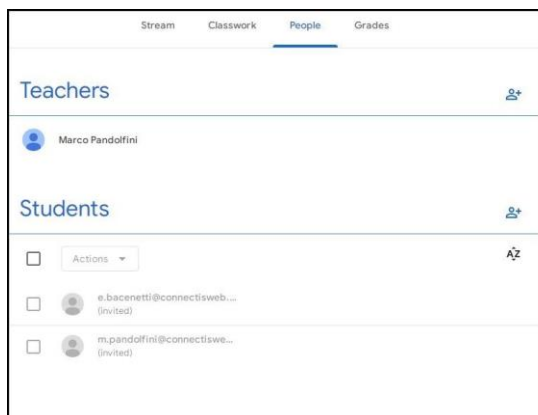
Once the class has been created with its credentials, clicking on it will bring up the main menu from which you can choose the various possible activities on Google Classroom: Stream, Classwork, People and Grades. With the first option, you can send some message to the class (be it an alert, an assignment, an evaluation, an explanation, a summary) or schedule it to be sent on another day. Also you can use a Class code to invite students to participate in that class, and with Stream settings you can organize communication with the students:



With Classwork, on the other hand, it is possible to create a whole series of teaching tools: Topic (like a module or a unit of study in a class), Assignment (with a title and instructions, like a classic student work, with points, date, links, the right topic, and the type of answers the teacher prefers), Quiz assignment and Question (to test students with open-ended questions, multiple-choice tests, or multiple-choice tests) and Material (writing a text or uploading files from the Computer or Drive). All with the possibility of assigning each assignment to a topic, and checking how many students have done the assignment and how many are still doing it. All this should be presented in this way:



The People part is dedicated to the list of teachers and students belonging to that class, and the possibility of organizing this list, adding or removing users, or editing some information. Grades, on the other hand, allows you to view the grades of your students, enter, edit or delete them - making notations afterwards:




With these tools it is possible to fully replicate the experience and the activities of the classroom lessons also at a distance: explanations, homework, exercises, laboratories, extra activities, experiments. And this is always done under the supervision and control of the teacher, who manages and coordinates the class in accordance with the parents and the needs of the students. All this comfortably at a distance and within reach of anyone with an internet connection and a computer.



Reflect

It is important to reflect on privacy issues, the advantages and disadvantages of a distance teaching and learning method, and how important it is to interact both telematically and in person.

2.3. Synchronous teaching. How to use online platforms in teaching (Zoom, Webex, Teams)



Abstract

Synchronous teaching can also take place via online learning, through the use of video conferencing and live chat or instant messaging. The Module highlights the main platforms used to facilitate online teaching.



KEY WORDS

*Synchronous teaching
 Online platforms
 Zoom
 Microsoft teams
 Webex*

Authors: Elisabetta Delle Donne, Andrea Anzanello



Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought online learning into the mainstream. Since learning in a virtual classroom requires a smartphone or a laptop with a good internet connection, students find it all the more convenient to enroll in a course of their choice.

Synchronous teaching is where the teacher is present at the same time as the learner(s). This is almost always the case in a face-to-face environment. Synchronous teaching can also take place via online learning, through the use of video conferencing and live chat or instant messaging. The same as in the face-to-face environment, the learners in synchronous online teaching can ask questions in real-time.

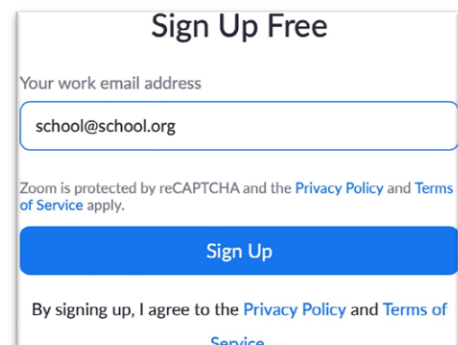
In the asynchronous environment, collaboration can be trickier but is still very important in reducing the sense of isolation learners may feel when working online. Discussions and group tasks can work just as well asynchronously as synchronously. Indeed, because of the lack of time constraints, learners can spend time composing a quality response when contributing to an asynchronous online discussion.

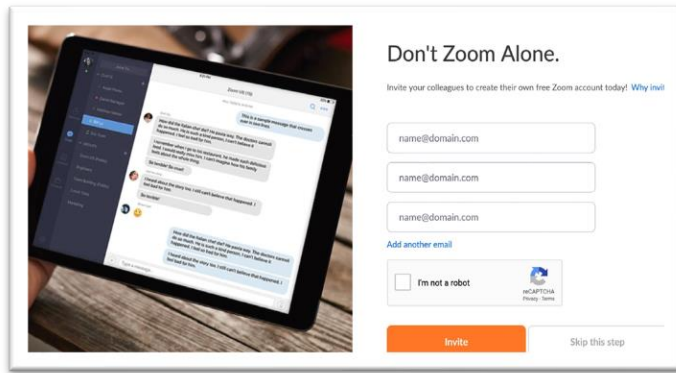
Below is a list of the three most commonly used applications for synchronous teaching.

ZOOM

How to Sign Up for the First Time

Start by going to zoom.us and click on the blue “Sign Up, It’s Free” button on the top right corner. Then you will be able to enter your school email address and sign up





You will receive an email from Zoom to activate. Go to your email and click *Activate Account*. You will be redirected to fill in your first and last name and create a password.

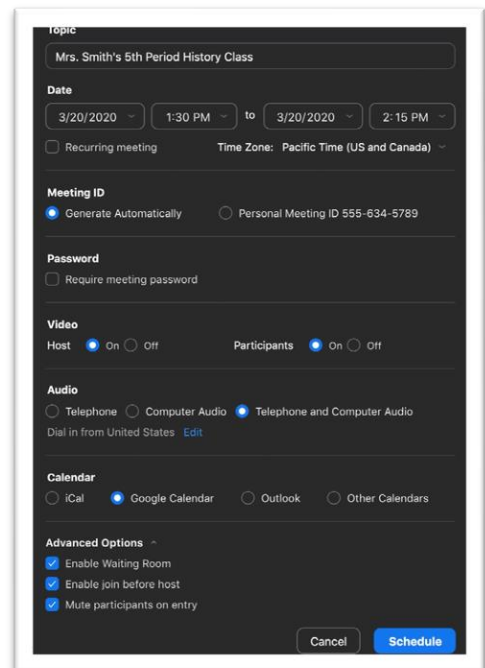
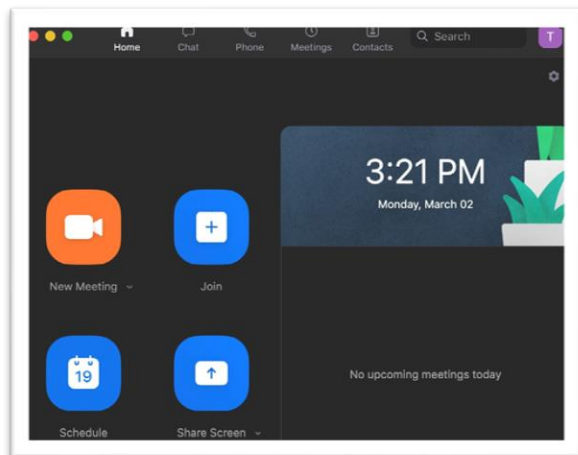
Once you have created your account, you will be able to use Zoom both online and by downloading the App on your laptop (<https://zoom.us/download>).

How to Schedule a Meeting

Scheduling a meeting on Zoom is quite fast and easy. By accessing the app, you will just need to click on the *Schedule* button to enter *Topic*, *Date*, and other related details, and press *Save* to finish. You can open the selected calendar service to add the meeting.

Note:

If you are scheduling a recurring meeting, you will need to set the recurrence in your calendar service.



To join a Zoom Meeting, simply click on the link sent over to you via email or click on the Meetings tab to join a scheduled meeting, and you will automatically be brought into the meeting.

TEAMS

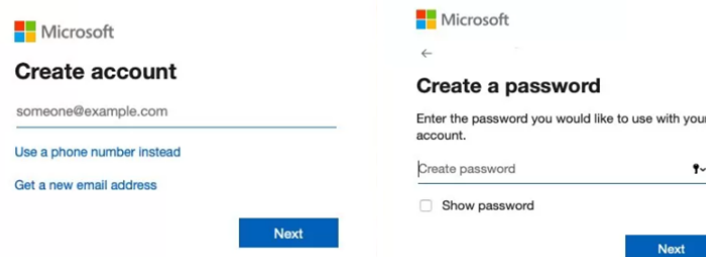
[Microsoft Teams](#) is a messaging app and a digital hub for collaboration within a team, department, or project. As well as conversations, it also allows you to share content and access other apps.

For easy access, you can download the Teams app. Open Teams and click the 'Get app' button in the left-hand menu. You'll need to check with your local IT support staff to confirm that you can download and install the application onto your desktop.

You can also download the desktop and mobile apps from the [Microsoft website](#).

TEAMS offers a chat facility that allows individuals to chat with others on a one-to-one basis or with a group of people without being a member of a Team. There are many different things that you can do in a chat, from simply conversing using instant messages, to sharing screens, working on documents or starting voice and video calls from within the chat itself.

The first thing to do is to create a Microsoft account. In the "Create account" window, enter your email address (preferably a work email address) and click on the "Next" button. The next step is to create a password, and once you have entered all your details and verified your email, you can visit the Microsoft Teams homepage to begin using the Teams web app.



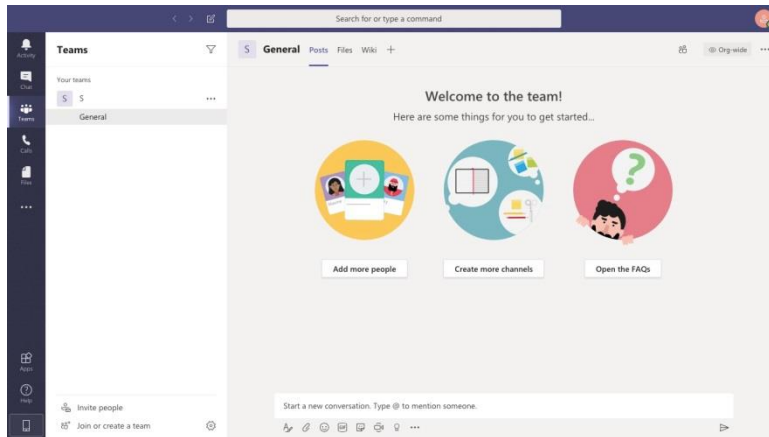
The image shows two screenshots of the Microsoft account creation process. The first screenshot is titled "Create account" and shows a text input field containing "someone@example.com". Below the field are three links: "Use a phone number instead", "Get a new email address", and a blue "Next" button. The second screenshot is titled "Create a password" and shows a text input field for a password. Below the field is a "Show password" checkbox and a blue "Next" button.

In Microsoft Teams, a Team is a group of people who collaborate, usually consisting of the entire organization.

To collaborate in Teams, you first need to be either a member of a Teams hub or the creator of one. To create a team:

- Click Teams from the App bar.
- Click the Join or Create a Team link that appears at the bottom of the App bar.
- Click the Create a Team card.
- Enter the name and description of the team.
- Choose the privacy settings for your team (Private or Public). A Private team means only team owners can add members, while a Public team means anyone in your organization can join the Team.

Add members to your team by adding a name, email address, a distribution list, or a mail-enabled security group in the Add box. A team can have a maximum of 2,500 members from either your organization or external users through secure guest access.



For important meetings that need everyone’s presence, it is best to schedule them in advance. In this way, people can clear their schedules for the meeting, and sync it with their calendars.

To schedule lessons with TEAMS, you need to follow a few simple steps.

- Step 1: Select “Schedule a Meeting” (calendar icon) below the compose box.
- Step 2: Go to “Calendar” on the left pane and click on “New meeting,” which is located at the top right.
- Step 3: Once you’ve selected a time range in the calendar, a form will open to help you out.
- Step 4: Add a title for the meeting, invite participants and add other details. The Scheduling Assistant can help you check everyone’s availability.
- Step 5: Hit “Save” to complete the process. An invite will automatically be sent to each participant’s Outlook inbox

Finally, to start a chat, click on the Compose Box and start typing your message while in either the Activity, Chat, or Teams sections. Click the Send icon to post your message. Depending on the culture of your team, you can spice up your chats with emojis, giphys, or stickers. You will find a variety of options when you click these icons below the Compose Box.

WEBEX

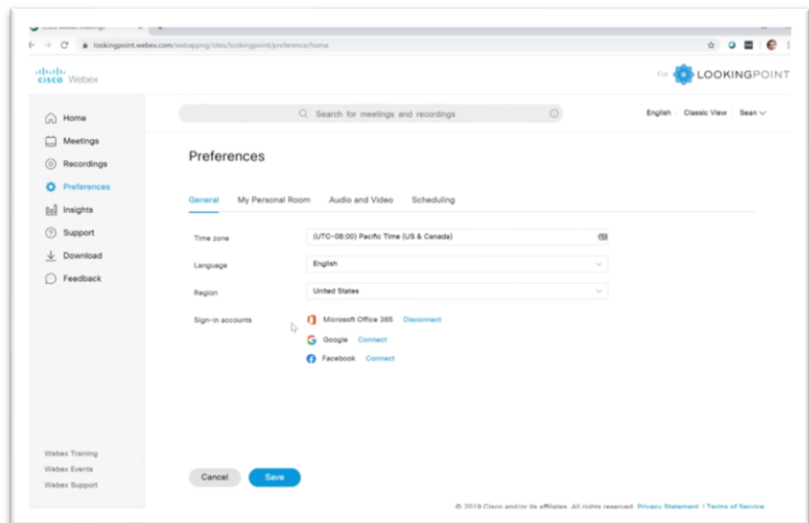
[Webex Classrooms](#) is a safe place where teachers can connect more naturally with students and parents, with automation allowing more time for teaching.

Many teachers are faced with administration-oriented systems that can be too rigid to facilitate communication with students and parents. With Webex Classrooms, teachers can set up lessons online, schedule virtual office hours, and automate note-taking and attendance. Students go to one place to connect, and view schedules, class records, notes and assignments, whether they are at home, on their mobile phones or on campus. At the same time, parents can stay involved more easily.

To plan your lesson, you should specify the Date, Time and Duration of the meeting. Setting duration for a meeting is for planning only as the meeting will continue until you end it.

You can enter the email addresses of people you want to invite or you can send the invite later.

Enter the Meeting Topic and Password. You can use the automatically generated password or create your own.



You will notice on top in the field your "Personal Room name". This is the name that participants will see when joining your room. Below is the personal room link. This is a link you can send out to participants that would like to join your personal room. All they would need to do is click the link, put in their first name and click join to join the meeting. They then would be able to meet you in your personal room.

Personal Room name:
Your Personal Room name must be between 1 and 128 characters

Personal Room link: <https://lookingpoint.webex.com/meet/webex>

Host PIN:
Your host PIN must be exactly 4 digits. It can't contain sequential digits, such as 1234, or repeat a digit 4 times, such as 1111.

You should think about how long your session should last and the best way to include everyone, in-person and/or remotely. You then need to send the invitation link to all the students you want to join the lesson. They can find the link in the in-app students' calendars.

An important tool is the possibility to upload material that will be used during the lesson in your "space" so that students will be able to read it and get ready to discuss the topic at the beginning of the lesson.



Reflect

Despite the platform you decide to use for your online lesson, you should think about how long your session should last and the best way to include everyone. Think also of the platform you feel more comfortable with. You should also ask the pupils if they already know some platform for the online teaching, to facilitate their access to the online lesson.

2.4. How to create digital resources and use interactive platforms (Bookwidgets, Worldwall, Liveworksheets, Canva, Animaker, Kahoot)



Abstract

Student participation and engagement is negatively correlated with online learning. Therefore, teachers have to strive to establish a virtual classroom that would captivate their students. This module presents the most useful and used tools to create attractive digital



*Widgets
Kahoot
Interactive worksheets
Animations
Quizzes*



Introduction

Authors: Sonsoles Jimenez Gonzalez, Sandra Ubeda

When we talk about digital resources, we are talking about images, documents, audio files, videos, or interactive resources. Sometimes there is a combination of them, like web pages or games. Creating these resources is difficult if we use professional tools to create them from zero. For example: if we need to create a poster, we can use Gimp or Inkscape or if we want to pay, we can use Photoshop or Illustrator. We need to learn how to use these professional tools and we need some concepts about graphic design if we want satisfactory results. Fortunately, nowadays, there are lots of applications that simplify this work for the most common use cases. They supply professional designed templates and graphic resources. The disadvantage of these programs is that you do not have total control and sometimes the results seem too similar. These tools are usually online, and you do not need to install any programs.

In this chapter, we are going to explore some of the many tools available.

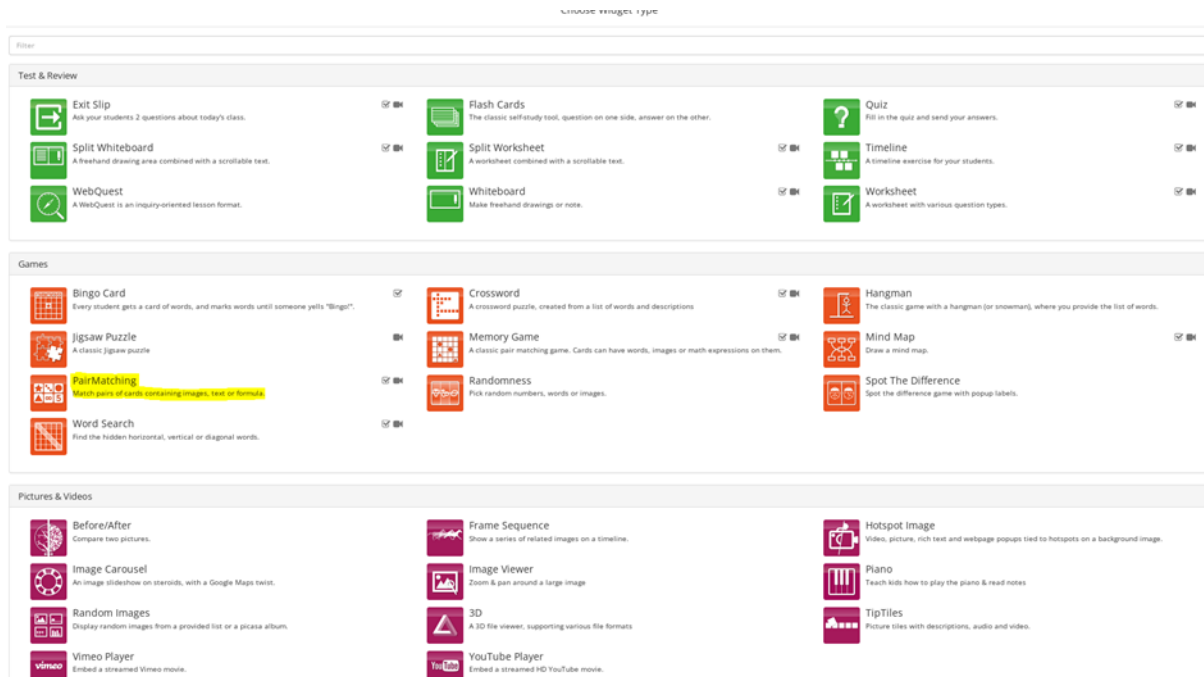
Bookwidgets

- URL: <https://www.bookwidgets.com/>
- Price: About 9€/month (for teachers). There are group discounts.
- Trial: 30 days free trial.

We can use this tool to create interactive exercises that are automatically graded. It offers lots of different so called “widgets”. There are categories like Tests, Games, Pictures & Videos, Math and others.

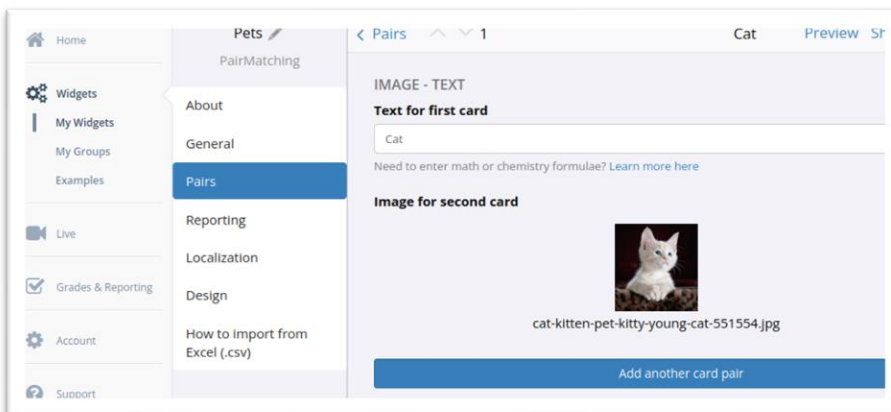
For this manual, we are going to create one widget from the beginning, the others have a similar process.

First, we must sign up. Then, click Widgets in Menu, click Create new Widget and select the type of widget we want to create.



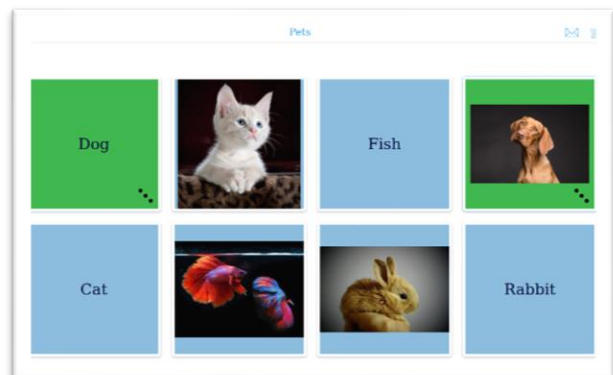
For this example, we selected the Pair Matching game. Bookwidges has some examples for inspiration.

First, we write a title and some options, and then we create the different pairs:



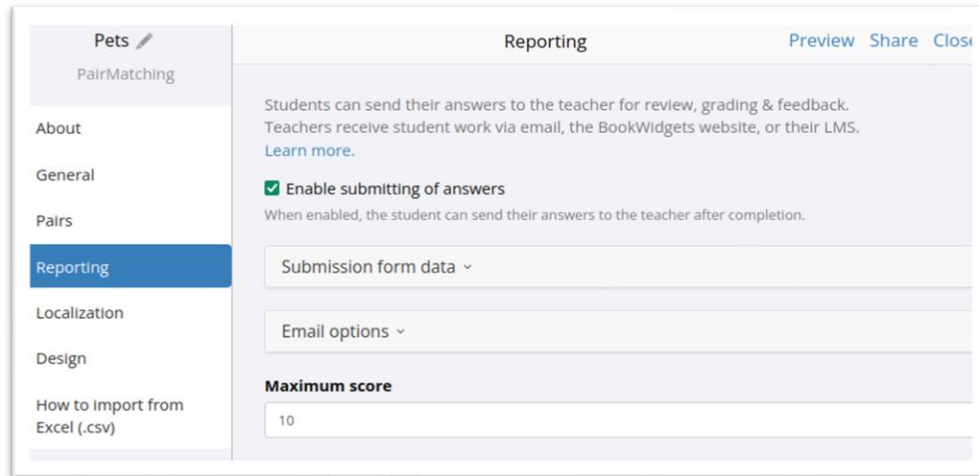
The pairs can have text or images. We can upload images or search for them on Google.

This is the result:



If we want to share the game with our students, we must click on the *Share* button and share the link by URL, Google Classroom, or QR Code, for example.

If we want to grade the Pair Matching game or make an exam, we must activate Submitting of answers in the *Reporting* section and configure the submission and email options:

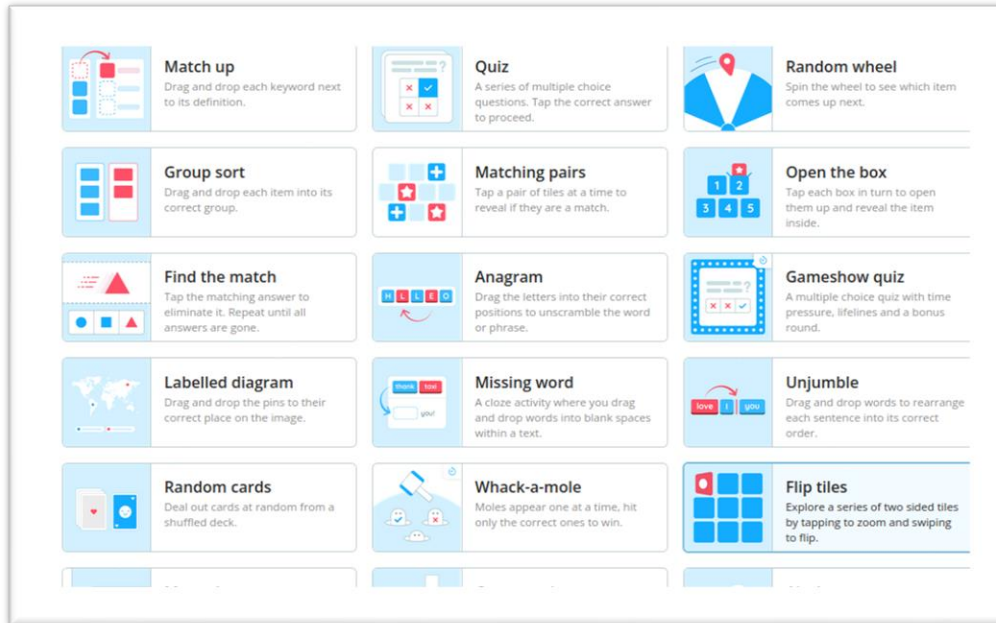


There are lots of different activities and options to share or grade with them. It is impossible to show everything; for this reason, the best thing to do is to sign up with the 30 free day trial, and use it for a while.

WordWall

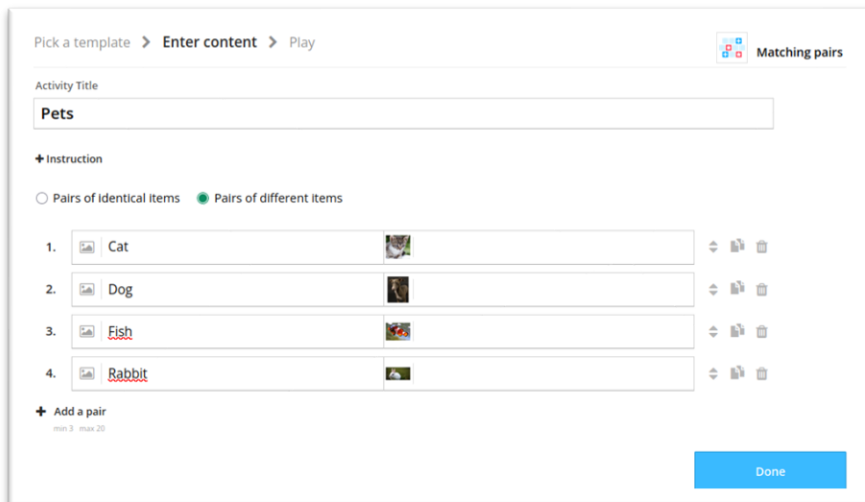
- URL: <https://wordwall.net/>
- Price: from 0 to 7,5€/month to create unlimited resources and professional templates
- Trial: Limited to 5 resources to create.

We can use this tool to create activities for the classroom. There are many diverse types of activities, as you can see in the picture:



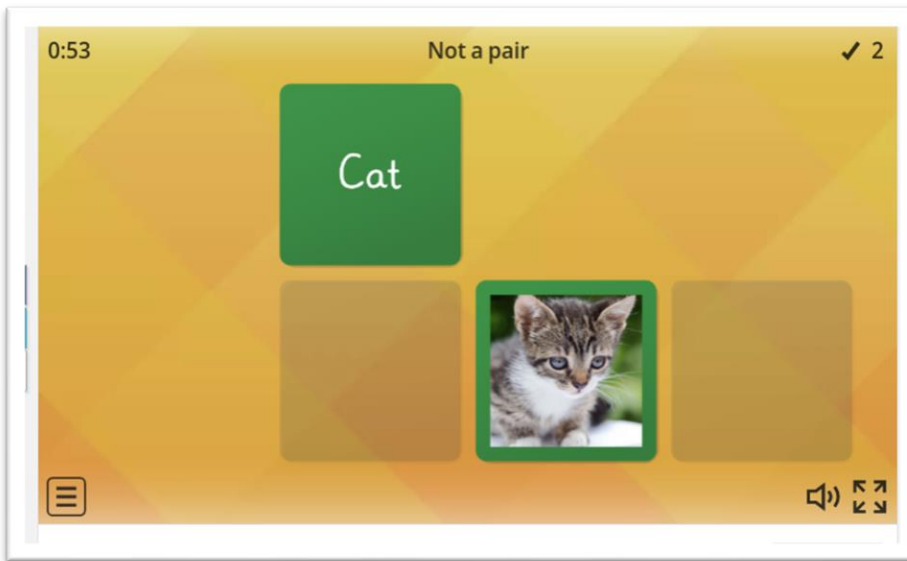
Some of them are simple games or tools to do other activities, like *Random wheel*, for example. Others are more like exercises.

We are going to do a *Matching Pairs* exercise to see how it works and what the results look like. When we click on it, we can write the title and, according to what we want, we can pair identical or different items. For this example, we selected *different* and started to create pairs:



We can add text and images. The images can be from our computer or you can search for them by using [Bing](#).

This is the result:



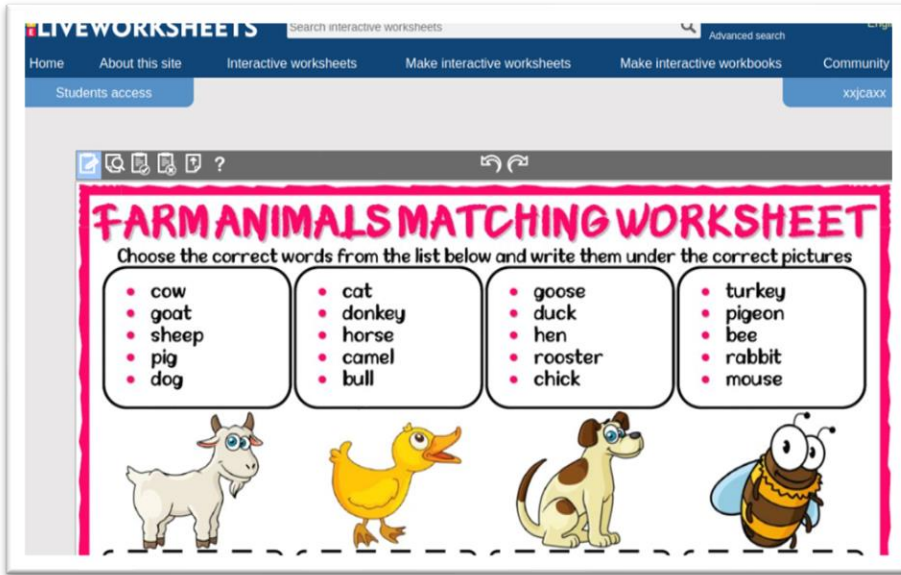
We can share it on social networks, as a link, or embed it in an educational application like [Moodle](#). If you want to grade it, there is a leader board with statistics. It is useful for gamification and self-evaluation.

Liveworksheets

- URL: <https://www.liveworksheets.com>
- Price: From 10€ to 200€ month. Multiple plans with limited options.
<https://www.liveworksheets.com/mysubscription/mysubscription.asp>
- Free: Limited to 30 private worksheets. Unlimited public worksheets. Some adds.

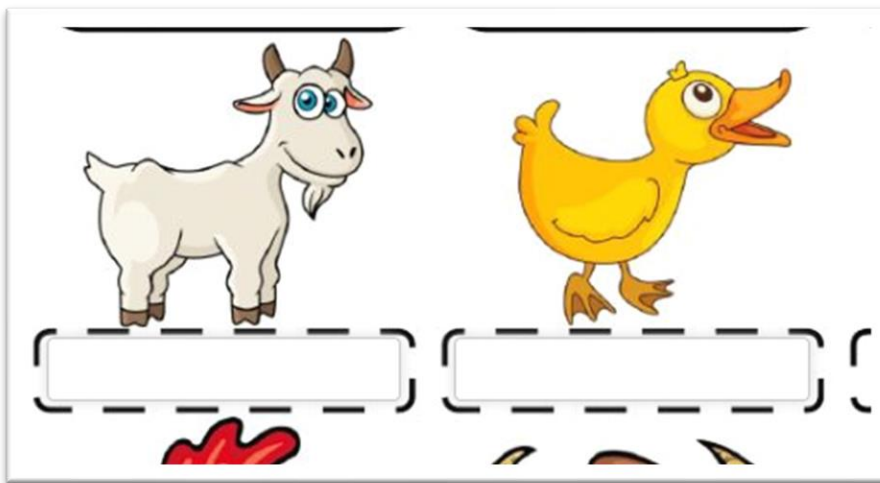
With this tool, we can create interactive worksheets. As they say, you can transform the traditional paper with exercises into online interactive and self-correction exercises. You can upload a PDF or similar with traditional exercises, and add some form inputs to make it interactive. It's a good choice if we have many printed exercises on paper and we want to scan them and transform them into digital exercises. We do not recommend starting to create exercises from zero, because you must do two tasks: 1. Write and export to PDF, and 2. Transform the PDF with this tool.

We must register as teachers. If we want to create a worksheet, we must go to *Make interactive Worksheets* and upload a PDF or a similar document.



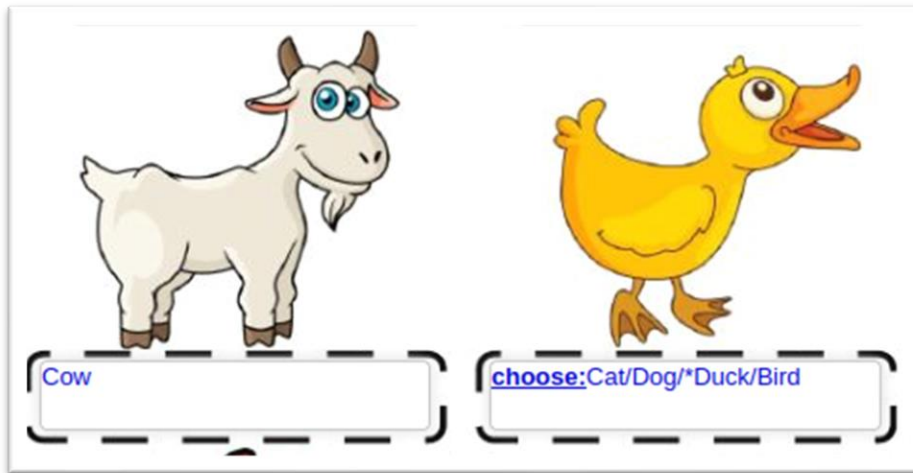
Once uploaded, we can add inputs. For every input, you can change the shape and enter the correct answer. For the answer, we can choose from *drop down*, *multiple choice*, *check boxes*, and more options. You need to learn the keywords for these options, but this is not difficult, and you can click the "?" button to see examples.

We are going to use a regular input and dropdown inputs. First, we must draw the text boxes.



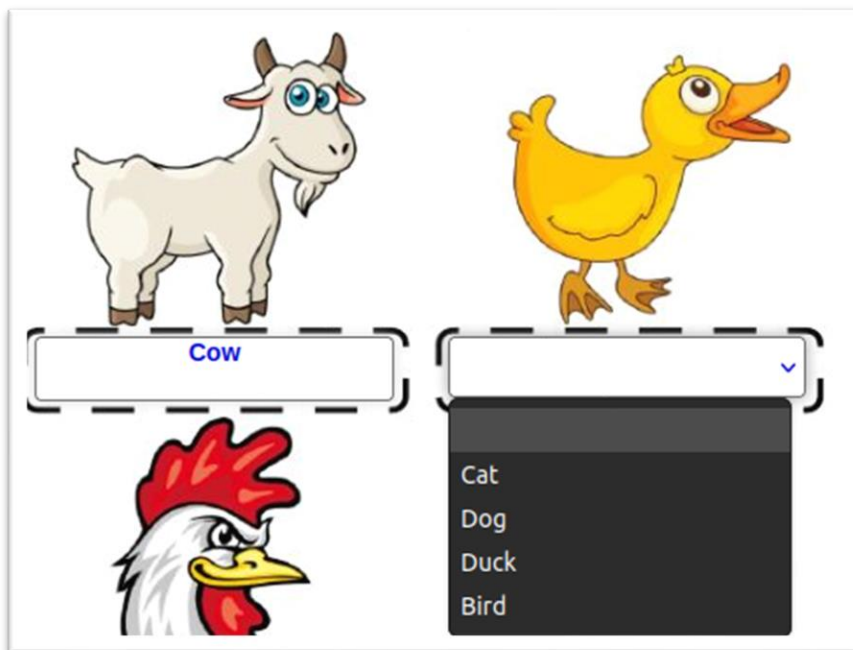
You can see in detail how the animal picture has a text box underneath, inside which we add the information.

Then, we have to put the correct answer in the text box. For the cow, there is one answer, and for the duck, there is a dropdown answer.



As you can see, we put an asterisk to select the correct answer. The other types of exercises have their own language. You can see examples in the documentation. When we fill in the entire document, we can save it as public or private and share the link with students.

This is the result:



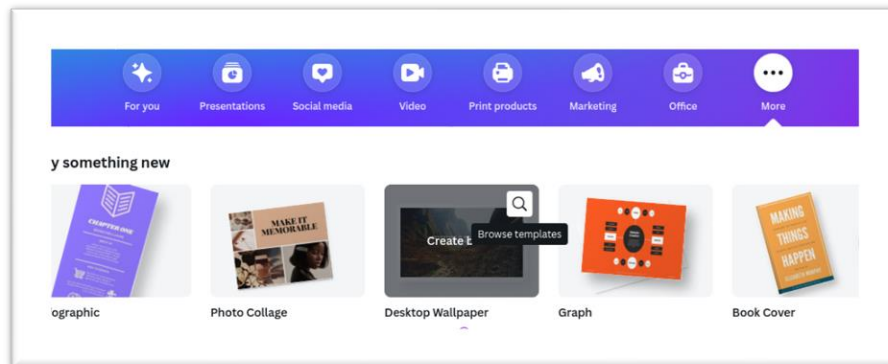
There are two ways of evaluation. The first is to do the exercises in a public worksheet and send the results via email. The second is to register the students and do the exercises with each name. This is the recommended option because the results of the first are available for only 30 days and it is more difficult to control.

Canva

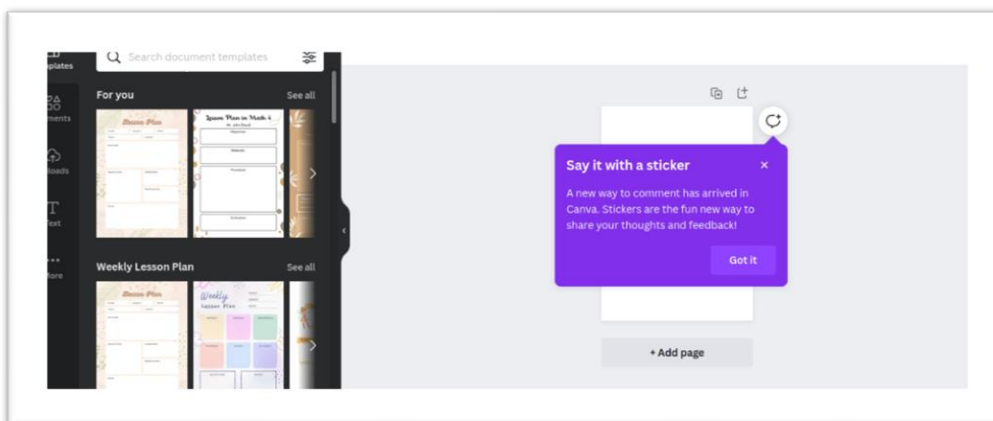
- URL: <https://www.canva.com/>
- Price:
 - Free: Limited templates and exports.
 - Pro: About 9.16€/month for 5 people. (There are promotions and educational plans)
- Trial: 30 days free trial for Professional plan.

This is one of the most famous applications in this list. It is not only an educational tool, but a powerful multimedia design tool for every purpose. Lots of people and organizations use it for making printable designs or social media resources. You can make videos, presentations, posters, logos, or infographics. Unlike Gimp, Inkscape, Photoshop, or Illustrator, you do not need to be an experienced designer, mostly because it has many professionally designed templates. In addition, it is very simple to use, and the application helps the user in the process. As a disadvantage, if you want total control of your design, this is not your tool.

When we sign up, we have access to a home page where we can manage our projects or create news. To create a new design, first we can select a template:



For this example, we are going to select a Lesson Plan. This is the first screen we can see:

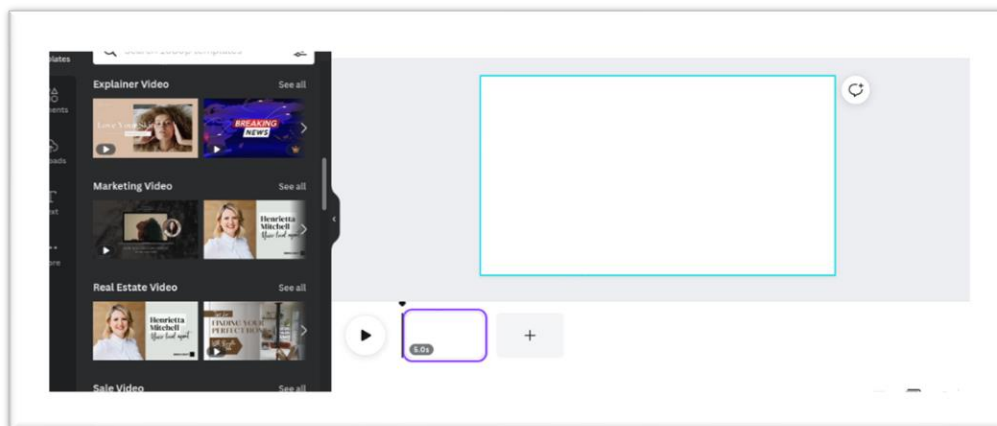


We can choose a template on the left side. Once selected, we can modify the template by adding more elements:



There are many designed elements. All are modern and professional. For this reason, it's easy to make good-looking designs for posters, family communications, activities, or social media.

It's easy to make a video presentation too. You have many templates and elements, and you can upload your media files too:



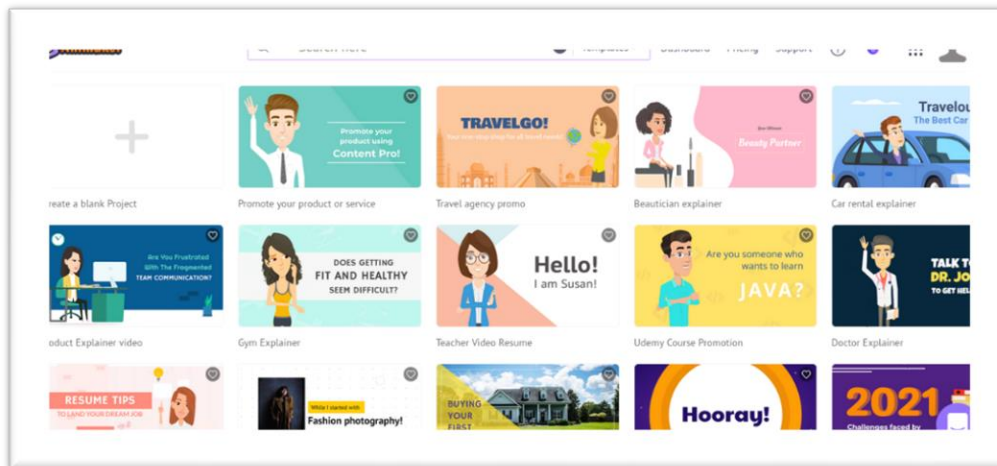
Animaker

- URL: <https://www.animaker.com/>
- Price: Since 10€ / month to 49€ / month.
- Trial: Limited options, videos with watermark, less resolution.

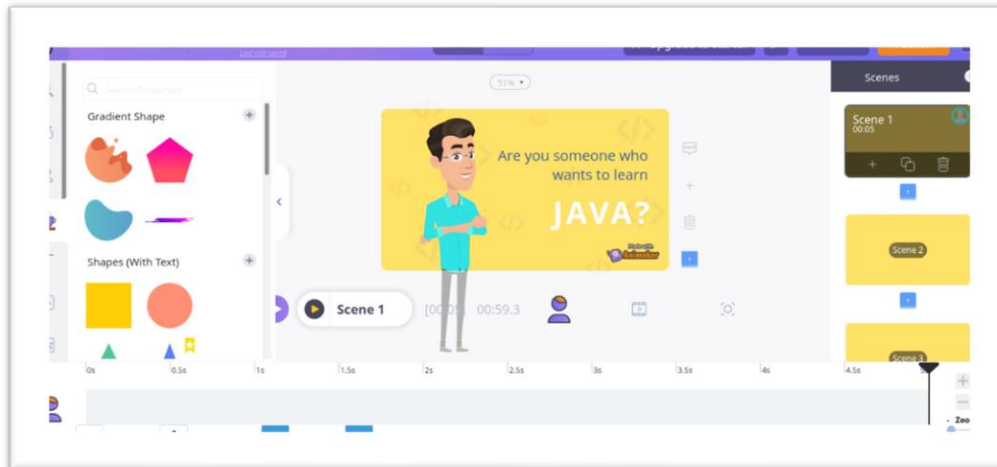
Animaker is a tool for creating videos with animations or live action. It simplifies video editing and the creation of cartoon-like animations and has many templates.

It is useful for the teacher to create presentations or videos to share with families on social media. For students, it is useful too, because they can create a video as a complement to an assignment about some topic.

We can sign up free and explore the different templates it has to start a project. In this example, we are going to start a project for an educational video. Firstly, we chose the template:



We chose one, and we can see the video editor interface:

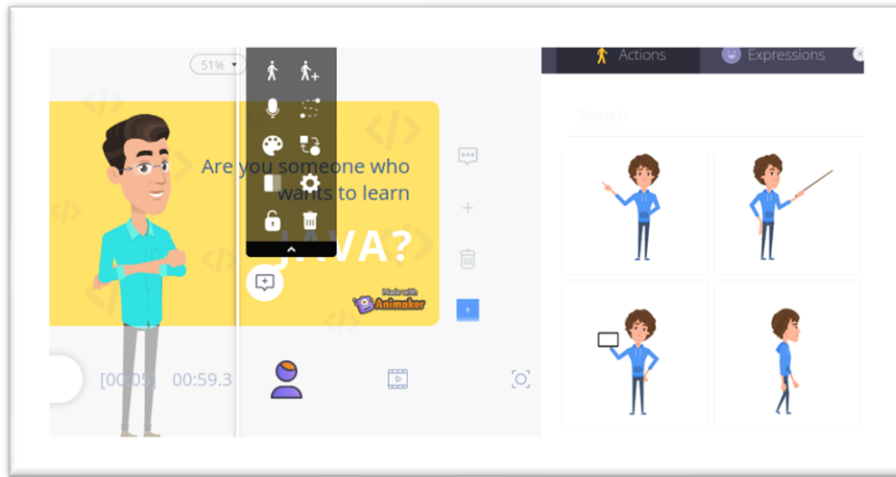


One video is divided into scenes, and you can manage them with the column on the right. The column on the left is to add videos, characters, shapes, text, images or backgrounds.

You can select the elements of the video, such as a vector editor program, and change their position, size, colours, and animation to enter the video, the time it exists in the video, and much more.

At the bottom, there is a timeline with the time of the scene and the start of the animations.

If you select a character, you can use one of the many pre-animated gestures:



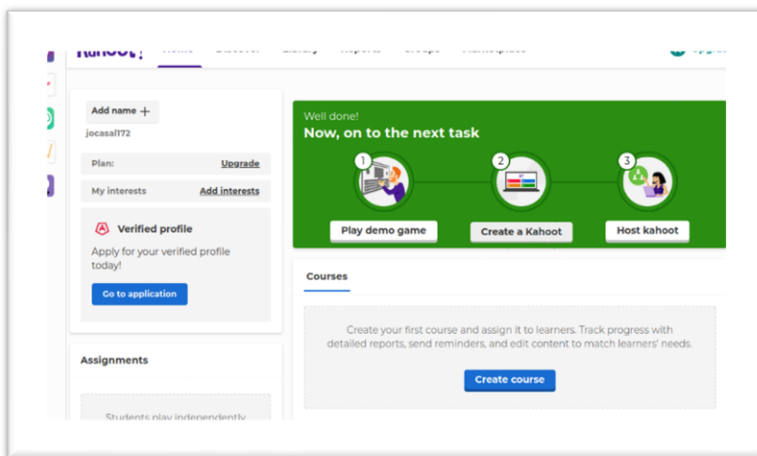
It is very difficult to make animations with these applications because it is a lot of work, but it is easier if the characters and pre-animated gestures are sufficient for you.

Kahoot

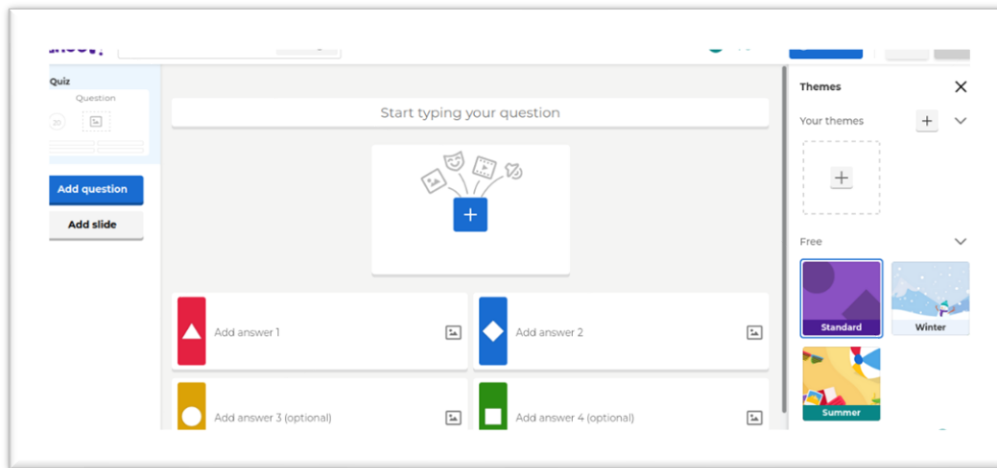
- URL: <https://kahoot.it/>
- Price: From 3€/month to 9€/month
- Trial: Limited teams, players and options.

This is one of the most famous educational applications. A Kahoot is a game of questions that all students can play on their computer or mobile phone at the same time. It is a competition, and it can be graded too. It can be used for gamification in class.

We have to register as a teacher and then create a Kahoot for our students. This is the dashboard page:

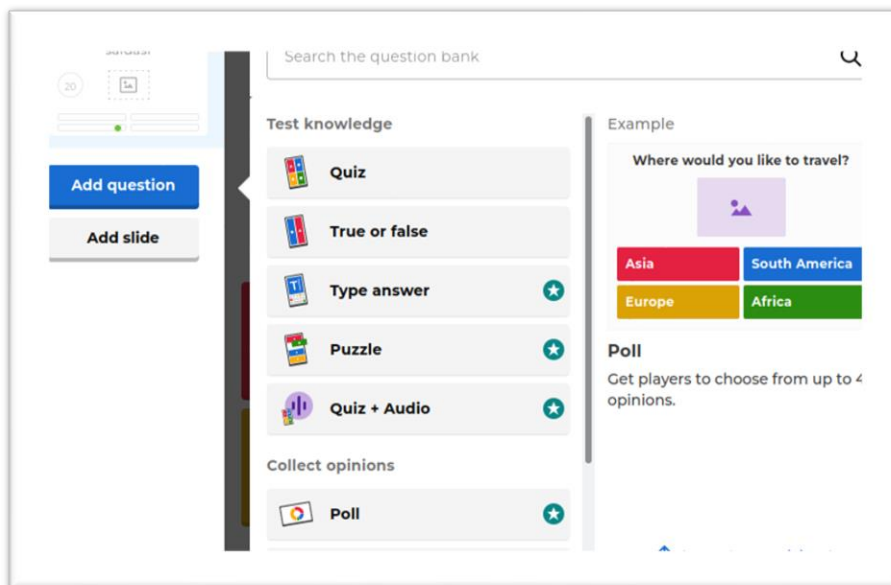


We have to click to create a Kahoot. We are going to create a Questionnaire from zero. This is the editor:



We can write the questions and then the answers. One of them has to be correct. We can change the background and images.

The questions can be of different forms: quizzes, true/false statements, written answers, puzzles. Some types are for premium accounts:



When we finish creating all questions, we can save the Kahoot and use it. We can share the link by social networks or get the link to put it in educational platforms like Moodle.

If we want to play it, we have two options: Start a live Kahoot, or assign it to participants.

The first choice is for face-to-face classes. When it starts, you will see a PIN and a QR code on the screen. Students can put the PIN on the Kahoot web, or scan the QR code, if they prefer to do it by mobile phone. With this choice, students have the projector in the classroom to see the game on the whole and use their screens to answer the questions.

The second choice is for non-presential classes. You select time limits and share the link with students. They can play the game when they want, before the time runs out.



Reflect

The most challenging aspect of teaching online in a virtual classroom is getting acclimated to it. Once you have the tools you need to be effective and entertaining, each class becomes progressively simpler.

3. Teacher-Student-Parent cooperation

3.1 Online learning is not an enemy. Rules for online learning for small age children



Abstract

Whether in the classroom or at home, children need boundaries and set rules in order to adapt and behave properly. Creating and following rules helps children understand what is expected of them and that inappropriate behaviour has consequences.



*Rules
Procedures
Consequences
Responsibilities
Healthy learning environment*

Authors: Merve Öztemir, Tevfik Sezgin Akan, Samet Başkonuş



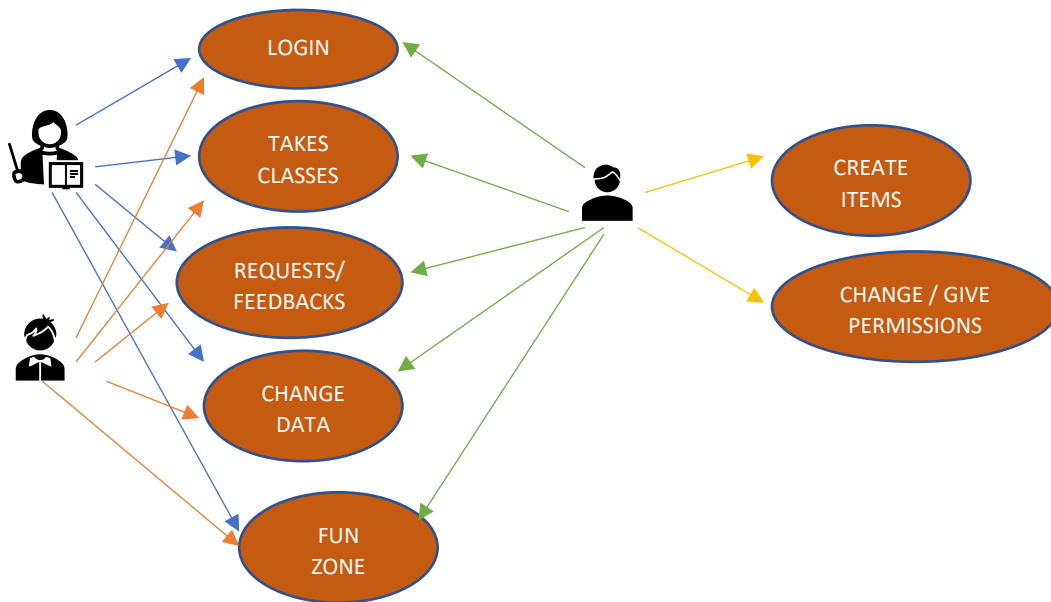
Introduction

Since there are many children in a classroom and often only one teacher, it is especially important to create rules together and democratically in a way that children can understand.

In addition, it is evident that preschool children have limited experience with technological learning tools and that they do not use these tools independently. Children also tend to encounter problems with self-management, motivation and understanding the educational material without the help of the educator. Therefore, family involvement inevitably comes to light for preschool children to participate in the online education process independently. Families are of critical importance, especially in the online education process, to ensure harmony between home and school and to minimize the negative effects of online education.



It is important for kindergarten teachers to see their students' parents as partners when children have to attend classes from home, as we have experienced during the pandemic process. Most children this age cannot enter an online classroom without assistance. But most can learn to turn their cameras on and off and mute their own sound once they're used to using Zoom or Google Meet. In fact, after a while, they become able to use many features. Therefore, families are excellent allies and can support you by expanding children's learning at home. However, we should not forget that families have responsibilities other than supporting our studies.



As seen in the diagram above, the online learning process appears as a systematic process and set of rules. Within these general rules, it should not be forgotten how much children need rules. As we can create rules similar to our existing rules in the classroom, it is inevitable that we need to create a different set of rules so that we can conduct online classes in a healthy way. The rules that will be mentioned below may vary and teachers can make current additions to these rules. Online learning is not our enemy, on the contrary, it is a magical instrument for us when our rules are formed.

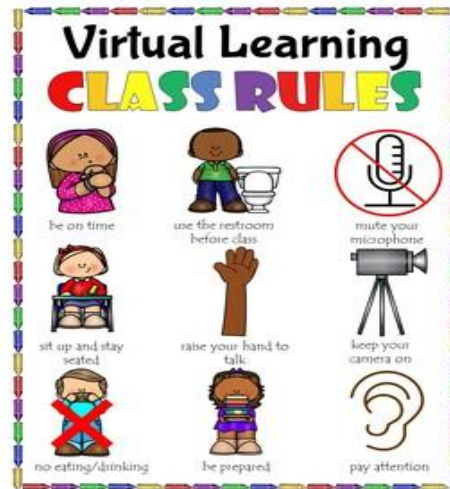
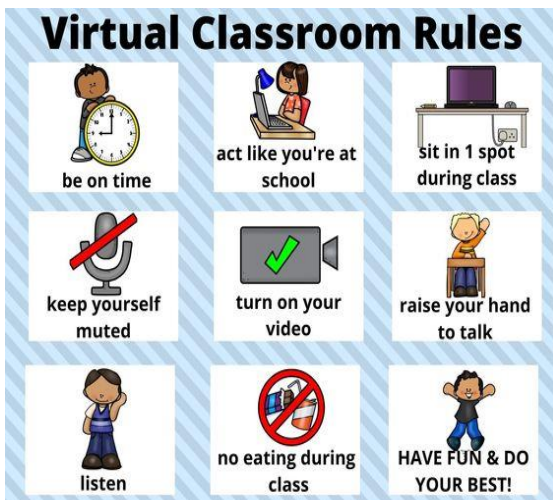
Online Classroom Rules for Your Virtual Classroom

Be on Time for Class

One of the most important online classroom rules is to be on time for class. Students may feel a little more relaxed or may sleep in a little later while learning from home, but being late for class can be very disruptive to online classes. Be sure to tell students to be at their desks and logged in 5 minutes before class starts so they are ready to start the class on time.

Dress Appropriately

A virtual classroom is still a classroom and so students, and teachers should dress just as they would when attending school. Be sure to tell students to dress appropriately and things like pyjamas, offensive t-shirts etc. are not allowed in the online classroom.



Choose Your Study Space

The place where students' desks/laptops should be while learning online is very important. Students should set up their study space in a quiet place away from distractions. For example, students should not place their laptop in a place where their parents and other family members may be walking around and talking in the background. This can be very distracting for all students in a virtual classroom.

Turn On Your Camera

The most important reason why we ask students to turn on their cameras at the beginning of the lesson; to give their minds and attention to that lesson. In order to achieve this, it is primarily to ensure that children feel good and safe. Here are strategies that can be used to encourage students to turn on their cameras (each teacher can adapt these strategies to their age group): [Please click for detail](#). In addition, knowing [the reasons](#) why students keep their webcams off during online classes will also be helpful in determining strategies. Also, you can play [games](#) from Zoom.

No Eating or Drinking

Just like in the normal classroom, eating and drinking should be prohibited in the online classroom. Students may be tempted to roll out of bed and eat their breakfast during class, but this can be very distracting for students. Also, students are not going to be able to talk and participate if they've got a mouth full of cereal.

One at a Time/Keep Yourself Muted

An online class can get very noisy, very fast. Especially if you are teaching kids online. If everyone is talking at once, it is very hard to hear and to be heard by other students. To make sure everyone can participate and be heard, tell students that they should speak one at a time, and if another student is talking, they should listen. If necessary, you can ask students to mute their microphones until it is their time to speak. Alternatively, as a host, you may be able to mute participants' microphones until it's their turn to speak. If you're using Zoom, you can find out how to do this [here](#). Or, if you are on Google Meet, you can click [here](#). You should also mute your own microphone when you're not speaking. When you're quietly observing students, for example, mute your microphone and unmute it when you want to intervene. Another benefit to muting students is that it gives centre stage to a single student who's speaking, and prevents interruptions. Muting is especially necessary for large classrooms. In small breakout sessions of up to five or six people, however, leaving microphones on can actually help a conversation flow naturally.

Be Prepared

The same as in regular classroom lessons, students need to come to class prepared when learning online. Students should be encouraged to have activity books, pens and paper, crayons, glue, scissors and similar materials within their reach. For this, [a storage](#) can be used for their materials in the area where they attend the fixed lesson.

No Phones or Toys during Class

Students know that the teacher cannot see them fully during online class, so they may be tempted to use their phone or play with another toy or gadget off-camera. Be sure to set the online classroom rule that no phones are allowed in class or any other toys or devices that may be a distraction.

Raise Your Hand

When teaching in a normal classroom, you probably ask your students to raise their hand when they want to speak, right? You can make this a rule for your online classroom, too. There are a number of ways you can do this. You can simply ask students to actually raise their hand, but this is a little difficult to see when teaching online, especially if you have many students. If you're using Zoom, there's actually a 'raise your hand' function. [Here](#) is a useful guide on how to do this on Zoom.

Respect and Encourage Each Other

Switching from learning in a classroom to virtual learning can be stressful for students which can have a big impact on motivation. Make it an online classroom rule for students to listen to, respect, and encourage other students in the class. For example, if someone has a good answer or idea, students can share a fun emoticon to cheer on their peers.

Have Fun

Teaching online is a fantastic opportunity to play lots of online games that you might not get a chance to play in a normal classroom. Make it an online classroom rule to play and have fun in each class. This is especially important if teaching children, as they learn best when their having fun. For inspiration for your next online classroom game, check out posts on [Fun Virtual Classroom Games](#) and [Fun Online Drawing Games](#).

Examples of games and activities for teachers to help the children internalize the rules

It can become a battleground as the virtual classroom rules are created. It is really important for teachers to make use of games while deciding the rules mentioned above together with children. Pre-schoolers in particular lose their attention even at the best of times; therefore, having a rich list of online classroom games will make our job much easier. You can create a game pool by adding creative activities to the games listed below.

Rule Makers

At the beginning, divide the children into groups. Ask the children what rules they think will help make the classroom a good environment for learning, and let them brainstorm a list of rules. Let each group create a poster and present their rules to the class. Then discuss the rules and create a list of rules for the

class. Discuss the consequences of breaking the rules and include them in the poster. Ask parents to print this poster and invite children to sign the classroom rules poster.

Rule Police

Choose a pair of children who will be the rule police. Children will check each other and give each other small feedback in a respectful manner at the end of each activity. At the end of a week, they can write a report about their matched friends with their families as the rule police. Small rewards can be prepared for children who adopt and comply with the rules. It can be continued by changing the pairs every week.

Mystery Question

At the beginning of the school year, students have questions about classroom procedures. Prepare questions about situations that may disturb them in online classes, where they can provide solutions. For example; "There is a lot of noise from one of your friends while you are talking? Does it bother you? What can she/he do in this situation?". Put all the questions in a hat. For each child, pull a question out of the hat and ask that child the question. Then discuss the answer with the whole class and together create a set of class rules.

Role Playing

We can get support from families during this event. Divide students into groups. Distribute the groups in the rooms. Indicate that they have 5-10 minutes. On that day, maybe an hourglass may be requested before the lesson. Give each group a class rule and ask students to demonstrate or animate what happens when it is not followed. Have other students guess the rule, and then discuss why this rule is important.

Mystery Rule

Write a rule at the beginning of the week and don't tell the kids which rule it is. If the class does not break the rule more than three times during the week, they will receive an online sticker. Every time the class gets 10 [stickers](#), they can choose a class reward. They can determine the awards as a class. For example, they can have breakfast, movie time or a party during a lesson together online. At the end of each week, students learn what the mystery rule is. For convenience, you can keep a chart listing the mysterious rules.

Spin the Wheel

[Spinner wheels](#) are hugely versatile tools and can actually be used for many types of online classroom games. By using this tool, you can prepare competitive games and some activities related to the rules.

Picture Zoom

Prepare the images related to the rules as a printout. Present a fully zoomed image to the screen. Be sure to leave out a few fine details as students will have to guess what the picture is. After getting the answers and comments, open the picture. You can also turn this game into an event. Ask the children to make pictures of the rules you have set. Then, give the children a chance to take turns zooming in their pictures and guessing the rule drawn by their friend.

Taboo

In this game that requires family participation, class rules and taboo cards are prepared. The teacher sends the cards to the parents' WhatsApp accounts or e-mails in advance. Each parent begins to tell the other children and their parents about the cards that came out to them. The game is continued in line with the interests of the children.

Pictionary

Simply start drawing a target word or rule on your virtual whiteboard and have the kids guess what it is. The first student to guess correctly gets a point. Before playing this game, you can talk about the [logo](#) related to the images above and ask them to find them by drawing them. You can learn more about the different ways to play [Pictionary over Zoom](#).

Bunny Ears

[Bunny ears](#) is prepared with the children. The teacher chats with the children about why they prepared the ears. They are told that when they wear this, they must listen to the teacher very well with their long and big ears. They carry this with them every lesson. When the teacher puts on their ears, the children also put on their ears and listen to the teacher silently. Only the teacher can wear the ears in subsequent lessons.

Watch and Find

The online classroom rules are distributed to the parents and they are asked to prepare a drama video with their children. Then they watch the videos in the online lesson and they can try to find out which rule it is about.

The Magic of Songs

We can benefit from music and songs while creating or learning the rules. It will even be very useful for children's physical activity requirements (dancing with the songs). First, you can listen to [sample songs](#) about the classroom rules. Then, you can encourage them to create their own songs based on your own online classroom rules you have created.



Reflect

Online education is a wonderful alternative for education since it provides convenience, lower prices, and a customized experience. Moreover, it offers a variety of advantages to students, including accessibility, opportunity to adopt new technology, and the promotion of autonomous, self-directed learning.

3.2. Digital threats and online safety skills



Abstract

For young children, being online provides numerous benefits, including the opportunity to express their creativity, improve their language skills, solve problems, think critically, and develop relationships. However, there are risks associated with young children using connected devices unsupervised or for extended periods of time.



*Content risks
Conduct risks
Cyberbullying
Parental control
Safety*

Authors: Mihaela Vatavu, Andreea Ionel, Elza Gheorghiu, Cristian Timofticiuc, Stefan Colibaba



Safety risks for pre-schoolers in online learning

Education, child protection, and child rights advocates believe schools are critical for not only educating but also protecting children. In times of crisis, schools assist children and families in re-establishing normalcy by providing predictability or routine. Schools bring children's needs to light and contribute to the formation of a protective layer of caring adults around them.

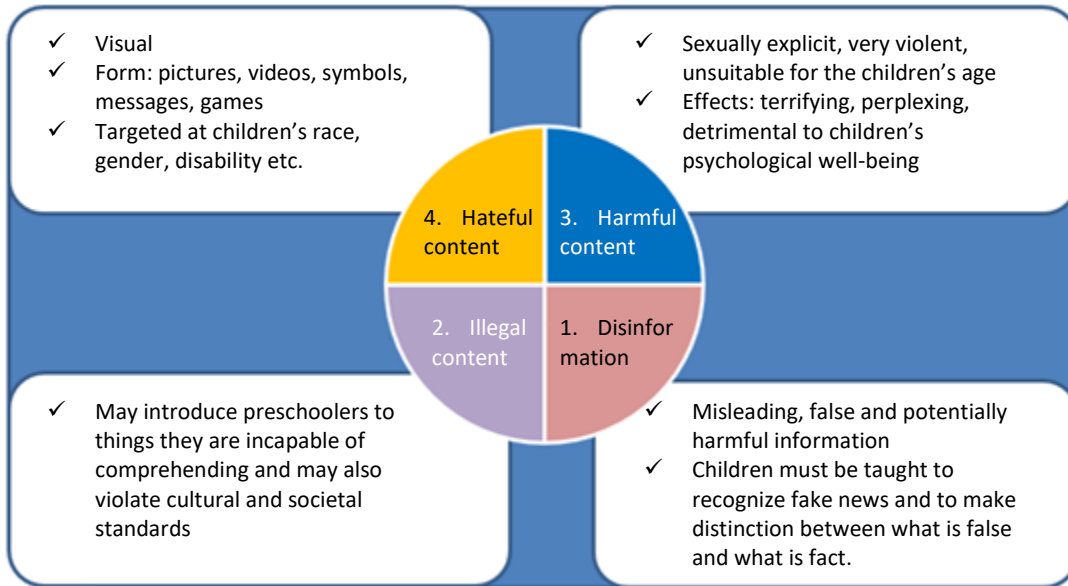
Schools track attendance and teachers monitor children's physical and emotional well-being in collaboration with families to keep children safe.

There are some safety risks for pre-schoolers online, although they are typically not as numerous as for older children. This is because they are less likely to be independent internet users.

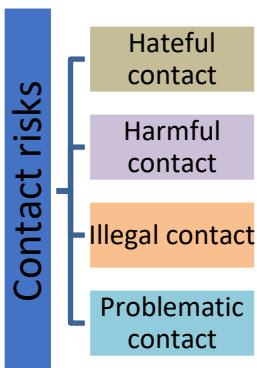
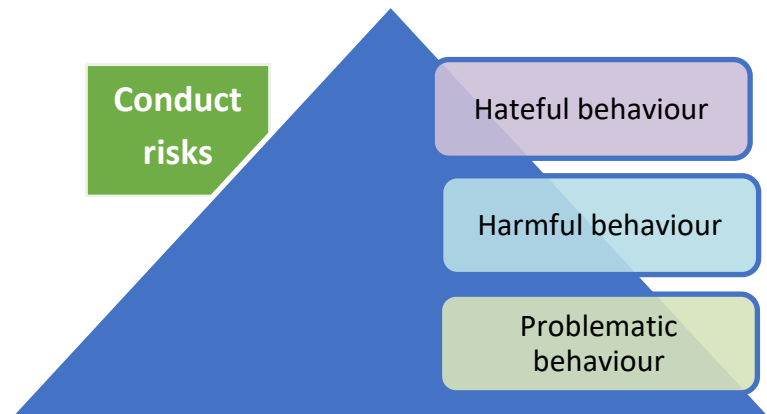
By implementing some simple internet safety measures, we can safeguard our children against risky or inappropriate content and activities. And since children get the most out of their online experience, which offers them the opportunity to learn, explore, teachers should be creative, and connect with family and friends.

For pre-schoolers, these are the most important types of online safety risks:

Content risks: these are risks associated with content that may be disturbing, vulgar, or otherwise unsettling to youngsters.



Conduct risks: these are risks associated with children acting in ways that might be harmful to others. The best example is *cyberbullying*.



Contact risks: these are dangers associated with children who encounter strangers. For instance, a youngster may utilize a communication app to communicate with a stranger.

Schools have a *twofold duty for e-safety*: to guarantee that the school's online policies protect children, and to educate them about online safety both in and out of school. In this respect, teachers and parents/guardians should adopt the following conduct:

Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● impose behavioural standards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● establish disciplinary repercussions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● maintain individual connections with students
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● actively monitor online interactions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● explicitly establish expectations for virtual classroom involvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● make students aware of online interaction norms, such as being polite to one another and on the lookout for potentially hazardous behaviour
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop connections with their pupils and earn their trust in order to be notified of and receive reports of cyberbullying

Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● actively supervise their children's Internet activities at home, including the websites they visit, the messages they receive, and the content they publish.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● create limits for internet usage
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● address online hazards openly
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● be on the lookout for symptoms of cyberbullying
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● educate children on how, when, and where to use educational platforms and social media at home can reduce the danger of cyberbullying
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● restrict their children's screen time and keep them informed about the online class schedule
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ascertain that children's devices are updated with the latest software and antivirus programs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● engage in open dialogue with children about how and with whom they communicate online
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● be on the lookout for signs of distress in children that may emerge as a result of their online activity

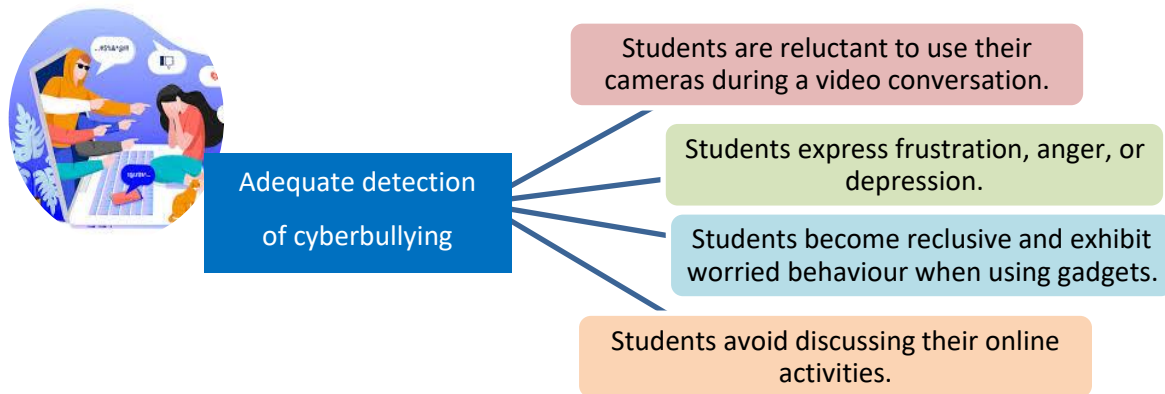
Online safety skills for digital threats

a. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is aggressive conduct that an individual or group engages in with the goal of causing harm to another. People use modern information and communication technologies, such as text messages, phone calls, email, social media, and other forms of communication, to frequently and purposefully ridicule, humiliate, threaten, or harass those who are unable to defend themselves.

There are different reasons why a child is bullied: looks, speech, or lack of coping methods. Recent research indicates that in many preschool classes, aggressive behaviour occurs reasonably regularly. While the presentation of relational aggressiveness in preschool children is comparable to that of school-aged children in many respects, it also includes distinctive characteristics. For instance, when young students participate in relationally hostile behaviour, they often do so in straightforward ways that entail a present circumstance or provocation, such as informing a peer that she/he will not be a peer's buddy unless the peer gives her/him a crayon. As a result, preschool may be the first setting outside of the family in which children's impairments in social relationships with peers may be observed and evaluated largely by adults and experts. Thus, identifying and resolving these issues early on prevents their escalation in later years and minimizes their detrimental influence on children's social and emotional development while promoting their success.

The first step in preventing dangerous classroom conduct is adequate detection. It is critical to monitor any changes in student participation or conduct on an individual basis.



While recognizing warning indicators is vital for eradicating cyberbullying in the virtual classroom, **prevention** is also necessary. This might begin by cultivating a good attitude and instituting policies that place a premium on student safety online.

Parents and teachers can fight together against cyberbullying by adhering to the following recommendations:

- Demonstrate to the children how to be polite and courteous online and model appropriate device use and online sharing behaviours.
- Encourage pro-social behaviour online
- Encourage youngsters to be courteous and kind online by explaining that being polite online contributes to everyone having a wonderful time. Discuss with pre-schoolers the dangers of cyberbullying as they grow older and assure them that you are always there if someone is unpleasant to them online.
- Exhibit positive behaviour when it comes to technology use.
- Young children observe and learn from their parents when they take up their phones and focus on the screen. Even very young infants are aware of the screens in their environment and the attention and time their parents give to them. By proving that they can put down their phones

and focus entirely on their kids, parents set an extremely significant example for their children, regardless of their age.

Built-in anti-bullying tools

Numerous systems, such as [Google for Education](#), include tools and features that help prevent harmful online behaviour and promote digital citizenship.



Google Workspace for Education

Transform how educators and students learn, work, and innovate together with free, secure tools from Google Workspace for Education.
 Explore Google Workspace for Education

[Google](#) also offers classroom-based internet safety initiatives, such as the [Be Internet Awesome](#) game. This interactive game teaches children the value of online safety and teaches them how to collaborate with their classmates to resist bullying, thwart hackers, and develop responsible behaviours.



[GoGuardian](#) is another popular remote education tool that places a premium on internet safety. [GoGuardian Admin](#), its web filter, enables instructors to monitor and manage any device connected to their networks. Teachers may ban objectionable comments, keywords, live conversations, and whole video categories on YouTube using the filtering settings. Additionally, it has a parent reporting tool that enables teachers to communicate directly with parents or guardians about student activity.







More resources on cyberbullying for teachers: <https://cyberbullying.org/resources/educators> and parents: <https://cyberbullying.org/resources/parents>.

b. Content control

As teachers, educators, and parents, one of our primary responsibilities is to ensure that our students and children use the Internet in appropriate, safe, and secure ways. The most effective approach to do this is via knowledge and practice. To begin, two critical theoretical ideas are necessary: digital literacy and digital citizenship. Understanding and imparting these ideas to pupils will undoubtedly provide them with the necessary knowledge and know-how to assist them in navigating the web safely and effectively.

Apart from developing the necessary digital literacy skills, children's online safety may be improved by curating their websites and digital platforms that provide kid-friendly material. Some of the top search engines optimized for young learners are as follows:


Search engine	Description	Image
Kiddle	A safe, visual search engine for kids powered by Google. Parental controls on Kiddle include keyword and site blocking for further search safety.	
Kidtopia	A Google custom student safe search engine for preschool and elementary students, indexing only educator-approved websites.	
Kido'z	A password-protected, self-contained browser that can be downloaded and installed for free. When opened, Kido'z takes over the entire screen, blocking your child from accessing any inappropriate content while offering a variety of kid-safe sites, games, videos, and other entertainment options.	
KidsSearch	A Safe Search Engine for children which uses Google's Safe Search technology and advanced filtering tools on web content.	



Reflect


...Our children are not objects of other people's experience, and they should be left alone to develop their own imaginations and enjoy their childhood. Because the online world is rife with abusers, we must collaborate to ensure that the internet is secure for children.....

3.3 How to involve parents in the online process of their children



Abstract

The Coronavirus forced many parents to assume the role of managing the education of their young children. At any age, parents act as coaches for their children, guiding them through the learning process, and they can also play a critical role in their children’s online education.



KEY WORDS

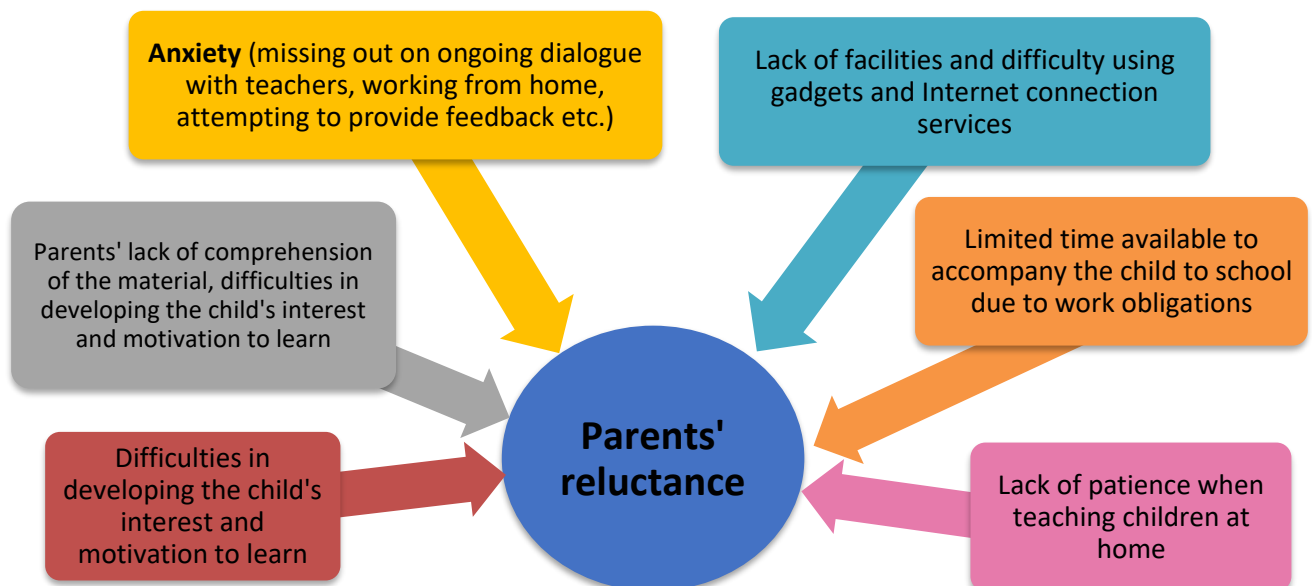
- Motivation
- Maintaining routines
- Guidance
- Supervision
- Encouragement

Authors: Alla Stan, Simona Danila



A. Parents’ reluctance regarding online learning

Parents had their objective reasons to reject online learning, related to the deficiency of it, their children’s insufficient self-regulation, and most importantly, the parent’s lack of time and professional ability to support their offspring’s online learning. Either it is performed in a synchronous or asynchronous environment, online learning has been growing in the past two years. However, parents’ beliefs and attitudes related to online learning can vary.





B. Benefits of parental involvement in the online learning

Benefit	Description
Parents may augment their children's online education	Parents are not expected to be full-time instructors or subject matter experts in their children's education. However, they can contribute to their children's online education through hands-on activities such as reading books, playing with clay or building blocks, and sketching, as well as language development through conversation.
Parental participation and student performance are strongly correlated	This relationship is critical in the age of virtual education. When children are aware that their teachers are not present to supervise them, they may be inattentive during virtual sessions. However, if parents study online with their children, their physical presence can make a significant effect.
Parents may encourage and urge their children to exhibit proper etiquette and discipline in front of their teachers	If the children are having difficulty comprehending something in the online class or are afraid to ask a question during the course, he or she may seek the parents/caregivers 'assistance in order to have a firm grasp on the subject. Parents can also encourage them to address their concerns during class. The parent's presence will instil confidence in the youngster, enabling him or her to pay attention during the study.
Parental support contribute to their children developing of a more positive attitude and self-confidence	The children's self-confidence and positive attitude is manifested by placing a premium on their academic accomplishment and taking ownership of their school performance.
Parents contribute to developing relationships with teachers.	Parents' participation in virtual online classrooms for children will assist them in developing relationships with teachers. If the parents have any questions about the timetable or tasks, they may inquire once the study is complete. Similarly, because the parents are there when their children are studying online, teachers may rely on parents to offer vital information.
Parents' participation in the online classes for children ends up helping the parents as well	Parents, in turn, acquire confidence in their interactions with instructors and their child's confidence grows. They perceive themselves to be better competent of supporting their children with their schoolwork. It enables them to continue their education alongside their children.




C. The parents' roles in the online education

Numerous parents have been compelled to alter their engagement style and extent as a result of the disruption produced by COVID-19; the abrupt move to online learning has increased parental involvement to previously unheard of levels. While online education is similar to traditional schooling in terms of curriculum, the learning environment is drastically different.

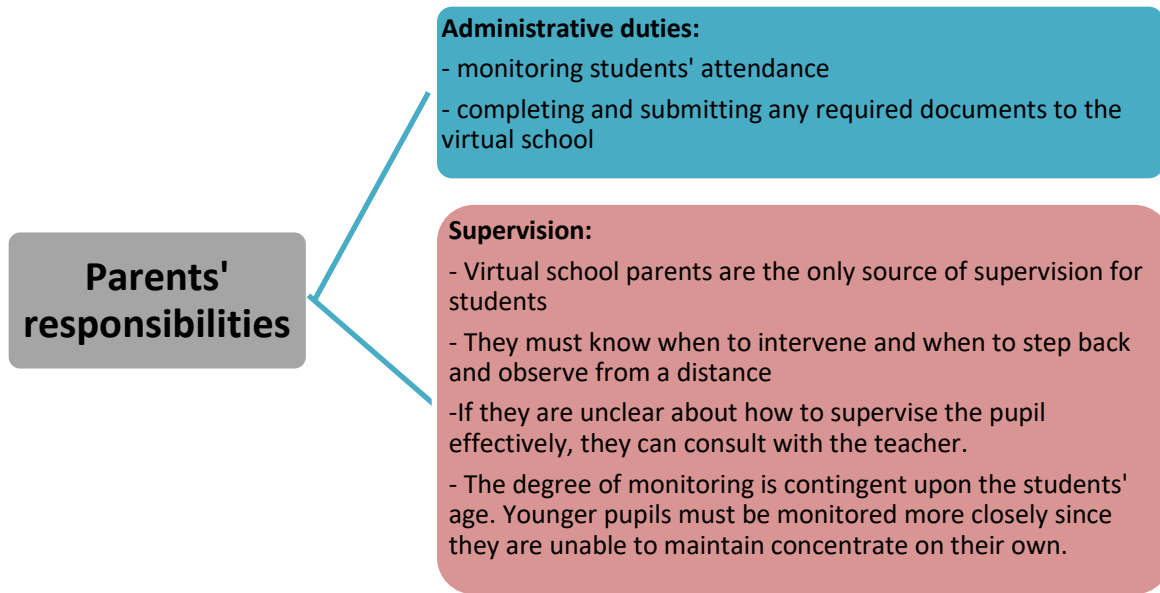
Organising the learning environment

 <p>Providing the supplies for online learning</p>	<p>While online education may require some resources that students in regular schools do not, and vice versa, some supplies are still required.</p> <p>Parents would buy for supplies for a regular school in the same way they would for their virtual</p>
 <p>Organising the workstation</p>	<p>The most important steps are testing the internet connection and decluttering a place designated for studying.</p> <p>It does not have to be a classroom arrangement, but it should provide an area for concentration.</p>

Maintaining a Routine

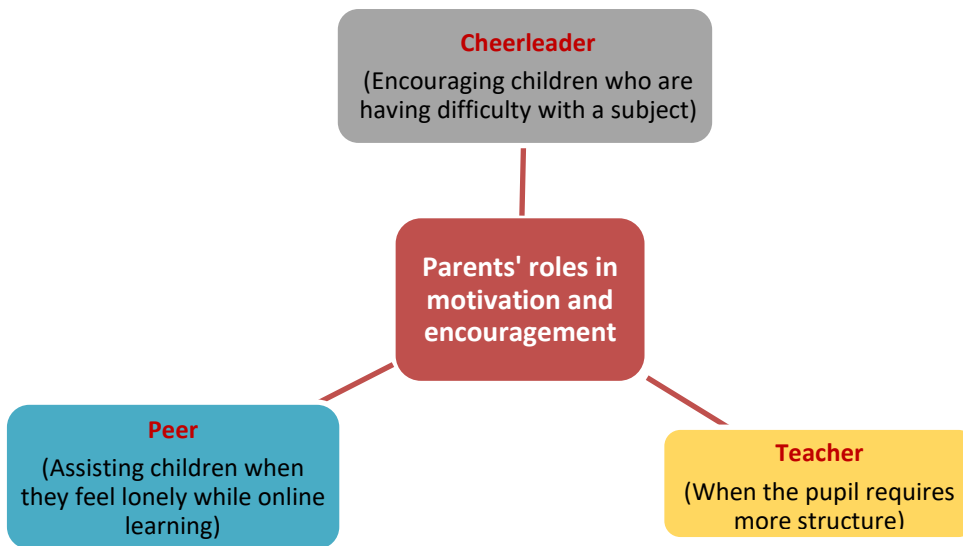
		
<p>Parents should respect children's routine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is difficult to make young children be autonomous enough to maintain their schedule on their own - Once the routine begins to lapse, parents must seize control and keep the learner on track. 	<p>Parents should act as guides in demonstrating that the routine should always be followed</p>	<p>Parents should include pauses between classes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Young children cannot sit through the entire school day without taking a break - Lunch and recess intervals should be included, removing the student from the workstation for a period of time to increase productivity and prevent boredom.

Administration and Supervision



Motivation and Encouragement

The parent's role as an encourager and motivator is crucial when their child begins virtual schooling. While it is critical to maintain these responsibilities, you must also recognize boundaries.



Always urge the child to participate in extracurricular activities, whether it is joining a sports team or volunteering on weekends. Socialization is critical for a child's development. Because they lack the socializing that comes with a typical school system, children are motivated to become involved in other activities.

D. Ways to motivate parents in involving in their children's online education

Parent-Teacher Collaboration

During their early years, parents serve as their children's first educators. As toddlers make the transition to elementary school, parents take on the role of learning mentors for their children. Parents assist their children in organizing their time and fostering their drive to learn new things both in and out of school through advice and reminders.

In online learning, parents and guardians take on the duty of becoming a vital part of their child's learning environment. They are obliged to work as members of the team responsible for the child's educational experience. This requires collaboration between the school's teaching and support staff. While instructors and guidance counsellors fulfil their obligations by aiding children through their online environment, parents are responsible for providing appropriate assistance at home. This collaboration is critical to online education's success in offering the optimal educational experience. However, parental engagement in a child's online learning experience varies depending to the grade in which the child is enrolled. While students in higher grades spend a significant percentage of their class time studying online, the situation is nearly reversed for students in lower grades. Indeed, children in lower grades rely largely on their parents or guardians for help, as the majority of learning occurs offline.

Establishing effective communication

The communication channels between teachers and parents must be kept open in order to sustain family commitment in the remote learning, as well as to encourage parents and guardians. A good communication with the family enables teachers to keep families updated about the educational advancements of their children, perform an analysis of the current situation and assess the needs. Additionally, parents can contact the educators to resolve issues or obtain educational information and support. An effective two-way communication teacher- parents must take into consideration the following:

- frequent communication (weekly)
- various means of communication, in accordance with the family chosen modes
- establishing special hours for parents and children so they can communicate their needs and worries.

Assistance offered whenever necessary

Apart from establishing a good communication with parents, educators should have a better understanding of their students' situation, such as parents' or guardians' temporary or permanent loss of work, their inability to provide basic necessities (food, clothes etc.), parents monitoring impaired children's education and/or monitoring one or more siblings, the incapacity to get essential technological equipment or internet access for the online education etc. Teachers who are able to understand the needs and difficulties of the families can respond more effectively to their concerns and consequently, offer assistance. Teachers need to take into consideration both academic and non-academic support.

E. Parenting tips for assisting children with online learning

Positive communication and mental health care is essential. Being a good listener, creating safe places for dialogues, and offering emotional support all contribute to stress management, family tie strengthening, and children developing the bravery and trust to share both positive and challenging feelings more freely with parents.

The following measures may be taken by parents to encourage constructive communication and mental health support:

▪ With empathy, listen and provide suggestions
▪ Make emotional support and caring by offering and being available.
▪ Consult with other parents for parenting guidance, and teach youngsters to seek help from their peers.
▪ Compliment others on their efforts and accomplishments
▪ Avoid coercion, force, and pressure
▪ Encourage youngsters to notice and accept things and feelings that are beyond of their control
▪ As a positive role model, demonstrate responsible and courteous behaviour, as well as flexibility in managing work from home
▪ Assist with educational requirements
▪ Establish a consistent schedule and promote positive homework habits
▪ Reduce screen time and assist in the establishment of an atmosphere and area suitable to online learning
▪ Encourage youngsters to identify future objectives, develop strategies, and manage their time, effort, and emotions.



Reflect

Distance education presents a unique set of difficulties for families with small children. Fortunately, early childhood teachers provide critical ties and a link to familiar people and secure places...

3.4. Useful approaches and tools to online teaching at home



Abstract

The pandemics forced teachers, preschoolers and parents altogether to make online learning work, but the transition from teaching face-to-face to online was a challenging and even painful process, with requirements for parents to share their "working" environment with their children.



*Parents' support
 Communication
 Resources
 Strategies
 Digital platforms*

Authors: Mihaela Vatavu, Andreea Ionel, Elza Gheorghiu, Cristian Timofticiuc, Stefan Colibaba



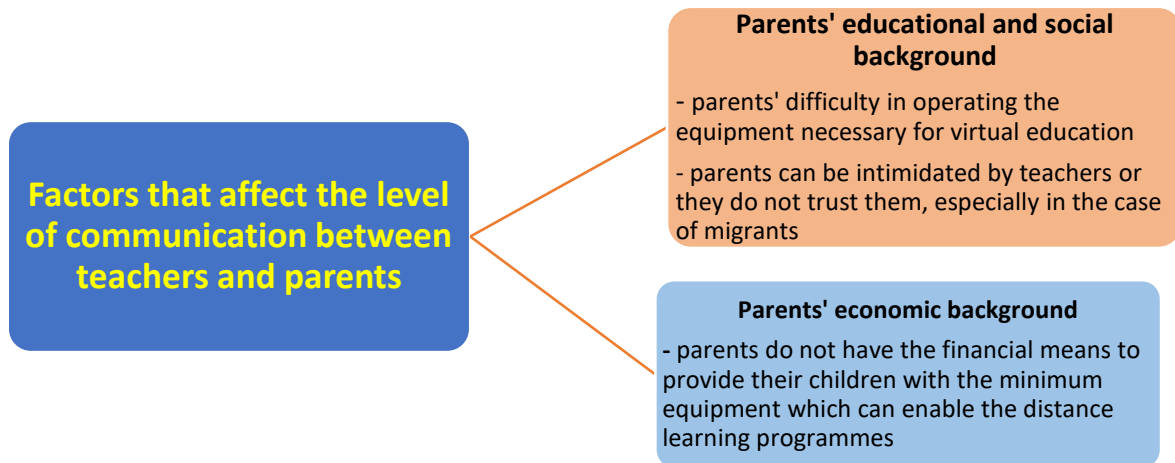
Collaboration teacher-parents

Collaboration between parents and teachers is not a new concept. However, while remote learning and virtual classrooms are becoming more common, this does not indicate that the technique is yet comfortable.

Since the start of the pandemic, teachers have been forced to rethink their approaches to education and the connection with the community. Moreover, millions of parents throughout the world have had to get involved and take control of their children's education. Most parents have done their best to reduce and ameliorate the severe interruption to learning that was caused by school closure under incredibly difficult conditions. Parents and educators have discovered and designed methods to collaborate for the benefit of the children.

It makes a significant difference when parents or guardians assist pre-schoolers when they are online. Therefore it is critical for kindergarten educators to view their students' parents as collaborators. The majority of the children at this age are unable to connect to an online class without assistance, although, once connected, they can switch off and silence themselves. To help the parents who have to keep a balance between working from home and supervising their children's education, teachers should keep the educational process as simple as possible.

In the new type of learning, parents and other caregivers must have a larger part in their child's learning and development than they did in the past. More so, because the majority of education today takes place outside of the school grounds, without the actual presence of teachers.



In all these situations, teachers are the ones who have to build the appropriate interpersonal skills necessary for confident and successful communication.

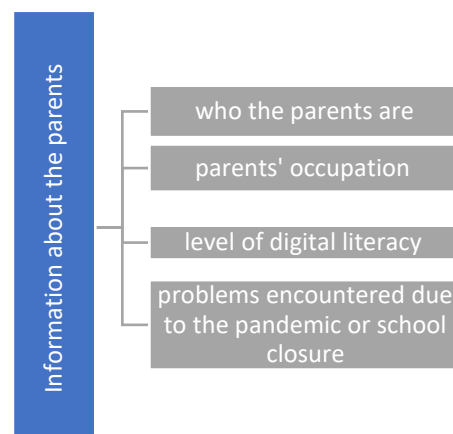
<p>The advantages of a fruitful relationship between teachers and parents in the educational process</p>	<p>The parents have a more comprehensive understanding of what their children are learning and may aid the teacher by contributing to a better retention of the knowledge in a passive way outside of the remote classroom.</p>
	<p>For both parts, there is mutual understanding, completed with additional support, mainly in learning online.</p>
	<p>Whenever a child has difficulty learning, an open dialogue between teacher and parent can peacefully solve the situation.</p>
	<p>The children themselves feel the benefit resulting from a positive relationship between their parents and the teacher.</p>
	<p>According to studies, a good teacher-parent partnership is associated with a child demonstrating healthy learning habits, improved social skills, and more flexibility.</p>

Approaches for helping parents in online learning

In order to establish a beneficial relationship with parents, teachers should adopt different strategies and approaches:

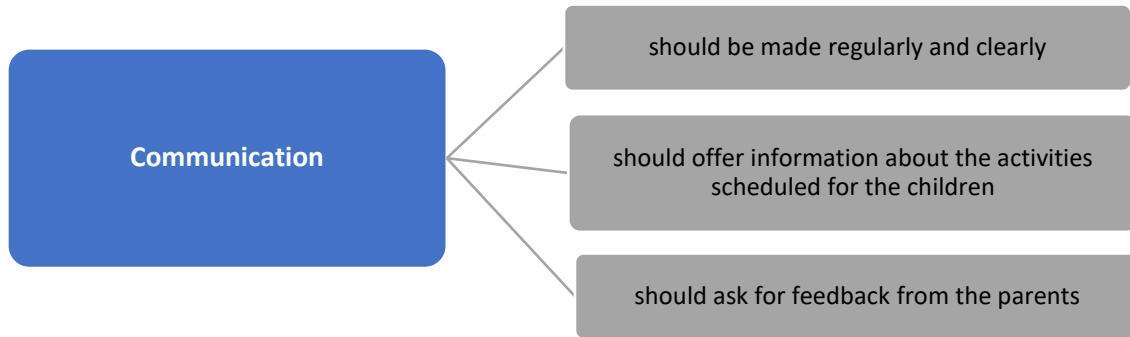
a. Gather information about the parents

The information can be collected by using different methods, the most used being by online questionnaires (*Google Forms*).



b. Establish strong communication with the parents

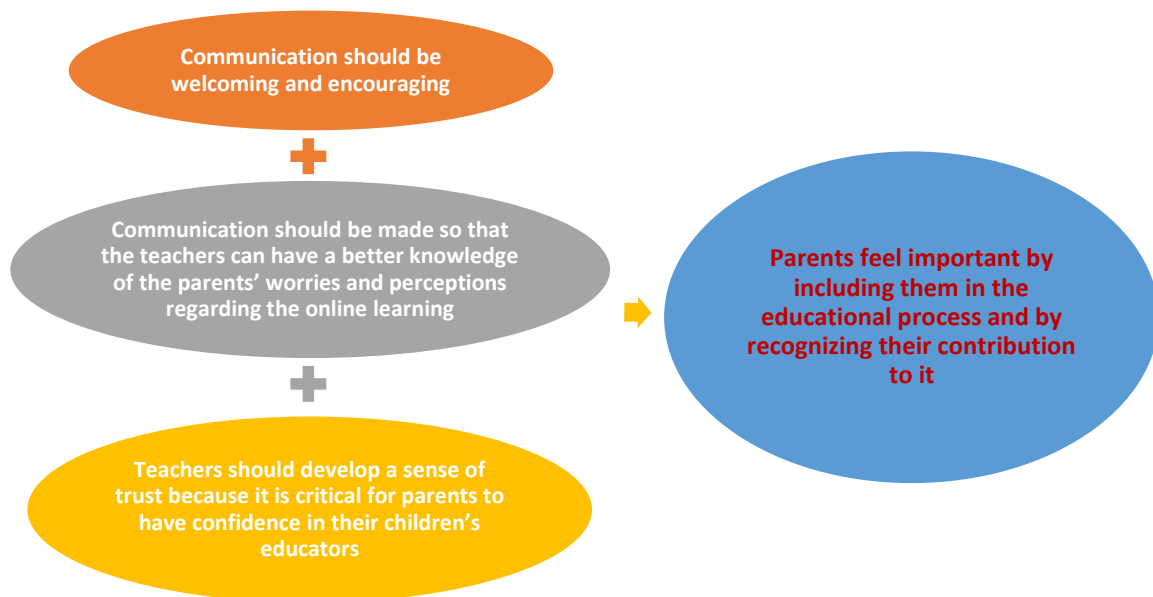
There is not just a single way of communicating with families in online learning; it is critical that a range of strategies are used in order to meet the demands of families and their schedules. Not all parents are reachable or interact in the same manner.



Techniques:

- Video conferences with parents (via Zoom, Skype etc.)
- Phone conversations and phone messages
- Virtual groups (WhatsApp, Messenger)
- E-mail
- School website or online conferencing platform;
- Platforms for social media (Facebook).

c. Use the appropriate tone when communicating with parents.



d. Design activities that can support parents in adjusting to the new style of learning

- These activities are not academic
- They are meant to engage the family as a unit and provide opportunities for social interaction in the virtual or physical environment
- Parents may supplement their children's online education with hands-on activities such as book reading, clay or building block play, and sketching, as well as language practice through conversation.

e. Assist parents in creating a favourable home learning environment.

Children's homes are full of distractions, and this results in the difficulty of maintaining their attention on the learning process. Due to the multiple distractions in a home, parents may want some aid in properly setting up their child's learning environment as a productive, studious atmosphere. Teachers can help parents in sending useful recommendations about online classroom tactics and routines. Using resources that are frequently present in children's homes will make online teaching easier. The teacher should request the parents to have a kit or a box with items often used in class, such as play dough, crayons, markers, coloured paper, cardboard, scissors etc.

f. Explain the strategies and learning goals.

Teachers should:

- define the overall picture of what children have to learn throughout the whole school year. When the curriculum is explained in its whole to the parents, this might offer the support to the families in preparing for the online classes.
- communicate to parents that certain contents have to be taught gradually, in a scaffolding approach
- emphasise the necessity of creating clear learning objectives for parents and guardians.

When parents understand the final objective, they might find additional learning experiences to accomplish it and to assess whether their children are capable of performing it when they finish the task.

g. Provide resources for parents

Once being endowed with the scope and the objective of the activities performed in the online environment, parents should also be presented with a list of activities or assignment possibilities. Teachers should take into account the parents' requirements and needs so they could provide tailor-made materials and resources. The activities are not supposed to be accompanied by explanations or pedagogical rationale for each tool, but they just have to be enjoyable and easy to use.

h. Promote children's self-reliance

Most pre-schoolers have the need to seek instruction from their teacher on how, where, and when to do a task, and subsequently they will also require further assistance during the activity. It is difficult to develop independence in kindergarteners, but there are ways to make it possible: through collaboration with the children's parents, who can create a learning space for the children, provided with the necessary

school materials. Since kindergartners need adult approval, it is important that the teacher, together with the parents, offer positive and personal praise anytime the child is engaged in autonomous study.


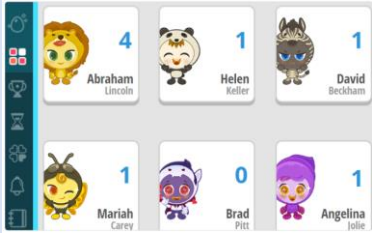
i. Support parents in building a schedule


In the traditional school, there is a lot of structure, which is difficult to replicate in the online environment. Young students, especially, have great difficulty adjusting to the increased autonomy the new learning environment has to offer. Therefore, it is critical to have a well-designed and specific daily routine, and parents are the ones who can develop such a plan and ensure that it is followed. The discussion about the routines young children have to follow should be conducted with the participation of the teachers, who can provide vital information about the curriculum, their personal expectations, and also, what amount of work is involved in the online activities.

Tools to support young children’s parents in online learning

Communication between parents and teachers is always of utmost importance. However, when children are engaged in virtual learning, this becomes essential. Numerous teachers are enhancing communication during distant learning through the use of new and creative apps, ranging from the most common, such as [Google Classroom](#) to [Class Dojo](#), [Bloomz](#), [Klassly](#), [Class123](#). Some of these applications are even built like popular social networking sites, making them instantly recognizable and simple to use.

Tool	Description	Image
Google Classroom	A free educational technology tool that allows you to create an online classroom, invite your students, and assign homework. You can also discuss assignments with your students online and track their progress.	
Class Dojo	A powerful tool for monitoring students' growth, setting goals, and communicating with parents. Class Dojo connects teachers with students and parents to build amazing classroom communities	
Bloomz	It can assist instructors with managing assignments, communication, student health, and social and emotional learning from a student perspective. Assignments, activities, and reminders may be shared via files, photographs, videos, and text.	

<p>Klassly</p>	<p>It has a humorous design that contributes to the platform's enjoyment. Teachers have considerable flexibility in terms of content customization, students may contribute work, and parents will welcome the opportunity to participate. Additionally, including parents can aid in student learning.</p>	
<p>Class123</p>	<p>A classroom management platform that contains a chalkboard, seating chart, timer, random name picker, and many other tools necessary for efficient class management. You can also keep track of students' attendance and behaviour, share stories and photos on boards, and communicate via private messages.</p>	



Reflect
 Children face a future in which online course will probably be part of the curriculum. Fortunately, with the assistance of effective parent-teacher cooperation, overcoming some of the difficulties associated with the quick change to online learning maybe made easier.

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