K-12 Blended Teaching: Social Studies Edition

Mark Stevens, Merinda M. Davis, Craig Perrier, Jered Borup, Karen T. Arnesen, & Lisa R. Halverson

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Mark Stevens has worked in Middle Level public education for almost 30 years. He enjoys employing blended strategies to support students in social studies learning and communication skill development. He has found this is the best way to serve all students, no matter their challenges or advanced skills. Throughout this time Mark has been able to support this effort by acquiring advanced degrees in education, history, and learning technology design research. Mark's doctoral dissertation involved examining the use of a multimodal system of content learning to support English Learners, and other students, while they studied history. His continued practice and research centers on using blended learning, and serving students in traditionally underserved populations.

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Merinda Davis is part of a diverse team of educators who develop resources and curriculum. Along with more than 10 years teaching Social Studies in Alpine School District, she has instructed teacher education programs at both Brigham Young University and Utah Valley University. Additionally, she develops online Research Quest investigations for the Natural History Museum of Utah. She holds both a Bachelors of Science in History Education and a Masters of Education specializing in Global Studies in Education. She travels the world studying international education systems and cultures to deepen her classroom instruction. She inspires students to become active global citizens empowered to make positive impacts on the world.

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Jered Borup is the professor-in-charge of George Mason University's Blended and Online Learning in Schools Master's and Certificate programs that are devoted to improving teacher practices in online and blended learning environments. Previous to earning his Ph.D. at Brigham Young University, Jered taught history at a junior high school for six years. He has also taught online and blended courses since 2008. His current research interests include developing online learning communities and identifying support systems that adolescent learners require to be successful in online environments. A full list of his publications can be found at https://sites.google.com/site/jeredborup/

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Karen is a Ph.D. student in the Instructional Psychology and Technology program at Brigham Young University. She has been an ELA teacher, magazine editor, and instructional designer. Her research and design interests are in blended teaching, personalization, and self-regulation.

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Lisa R. Halverson is a Civics Education Fellow at the Center for Constitutional Studies at Utah Valley University. She holds a PhD in Instructional Psychology & Technology from Brigham Young University, where she researched blended learning engagement. Lisa also holds an MA in History from Stanford University and a BA in International Relations from Stanford. She has taught high school and university courses for over 20 years. Lisa also helps direct a nonprofit dedicated to women's involvement in politics and governance. A native Oregonian, Lisa now lives in Springville, Utah, with her husband and two children.

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Preface and About This Book

Charles R. Graham, Jered Borup, Michelle Jensen, Karen T. Arnesen, & Cecil R. Short

Thank you for accessing one of the books in the *K-12 Blended Teaching (Vol. 2): A Guide to Practice Within the Disciplines* series!

The purpose of this preface is to orient you to the focus of this book, the original contributions that this book makes to blended learning, and the resources available to you within this book.

The Purpose of This Book

The purpose of this book is to provide rich examples of the four blended teaching competencies from a disciplinary perspective. The first three chapters of the book provide definitions and an overview of the blended teaching framework. Subsequent chapters are organized into sections that focus on blended teaching in a specific discipline. Each section has the following chapters:

- **Introductions**—Video introductions to the model teachers who will share written and video examples throughout the section.
- **Why Blend?**—Descriptions from the model teachers about why they chose to try blended learning in their classrooms.
- **Online Integration and Management**—Examples of how to effectively combine online instruction with in-person instruction.
- **Online Interaction**—Examples of how to facilitate online interactions with and between students.
- **Data Practices**—Examples of how to use digital tools to monitor student activity and performance in order to guide student growth.
- **Personalizing Instruction**—Examples of how to implement a learning environment that allows for student customization of goals, pace, and/or learning path.

What is This Book?

This book is a follow-up to [K-12 Blended Teaching: A Guide to Personalized Learning and Online Integration (Volume 1)](). Volume 1 took a competency-based approach to planning and implementing blended learning. The competencies in Volume 1 were organized into the following areas: Online Integration, Data Practices, Personalization, and Online Interaction, with a final chapter that discussed how all of these areas come together to design blended learning. These competencies are built upon a solid foundation of blended learning dispositions and technology skills.
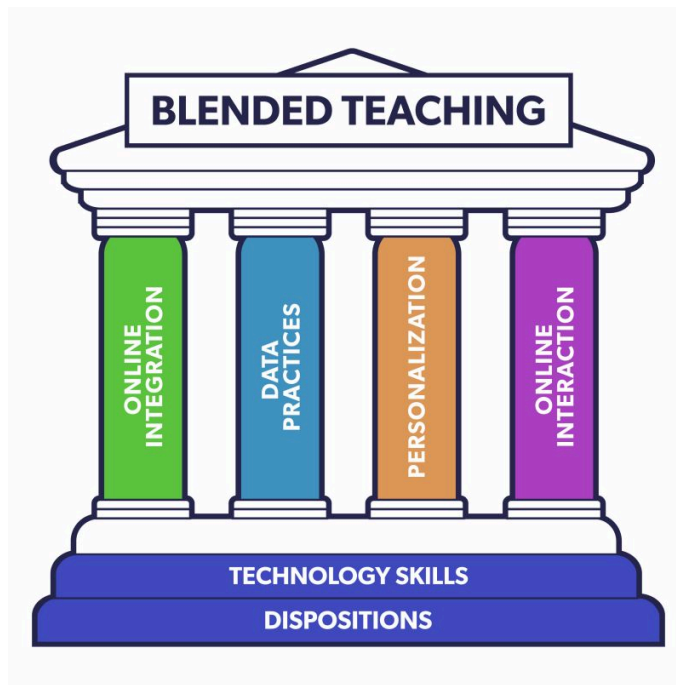
You can read more about these ideas by following these links to Volume 1:

- Cover - *K-12 Blended Teaching (Vol. 1): A Guide to Online Integration and Personalized Learning*
- Chapter 1 - Blended Teaching Foundations
- Chapter 2 - Online Integration
- Chapter 3 - Data Practices
- Chapter 4 - Personalizing Instruction
- Chapter 5 - Online Interaction
- Chapter 6 - Blended Design in Practice

Instead of using the competency-based approach from Volume 1, Volume 2 explores blended learning within various K-12 contexts through a problems of practice approach. These problems of practice are organized into the areas of Pedagogy, Social/Emotional Learning, the 6 C's of 21st-century learning, the 7 P's of transformational blended learning, and Access. Examples of these problems of practice are illustrated in this volume's Chapter 1: Introduction to K-12 Blended Teaching. Below is an image from the English Language Arts chapter that demonstrates some possible problems of practice.
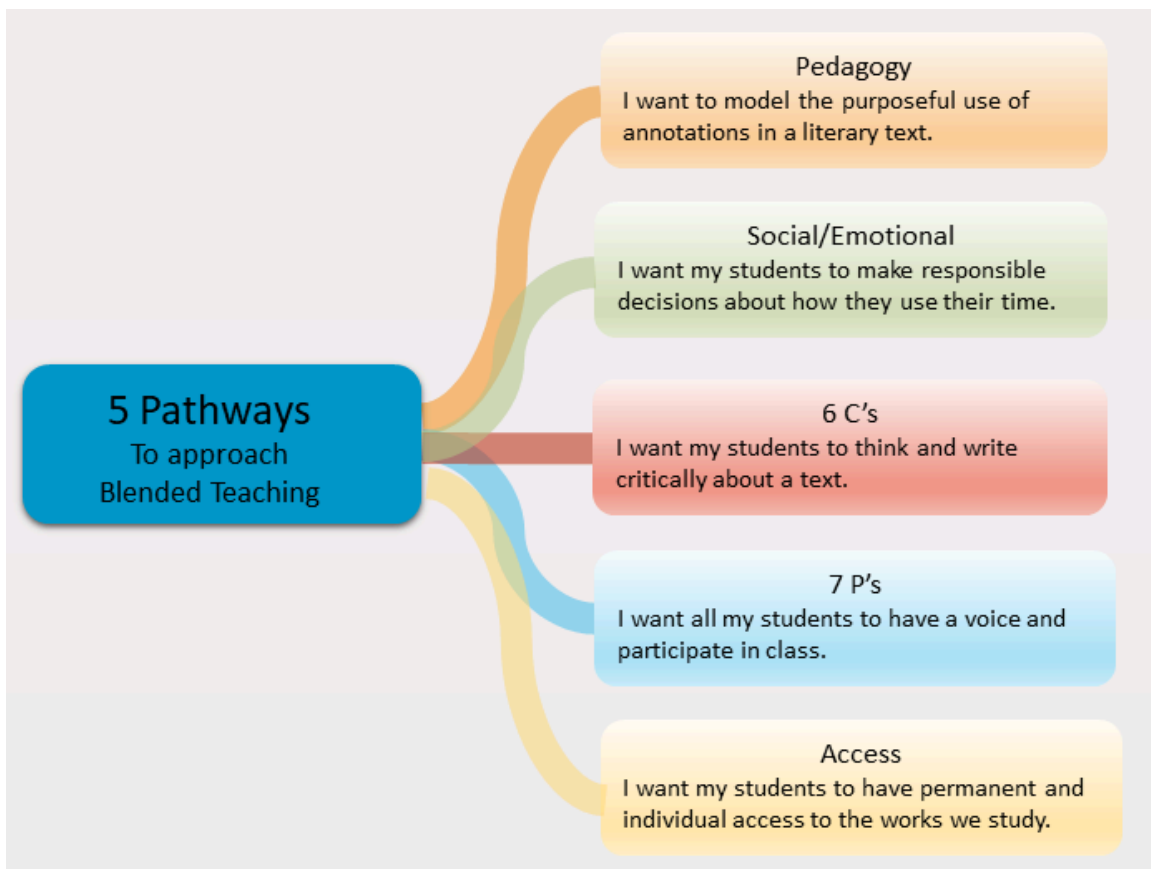
🏛️ New Content in Volume 2

While Volume 2 understandably builds on the content of Volume 1 and offers new examples of blended teaching across K-12 contexts, it also offers some new insights that are generally applicable to blended teaching.

First, Chapter 2: K-12 Blended Teaching Competencies offers an overview of the competencies from Volume 1, but also provides new understandings of what some of these competencies look like in practice. Worth specific exploration are new understandings of what personalized learning looks like in K-12. Chapter 2 provides a framework for designing personalized learning that examines the relationships between the data used for personalization, who or what is controlling the personalization, what is being personalized, and the extent to which learners are practicing agency and ownership over their own learning. These new understandings of personalized learning come from working alongside the teachers who contributed their practices to this book.

Second, Chapter 3: Evaluating Teaching with the 4Es and PICRAT presents a new framework for evaluating blended teaching practices. Volume 1 used PICRAT to help explain some of the designing that goes into blended teaching. Volume 2 builds on Volume 1 by providing both PICRAT and a new 4E framework for evaluating blended teaching. This new framework focuses on evaluating the ways in which blended teaching Enables, Engages, Elevates, and/or Extends learning in meaningful ways.
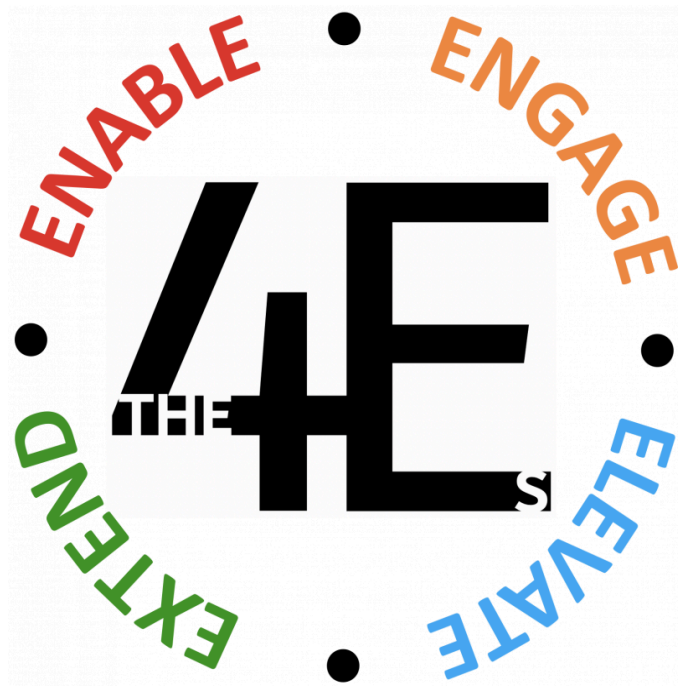
🏛️ New Resources in Volume 2

Much like Volume 1 offers resources such as blended teaching videos, artifacts, and reflection questions, the books in Volume 2 have their own resources worth referencing.

Each chapter of this book is filled with **teacher quotes and videos** about teachers' experiences with K-12 blended teaching. Chapter 4 of this book introduces the teachers who contributed practices to the book. Our hope in creating this book is that it can largely be seen as a book created through collaboration with teachers for teachers. The videos and quotes throughout this book should not be seen as optional content, but rather as the core content used to explore examples of blended teaching across content areas and grades.

The other key resources to be aware of in using this book for training, professional learning, or blended teaching implementation are the **Blended Teaching Readiness Survey**, the **Blended Teaching Roadmap**, and the **Blended Teaching Workbook**.

Each chapter of Volume I begins with a link to the **Blended Teaching Readiness Survey**, a brief readiness self-assessment survey. This survey can be helpful as your prepare for blended teaching regardless of whether you are taking a competency-based approach or a problems of practice approach. The survey takes 2-3 minutes per section of

the survey. These sections include questions about your dispositions and abilities to use online integration, data practice, personalized learning, and/or online interactions. It provides users with a sense of their current aptitude for blended teaching specific to each competency. You can learn more about the Blended Teaching Readiness instrument and use it yourself here: **http://bit.ly/K12-BTR**.
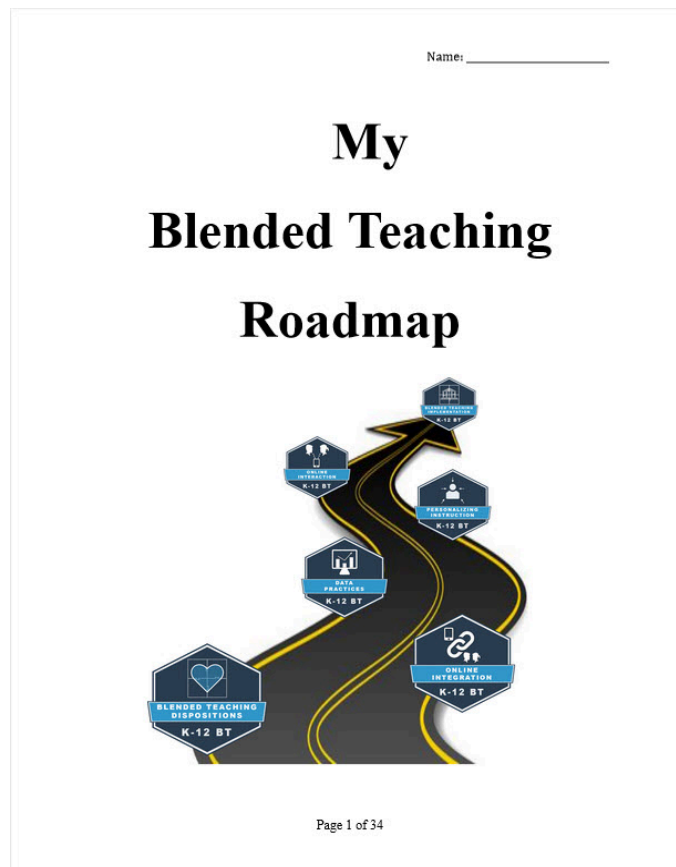
The Blended Teaching Roadmap is a resource introduced in Volume 1 for guiding teachers in designing, developing, and implementing blended teaching. Like Volume 1 itself, this resource takes a competency-based approach to help educators implement blended teaching. Appendix C of Volume 1 provides links to examples and Google Docs to reference and use in creating a plan for blended teaching. To use the Google Doc, you should make a copy of the Blended Teaching Roadmap that you can edit and own.

> ✏ **Blended Teaching Workbook**
>
> This is an example of what the callout boxes for the Blended Teaching Workbook look like. You will find these scattered throughout the book. You can access the Blended Teaching Workbook here.

The Blended Teaching Workbook is a new resource introduced in Volume 2. Like Volume 2 itself, this resource takes a problems of practice approach to designing, developing, and implementing blended teaching. References to the Blended Teaching Workbook are scattered throughout this book with links to the Google Doc used to create the workbook. To use the Google Doc, you should make a copy of the Blended Teaching Workbook that you can edit and own.

We hope that you enjoy the book we have put together, and encourage you to share it with others! Thank you again for exploring our work!

Previous Citation(s)

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General Introduction to Blended Teaching

1

Introduction to K-12 Blended Teaching

Charles R. Graham, Karen T. Arnesen, Jered Borup, & Michelle Jensen

1.1 Blended Teaching

In its simplest form, blended teaching is the *strategic* combination of in-person teaching and online teaching.

Blended teaching is a general term that covers a wide range of different pedagogies, strategies, models, and practices. One teacher's blended classroom might look mostly like a traditional classroom with the addition of an occasional online discussion with students, while another classroom might be mostly online with a few strategically planned in-person activities.

Consider this simple (yet imperfect) analogy. Blended teaching is like baking a cake.

- The cook mixes the dry and liquid ingredients together to create a cake for friends/family to eat. The skill of the cook and the nature of the ingredients can create something uniquely wonderful.
- Likewise, a teacher 'mixes' pedagogies in online and in-person modalities together to create learning experiences/outcomes for students.
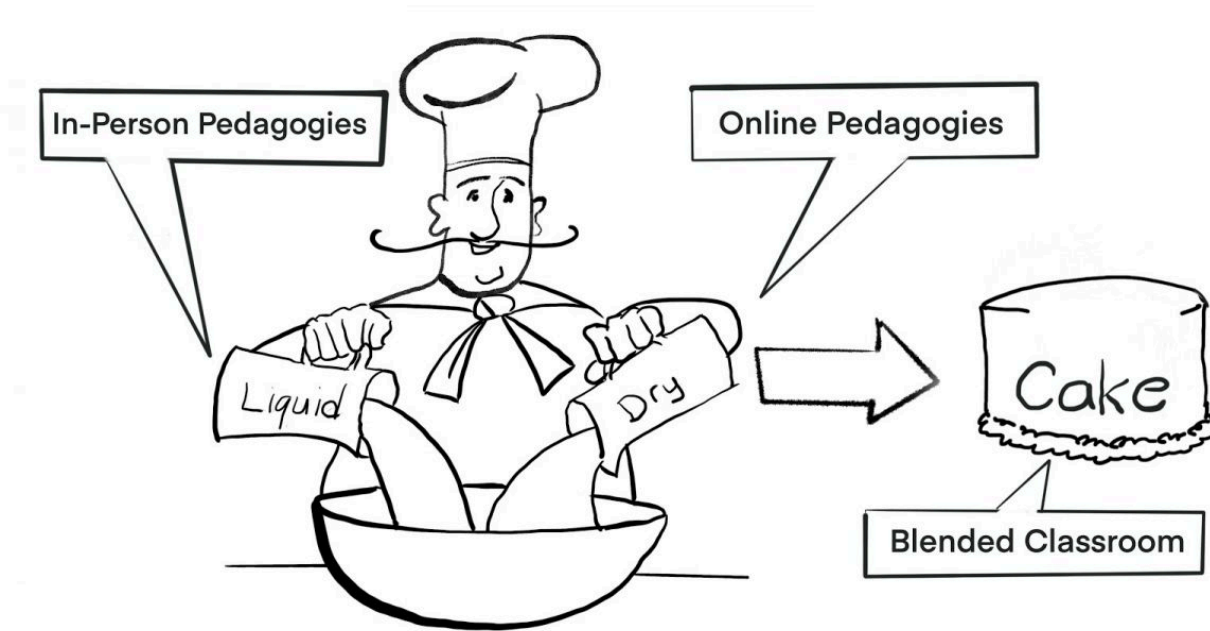
Consider possible lessons to take from the blended-cooking analogy:

- More dishes are possible with both dry and liquid ingredients.
- The specific ingredients matter. (You can't just have 2 cups of any dry ingredients and 1 cup of any liquid ingredients.)
- The amounts of specific ingredients also matter.
- When mixed well the outcome is different (often better) than if not mixed at all.
- When different ingredients are used, a different cake is made.
- Different cakes may have different purposes.
- There are thousands of ways to combine the dry and liquid ingredients.
- Good cooks do not follow a recipe. They make the cake to fit a specific purpose.

Like a good baker makes a cake, a skilled teacher can create a blend that promotes learning in a way that is most helpful for her own students.

1.2 Reasons for Blended Teaching

There are three primary reasons that teachers are motivated to try blended teaching: (1) Improved student learning, (2) Increased access and flexibility, and (3) Increased cost efficiency. Table 1 shares a few simple examples of each of these reasons for blending.

Table 1

Reasons for Blending

Reasons for Blending	
Improved Student Learning	A teacher:

	• uses the blend to give students small group instruction or one-on-one time with students in order to address specific learning needs. • uses data obtained from online tracking systems to constantly monitor learning and to make adjustments to instruction. • uses self-made videos to give instructions that students can slow down, speed up, pause, or repeat in order to understand the material or an assignment. • offers choice in assignments to increase student engagement and ownership in their learning.
Increased Access and Flexibility	A teacher: • uses the online space to incorporate into the classroom materials and information, targeted instruction, and activities that are not otherwise available. • A teacher uses technology to give students choices in learning activities. • A teacher consults with students to make learning goals.
Increased Efficiency	A teacher: • moves some science labs online, creating less need for expensive equipment in the classroom. • uses books that are online to lower the cost of books (and to have more than a classroom set for students). • uses the online space to publish assignments, teacher and student examples, writings, explanations, and questions, reducing the need for copies. • Creates videos to expand teacher presence in the class, thus multiplying her effectiveness and productivity.

In this book we will primarily focus on providing examples of blended instruction that are designed to improve student learning and/or increase access and flexibility for the learner. It is worth noting that while one of these purposes may be the primary reason that you implement a blended approach, you may also see added benefits in other areas as well, such as in ease of lesson planning or improved overall class engagement.

1.3 Identifying Your Reason for Blending

Each teacher needs to decide their own reason for blending. This is important because, like the chef with the cake, determing your purpose provides a vision for how to select appropriate blended models and strategies to achieve the purpose. Blending just because an "administrator told you to" or because "you like technology" are not good reasons for blending.

In working with teachers, we have found that one of the best ways to get started is to identify and focus on a problem of practice. A problem of practice is a current problem or challenge that you believe blended teaching could help you solve.

As you consider problems of practice that are meaningful to your teaching context, these five pathways may help you identify them (Table 2).

Table 2

Problem of Practice Pathways

Problems of Practice Pathways

Signature Pedagogies	Signature pedagogies are the teaching strategies that are commonly used in your discipline. They are often unique to your content discipline and shared within your professional organization.
	A problem of practice could recognizing and trying to address limitations in your implementation of one or more signature pedagogies in your discipline.
	Examples:
	- **Language Arts:** I want to find more effective ways to engage my students in collaborative writing.
	- **Math:** I want to increase the quality of mathematical discourse in my classroom.
	- **Science:** I want to create opportunities for my students to use technology to analyze and interpret data and then create a scientific argument from this evidence.
Social Emotional Learning	Students may struggle in areas of social emotional learning, such as self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision making, social awareness, and relationship skills.
	A problem of practice could be recognizing and addressing areas of growth in students' social and emotional learning.
	Examples:
	- I want to create structures to help my students to make rational decisions.
	- I want my students to engage in activities that help them develop empathy for each other.
	- I want to introduce self-regulation challenges into my students' assignments.
6 C's of Deep Learning	The 6 Cs of Deep Learning are character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking.
	A problem of practice could entail trying to increase one or more of these C's in your instruction.
	Examples:
	- I want to increase my students' ability to communicate effectively about their learning.
	- I want to help my students develop better collaboration skills.
	- I want to students to think critically about current world events.
	- i want to allow my students to demonstrate their learning in creative ways.
	- I want to help my students practice appropreate digital citizenship.
	- I want my students to develp good character as they prepare to enter the real world.
7 P's of Quality Blended Teaching	The 7 Ps of Quality Blended Teaching are participation, pacing, personalization, place, personal interaction, preparation, and practice with feedback
	A problem of practice could be recognizing and addressing a challenge in one of these areas.
	Examples:

- I want to enable 100% participation in class discussions.
- I want my students to pace themselves to learn as quickly as they are able or as slowly as they need to.
- I want my students to personalize their learning by selecting learning activities that will help them the most.
- I want to open up learning experiences that take place outside of my classroom.
- I want to create additional opportunities for students to personally interact with me and with one another.
- I want to increase students' out-of-class preparation before classroom activities.
- I want my students to recive timely, effective feedback to their practice.

Student Access	Students may have challenges with access to traditional learning opportunities because of disabilities, illness, and/or participation in extracurricular activities like sports or the arts. They may also have limited access to materials that are necessary for improving their understanding of the subject. Such materials may include books, primary resources, lab equipment and resources, art supplies, concert or theatrical performances, etc. A problem of practice could try to address challenges of access for students in your class. Examples: - **Student Absence from Class:** I want to make it easy for students who miss class for illness or extra curricular activities to stay caught up. - **Transient Students:** I want to make it possible for students who move between schools regularly to quickly assess what they know and do what is needed to participate with the class. - **Resources:** I want students to have access to the educational materials used as part of our learning in class.

🏛 1.4 Examples of Problems of Practice

Here are some examples of teachers who used blended teaching to solve a problem of practice. As you read through them, see if some resonate with desires you have for your classroom.

Scenario 1

Problem of Practice: A teacher wants students to take more ownership for their educational practices and attitudes.

Blended Approach: Students set weekly and daily goals which are recorded online, where the teacher has immediate access to them. Goals can include completion goals (setting a certain number of assignments and assessments to complete), performance goals (setting a specific standard of how well the assignments are done), or a mindset goal (setting a goal for asking for help or focusing better), for example. Students share their goals with their team and teacher online. At the end of the week, they reflect online about their experience. The teacher can respond online or in-person to areas of concern as needed.

Setting: LPS (Leadership Public Schools) Richmond in Richmond, CA

Site: [Daily and Weekly Goal Setting](#)

Scenario 2

Problem of Practice: A chemistry teacher wants his students to "learn for themselves and by themselves."

Blended Approach: The teacher employs a flipped classroom. He creates videos of content the students need to know as well as tutorials on how to do certain chemistry operations. The students watch these videos at home. In class, the students apply what they learn at home in a variety of activities. The teacher walks around the class, answering questions, giving guidance, tutoring as needed, and "putting out fires."

Setting: Woodland Park High, Colorado

Site: Flipped Chemistry Course

Scenario 3

Problem of Practice: A writing teacher wants her students to receive immediate feedback and to value the writing and feedback processes.

Blended Approach: The teacher has students write a specific type of paragraph online in a shareable document. While the students write, the teacher opens the students' documents on her computer and gives feedback on them. Later the teacher and students discuss how to give good feedback. The students are then paired with another student to give each other online feedback. The teacher chooses five feedback comments and shares them in an in-person whole class discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of the feedback comments.

Site: Learning to Give Feedback

Scenario 4

Problem of Practice: A middle school teacher wants parents to be better informed and involved in their child's education.

Blended Approach: Students use an app called Seesaw to record their work. Anything recorded on Seesaw is immediately available to parents who are connected to their child's profile. Students can add video and audio components to explain their work.

Setting: Trailblazer Elementary School in Colorado Springs, CO

Site: Seesaw Record

Scenario 5

Problem of Practice: Students hurry through math assignments without really learning how to approach math problems and do them correctly.

Blended Approach: Students have individualized online learning agendas with standards, instructional videos, and text exercises. Students check off each objective within a standard as they complete them and pass an online mastery quiz. Teachers use the agendas to track student progress. When the students have finished each objective, the teacher reviews the progress and assigns them to create a mastery video, in which the students show how they work an easy, medium, and difficult problem within the standard. Teachers review the video to determine if the student is ready for the final mastery assessment.

Setting: ReNEW DTA, a charter school for pre-K through 8th grade in New Orleans, LA.

Site: Thinking Mathematically

Creatively addressing problems of practice with a blended approach can transform your classroom and help you create a strong, effective learning environment.

🏛 1.5 Pedagogy Centered, Technology Supported

The power of the blend is that it opens a whole new set of pedagogical possibilities for teachers. Although blends can improve outcomes for students, they can also make things worse for them. As with traditional teaching, the teacher's strategic planning and skill will make all the difference in the quality of the blend.

One way to begin thinking strategically about a blend is to consider the 3 M's—media, modality, and method.

Definitions: Media, Modality, Method

Media: The physical tools or technology used in the classroom. They can be digital media, such as tablets, computers, or cameras, or they can be non-digital, such as whiteboards, books, or science equipment.

Modality: The environment, where learning takes place. Modalities are generally the in-person classroom, the online classroom, and the blended classroom.

Method: The strategies and pedagogies of the teacher. They may be general methods (such as discussions) or discipline specific pedagogies such as experimental labs in chemistry.

See [Media, Modality, and Methods](#) video for a more full explanation.

Although all three M's impact learning, they are not equal in importance. No media or modality will be effective if it is not used as part of meaningful and strategic methods or pedagogies. Modality and media have an indirect effect on learning outcomes because they influence the *types* of strategies and methods that a teacher can use. But the teacher's methods directly influence student learning and outcomes. Table 3 shows good and bad examples of blended learning strategies and pedagogies. Evaluate each and see what made the difference: media, modality, or method.

Table 3

Good and Poor Examples of Blended Learning

Good Example of Blended Learning	Poor Example of Blended Learning
A math teacher uses adaptive software. She allows students to progress at their own pace and has one-on-one or small group sessions for students who struggle with a particular concept.	A math teacher has students who finish their math assignment early uses apps on a classroom set of tablets to play math games.
A history teacher sends students links to two different viewpoints of a historical event. Students read/watch the content at home. In class, the teacher puts students in groups of four and has them summarize each viewpoint and discuss why they are different. How does the creator's viewpoint affect the depiction of what happened? How can people really know what happened and why?	A history teacher records a lecture and has students view it before class at home. In class they do a worksheet with questions about the lecture.
A foreign language teacher utilizes station rotations in his classroom. At one station students choose from a list of writing assignments and write using google docs. Another student at that station reads the document online and gives suggestions or asks questions.	A foreign language teacher uses a video streaming service to show his students a weekly video in the target language. This enhances listening skills and allows

Good Example of Blended Learning	Poor Example of Blended Learning
At the next rotation students meet online with a native speaker and have a short conversation, which uses new vocabulary. Finally, at the last station students meet with the teacher to discuss and practice new grammar rules and language structure.	students to hear the language spoken by native speakers.

These examples illustrate that blended teaching is powerful only when the modality and the media are used to support, not replace, pedagogy or method. As in any teaching setting, good blended teaching does not depend on technology but on the teachers' understanding of her students, her knowledge of the content, and her ability to plan strategies that will use technology to meaningfully combine online and in-person spaces, increase the number and quality of student interactions, use data to effectively meet students' needs, and personalize instruction in order to increase student ownership of their education, their engagement, and their ability to develop and use 21st century skills.

The chapters in this book will help you get started.

Previous Citation(s)

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K-12 Blended Teaching Competencies

Charles R. Graham, Jered Borup, Michelle Jensen, Karen T. Arnesen, & Cecil R. Short

2.1 Blended Teaching Competencies

In Volume 1 of K-12 Blended Teaching we introduced four competencies shown in Figure 1, with each competency represented by a pillar built on a solid foundation of blended dispositions and technology skills. The four core blended teaching competencies—(1) Online integration, (2) Data practices, (3) Personalization, and (4) Online interaction—can be mastered by any teacher in any subject area. These competencies are built on a foundation of positive dispositions and basic technology skills.

Figure 1

Blended Teaching Foundations and Core Competencies
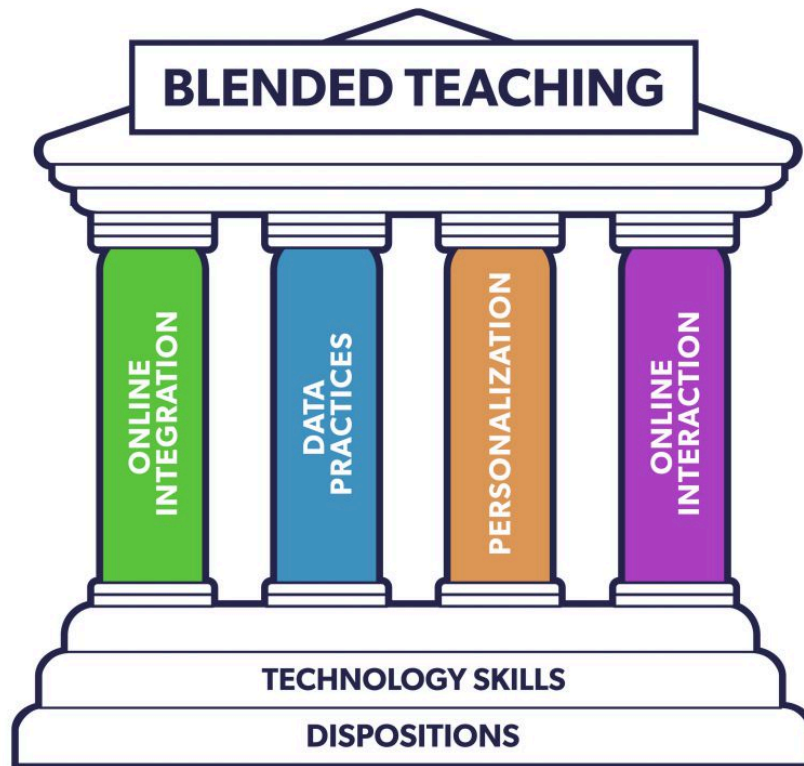
We will provide a brief introduction to these competencies in this chapter with more in-depth coverage in each of the subject-specific sections. Check out your readiness for blended teaching in each of these areas by taking this Blended Teaching Readiness Self-evaluation.

**Test Your Blended Teaching Readiness: http://bit.ly/K12-BTR**

Check out how ready you are for blended teaching?

As shown in Figure 2, the results of the blended teaching readiness instrument will give you a score in each of the competency areas. The scores will help you to understand which competency areas you might want to start with as you build your personal skillset with blended teaching.

Figure 2

Example results from the Blended Teaching Readiness Survey
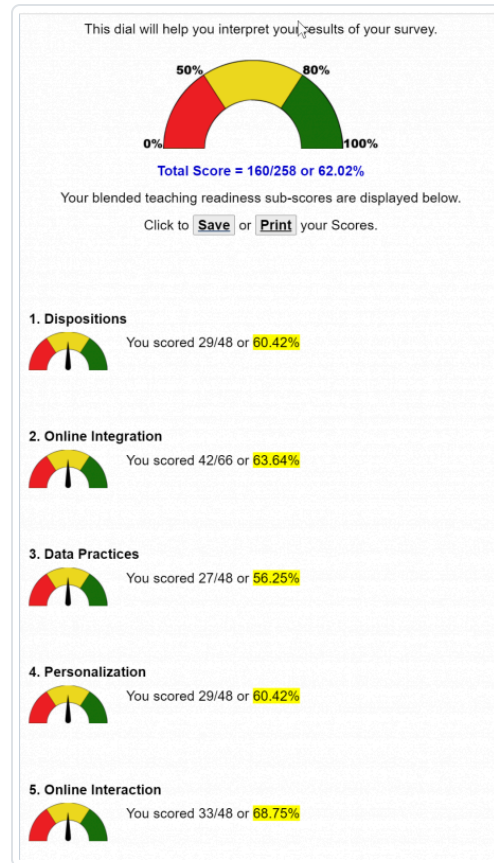
This volume differs from Volume 1 of the K-12 Blended Teaching series in that it focuses on examples of blended teaching in a specific content area. The four competencies of online integration, data practices, personalization, and online interaction are still key skills for successful blended teaching. However, those skills may look distinct when practiced in **different content areas**. We have represented this idea on the cover of this book with the blended teaching tree as shown in Figure 3. The individual branches represent blended teaching in the many distinct educational disciplines all of which are nourished by the common core set of teacher competencies.

Figure 3

Core Competencies in the Content Areas

In the following sections we will briefly outline these four core blended teaching competencies, and in each of the following chapters we will provide specific examples of these competencies. Many of the sections below include questions for you to think about. Think carefully and honestly about your answers, perhaps writing them down. Then notice where you are already strong and where you have room for improvement. These thoughts can guide your process as you begin blending.

2.2 Positive Dispositions and Technology Skills

You will need to develop basic technology skills and positive dispositions in order to be successful in blended teaching.

Dispositions focus on the teacher's attitudes and beliefs towards blended learning and teaching. Positive attitudes, even excitement, in each of these areas will determine how willing you are to experiment with and grow in a blended learning context.

Learn more about dipositions and skills in K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume 1): What Competencies are Needed?

2.2.1 Student Ownership and Agency

Successful blended learning classrooms shift from teacher led pedagogy to student driven pedagogies. Students begin to take more control of and responsibility for their learning, often making decisions for what, how, and when they learn. Teachers become a facilitator in such decisions and in helping students succeed in their new roles.

- How do I feel about students making some of the decisions about their learning?
- Do I feel I could learn to help students become more independent of me and more able to create their own learning agendas?

2.2.2 Mastery Learning Orientation

Blended classrooms lend themselves to mastery-based learning instead of time-based learning. Students advance in their learning as they master skills and content, not as they spend a certain amount of time on them. This approach significantly reduces the amount of whole-class direct instruction. Technology is a helpful tool for managing mastery learning.

- How do I feel about students learning at different paces in my classroom?
- Do I value students having enough time to master a learning objective before they move to the next one?
- Do I think I could develop the flexibility to manage such a classroom?

2.2.3 Value of Data-Driven Decisions

A reliance on data (Figure 4) to make decisions about instruction and individual pathways to learning is at the heart of a blended classroom. This data may include formative and summative assessment results, attendance, student goals, demographics, and measures of engagement. It can help teachers recognize strengths and weaknesses, progression, and reasons for students' lack of progress.

- How do you feel about using technology to keep track of various aspects of student learning?
- Do you feel data could help you not only understand your students better but also help them progress and become better learners?

Figure 4

Example of a Mastery Tracker Showing Student Progress

Students			Obj1.1	Obj1.2	Obj1.3	Obj1.4
SORT: Last, First A - Z						
Student 1	3 0 1		MASTERY	MASTERY	MASTERY	REMEDIATION
Student 2	2 2 0		MASTERY	NEAR MASTERY	MASTERY	NEAR MASTERY
Student 3	3 0 1		MASTERY	MASTERY	REMEDIATION	MASTERY
Student 4	2 1 1		REMEDIATION	NEAR MASTERY	MASTERY	MASTERY
Student 5	2 2 0		MASTERY	NEAR MASTERY	NEAR MASTERY	MASTERY
Student 6	4 0 0		MASTERY	MASTERY	MASTERY	MASTERY

2.2.4. Growth Orientation

Becoming a successful blended teacher will require you to take risks. You may fail at times, but these failures can help you learn and improve.

- How eager are you to learn new things and try innovative ways to do things?
- Are you willing to take risks that may temporarily leave you feeling inadequate? (Are you willing for your cake to fail now and then?)
- Do you enjoy learning and trying new things?

2.2.5 Emphasis on Life Skills

In a blended learning environment, technology can be used to develop real life skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

- Do you currently use pedagogies that help your students develop life skills? If not, how can you start?
- Do you believe these life skills are part of your responsibility as a teacher?
- Are you willing to consider using technology to develop these skills?

2.2.6 Value of Online Learning

Because blended learning is "the strategic combination of in-person with online teaching," valuing online learning is as important as valuing in-person learning.

- Do you believe online activities can enhance the way children learn?
- Do you feel online activities can give students opportunities to learn they can not get in the traditional classroom?
- Can you see ways online learning can help you personalize or individualize curriculum?

It is natural to feel a little uneasy about some of these dispositions. Maybe you are suspicious of online learning, or perhaps giving students more control makes you feel uneasy or out of control. Perhaps you worry that if you emphasize life skills, you won't be able to teach the content you are mandated to teach. Any new venture may feel risky; however, the fact that you are reading this book shows that you are ready to learn! And learning can change dispositions.

You can begin to see yourself as a teacher in new ways and to grow and learn along with your students, adding an excitement to learning that will enhance any methods you learn and choose to use. The key is just to begin. Beginning is the basis for personal growth—you have to start somewhere!

2.3 Basic Technology Skills

If you feel uncomfortable with all the technology tools out there, you are not alone. However, it is important to note that technology is not ultimately the focus of blended learning. *It is about helping students learn.* Once you start applying blended teaching, you will find that technology will become as invaluable and comfortable a tool to use in improving the learning experience of your students as a whiteboard, a book, or a worksheet is.

Here are some of the important knowledge and skills you can develop as a blended teacher.

2.3.1 Basic Literacy

You will need to become familiar with and use technologies on your own, troubleshoot issues that may arise, and find quality online content for use in your classroom.

- What technologies do you currently feel comfortable with? How did you learn to use them?
- Make a list of technologies you know of but that you don't use. Which one would you like to learn? How can you do so?

2.3.2 Digital Citizenship

Digital citizenship consists of modeling and teaching copyright laws and fair use, ensuring privacy and protection (passwords, no bullying, etc.), ensuring honesty, and ensuring access.

- What concerns do you have in any of these areas?

2.3.3 Learning management systems

Many blended teachers use learning management systems (LMS) to organize their classrooms. They keep grades, give announcements, and create content pages, quizzes, assignments, and discussion boards in the LMS.

- Does your school already use an LMS? Which one? How familiar are you with it? How can you learn more? Is there another teacher or a coach in your school who could help you?

2.3.4 Educational Software

Blended teachers have resources for finding content-specific educational software that helps them meet their learning objectives.

- What content specific educational software are you aware of? Does your school already subscribe to any?
- Are there any free sources you can use?

2.3.5 Media Creation Tools

These tools help teachers create or edit online materials to meet specific needs. They are also tools that students can use to create.

- What media creation tools are you familiar with?
- How could you use them to create materials for your classroom?
- How could you let your students use them to learn or to demonstrate learning?

2.3.6 Communication Tools

Blended teachers use a variety of tools for communicating with their students, parents, administrators, and other stakeholders. They also leverage these tools to help students communicate and collaborate with each other.

- How can greater communication with students, parents, administrators, and others help enhance your teaching ability and your students' learning experiences?
- What tools do you already use to interact with others? Could some be adapted to use with students and others?
- What new tools (such as Flipgrid) could you incorporate into your classroom?

🏛️ 2.4 Online Integration

Online Integration focuses on the teacher's ability to make and implement decisions related to selecting when and how to effectively combine online and in-person learning as part of core instruction.

Online integration is the one competency that is truly integral to blended teaching. Why is this so? If you don't have some kind of strategic combination of online and in-person instruction, you don't have blended teaching. However, don't let this overwhelm you. All of the other competencies we will discuss provide specific tools to use in integrating the online and in-person space.

- What part of your instruction could be moved online so that you have more time to spend one-on-one or in small groups with students?
- How could you make this content available to students in the online space?
- What parts of student learning are especially well suited to in-person learning?
- How can using the online space help make learning more interactive and personalized?

Read more about online integration practices in the in K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume 1).

🏛️ 2.5 Online Interaction

Online Interaction focuses on the teacher's ability to facilitate online interactions with and between students. Online interaction in a blended teaching classroom broadens the opportunity for students and teachers to communicate with one another about their learning. Online interaction might include digital instruction, discussions, and feedback.

In 1989, Michael Moore defined three different types of learning interactions: (1) Student–content, (2) Student–instructor, (3) Student–student. Moore explained that each type of interaction contributes to a quality learning experience. Though Moore defined these types of learning interactions in a discussion about distance learning, they also apply to online interactions that occur in blended teaching.

Online student–content interaction occurs when students engage with online learning materials by reading, listening, watching, and/or reflecting. Online student–instructor interaction occurs when students have opportunities to apply what they have learned from their content interactions, demonstrate new knowledge, and receive feedback in an online forum from the teacher as the "expert." Finally, online student–student interaction occurs when students communicate online with one another—sharing their understanding and building on what they have learned.

One of the key elements to being able to leverage the advantages of blended learning is the ability to create a positive, supportive, and safe space—not only in the physical classroom, but in the online space as well. Just as students must develop an understanding of the rules, routines, and procedures for communicating and participating in-person, they must also learn the guidelines for online interaction.

Read more about online interaction in K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume 1).

2.5.1 Online discussions

One of the major interactions that can happen in an online setting is the use of discussions. The advantage of online discussions is that they are one of the few online activities that can combine all three types of interactions. Students usually read or view materials to prepare for the discussion (student–content interaction), then share their thoughts with their peers (student–student interaction) in a forum that is moderated by the instructor (student–instructor interaction). As a result, online discussions can be critical in helping students achieve course outcomes because they provide students with a variety of interactions.

Discussion Variations

Online discussions can happen synchronously (in real time) or asynchronously (not in real time). The advantages of an asynchronous discussion is that it allows additional flexibility in time, place, and depth of reflection. Online discussions can also range from low fidelity (mostly text based with no communication cues) to higher fidelity (video communication with more communication cues). Higher fidelity discussions that utilize video or audio discussion platforms contain many of the communication cues that we are used to having in person.

Learning Objectives

It takes careful thought and preparation to create an effective online discussion. Once you have established guidelines, you must figure out how an online discussion can support and improve student learning. It is helpful to keep in mind what you want students to know and take away from the online discussion. You might want to communicate this rationale with students, highlighting what you hope they will gain from their participation.

Once you have determined your objective(s), consider how you are going to make sure that students meet them. You may want to think about the source material students will need to read or watch prior to participating, how the online discussion will inform in-person discussions, and whether the discussion will be started, continued, or finished in the online setting.

Effective Prompts

All good online discussions begin with well-planned discussion prompts. You may wish to consider a range of question types depending on the specific objectives and what you want students to take away from the discussion. These questions can take a variety of forms, similar to any in-class discussion. As Davis (2009) described, you might consider asking the following types of questions:

- Exploratory questions: probe facts and basic knowledge
- Challenge questions: interrogate assumptions, conclusions, or interpretations
- Relational questions: ask for comparisons of themes, ideas, or issues
- Diagnostic questions: probe motives or causes
- Action questions: call for a conclusion or action
- Cause-and-effect questions: ask for causal relationships between ideas, actions, or events
- Extension questions: expand the discussion
- Hypothetical questions: pose a change in the facts or issues
- Priority questions: seek to identify the most important issue(s)
- Summary questions: elicit synthesis

These question types can be mapped to Bloom's Taxonomy, ranging from those that focus on factual information such as exploratory questions, to others that require more in-depth synthesis and evaluation.

Online discussions are more productive when teachers give participants explicit instructions. You will want to model the nature of the posts you are expecting. Directions may also include a number of factors such as post length, style of writing, specific formatting conventions students are expected to follow, required references, expectations for number of replies, who will respond to whom, and when initial posts and response posts are due. You can group these aspects into categories of structure, content, flow, and timing. Each aspect of these categories is described in Table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of Online Posts

Category	Factor	Description
Structure	Length	How long should posts be? Can you include a range of the number of words expected? Should the post be a certain number of sentences or paragraphs?
	Style	How formal do you expect the language to be? While it might be more conversational, the tone should still be academic in nature. Helping students strike this balance is important to model in online discussions.
	Formatting	Are there any guidelines you want students to follow when posting , such as a specific title for the subject line? Should students use a greeting and a closing in their responses? Is there specific content you want in each paragraph?
Content	Requirements	Are there sources/references the students need to connect to or cite in their responses? What ideas must students present in their posts?
Flow	Replies	How many posts/responses are required to adequately participate in the discussion? How will students know who to respond to?
Timing	Due Dates	When are initial posts due? Do students have enough time to understand the material or discussion before posting?

Managing Discussions

One of the mistakes that teachers who are new to blended learning often make is using their LMS to create whole class discussion activities. It can be okay to have a class discussion board for sharing general ideas about class or asking general questions, but these are not ideal for creating student-student interactions. If the discussion group consists of more than 10 members, it becomes very difficult for each member of the group to read all the posts and know what has been said and what has not been said. Additionally, large discussion groups make it more difficult to create a sense of community, whereas members of a small group have a better chance of getting to know one another.

For managing discussions, breaking your class into smaller groups can be helpful. You might consider creating groups with between 4 and 6 members (certainly fewer than 10). If you want all students to get a sense of the discussion happening throughout the entire class, groups can have their discussion and then report to the entire class with a synthesis activity. Another strategy is to assign specific roles within the small discussion group to focus students' contributions. Over a series of weeks, these roles can rotate so that each student has an opportunity to fulfill each role. Several possible discussion roles might be facilitator, devil's advocate, connector, explorer, and summarizer (North, 2017).

When facilitating online discussions, it is also important to strike the right balance in terms of teacher interaction. Too little teacher interaction and students can feel like no one is listening. Too much and you run the risk of dominating the discussion which can limit or hamper students' interactions, both in terms of quality and quantity.

You will also want to establish guidelines for giving students credit for discussion board participation, and provide ways to allocate points for posting regularly, responding to classmates' posts, staying on topic, and responding in a thoughtful manner. Assessing the quality as well as the quantity of the students' online posts is important. Using rubrics will allow students to have clear guidelines of your expectations for the quality of their posts.

2.5.2 Feedback

Effective feedback highlights strengths and areas for improvement for student work, is given promptly and respectfully, and motivates students to improve. Feedback should build relationships, offer praise, suggest corrections, and offer support. In a blended classroom online tools can be used to facilitate these goals. Online rubrics within most learning management systems help teachers to quickly assess and communicate expectations to students. Feedback templates may be used to provide feedback about common weaknesses by completing a digital form for each student. Video and audio comments can allow for more complex feedback.

Peer Feedback

Quality peer feedback can allow teachers to spend their time more effectively. For instance, you can implement a three-before-me policy that requires students to receive feedback from three peers before submitting the project to you for feedback. John Hattie's (2008) review of research found that 80% of feedback that students receive comes from their peers. Unfortunately, 80% of that feedback is incorrect! As a result, you should help students learn how to provide quality feedback to their peers. For instance, you can create specific rubrics and then help students understand how to use those rubrics while providing feedback (2008).

Teacher Feedback

Student to teacher feedback can improve learning for all students. Again, John Hattie's seminal synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to student achievement highlights the need for student-provided feedback. Hattie explained, "the most important feature was the creation of situations in classrooms for the teacher to receive more feedback about their teaching" because it created a "ripple effect back to the student" (2008, p. 12). Online communication can help students provide you with meaningful feedback because their comments can be anonymous. It can also give students the opportunity to provide you with feedback at any time. For instance, you could create an anonymous feedback survey using Google Forms linked in the sidebar of a course website that students can access while they are working on assignments.

Supporting Learning with Online Interaction

Sometimes teachers don't see a need to communicate online if students have the opportunity to do so in-person. However, there are advantages and disadvantages to both in-person and online communication. The challenge is leveraging the advantages of both in-person and online interaction. Some of the strengths of online communication include:

- **Flexibility:** Students can contribute to the discussion at the time and place that is most convenient and comfortable to them.
- **Participation:** All students can participate because time and place constraints are removed. The discussion is not limited to the time that class is meeting or to the students that are present or feel most comfortable speaking in front of others.
- **Depth of reflection:** Students have time to carefully consider their claims, provide supporting evidence, and engage in deeper, more thoughtful reflections (Mikulecky, 1998; Benbunan-Fich & Hiltz, 1999).

Notice how the strengths of online communication are some of the weaknesses of in-person communication.

2.5.3 Conclusion

Online interaction facilitates student learning by taking advantage of the strengths of both in-person and online communication. You can begin or improve your blended teaching by considering the advice and guidelines recommended in this chapter.

2.6 Data Practices

Data Practices focus on the teacher's ability to use digital tools to monitor student activity and performance in order to make informed choices about interventions and to help all students progress.

Read more about data practices in K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume 1).

2.6.1 Performance Data

Performance data shows direct measures of how students perform on assessments. It may include measures such as grade books and state and national exams. Performance data can also be found in mastery or performance dashboards in an LMS.

2.6.2 Activity Data

Activity data are indirect measure of student participation and engagement. It includes attendance, participation, LMS log-in times, and engagement. Some of this data can be found in LMS dashboards; other data could come from one-on-one interviews or observations.

2.6.3 Learner Profile Data

Learner profile data are measures of a learner's background, interests, goals, and preferences. These data are just as important to data-driven instruction as performance data and activity data if teachers want to provide data-driven instruction and help students to personalize their learning.

Read more about learner profile data in section 4.1.3 in the Personalization chapter of K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume I).

2.7 Personalization

Personalizing instruction focuses on the teacher's ability to implement a learning environment that allows for student customization of their learning goals, pacing, time, place, and/or path. It is the process by which teachers shift their focus from a classroom in its entirety to individual students. Through personalization, students begin to understand how they learn and how they become life-long learners. Helping students learn how to learn is a goal that almost all teachers have for their students; the question therefore becomes, "How do I empower to students to personalize their learning in my classroom?"

Personalization means allowing a student's needs and desires to motivate what, when, where, and how the student meets the learning outcomes for a course (Patrick et al., 2013). This involves the teacher giving the students more freedom while still guiding and facilitating the learning process in the classroom. It is helpful to think about how learning can be personalized across various instructional elements, dimensions of personalization, and levels of student agency.

Read more about personalization in K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume 1).

2.7.1 Personalization Across Instructional Elements

Learning can be personalized along any of the three elements that commonly make up instruction: learning objectives, assessments, and learning activities (Figure 5). Describing the personalized learning of these elements helps explain what is being personalized.

Figure 5

Instructional Elements According to Backward Design
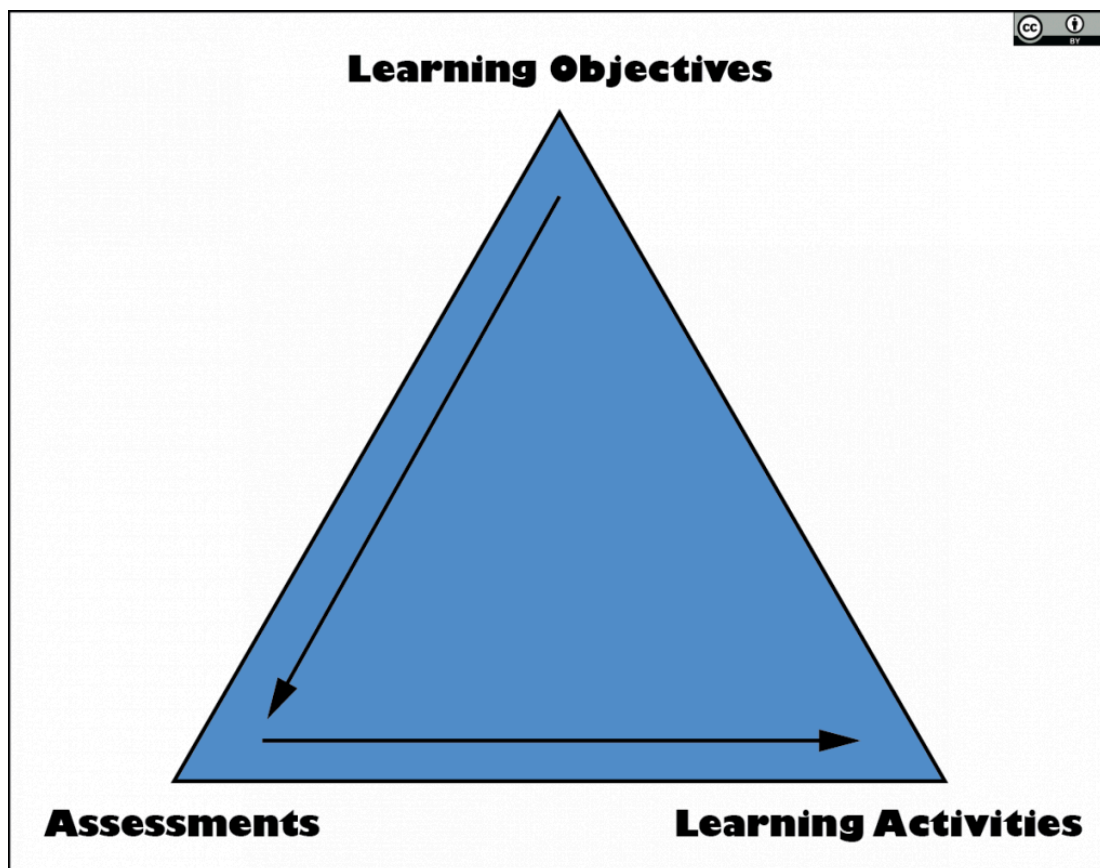
"Backward Design" created by Cecil R. Short is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution International 4.0 License

While some assessments may have mandated times, places, and formats, other assessments may offer students some flexibility in demonstrating their knowledge or ability. For instance, some assessments can be personalized by allowing students to choose how they show their understanding; the level of mastery they hope to attain on the assessment; how quickly an assessment must be completed; or even when and where the assessment should be completed—such as at home or in an alternate school environment during class, before school, or after school.

Similar to assessments, learning activities can also be personalized by allowing students to choose from various kinds of activities, formats, or media to use in preparing for assessments; how quickly learning should occur; when and where

study or completion of learning activities should occur; with whom the student would like to work; or even the learning habits students aim to develop while completing the learning activities.

We further discuss how these instructional elements can be personalized by describing the various dimensions of personalized learning below (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Dimensions of Personalized Learning

"Five Dimensions of Personalization" created by Jered Borup is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 International License](#)

2.7.2 Goals

Teachers often feel pressure to make sure their students meet certain outcomes by the end of their time together. These learning outcomes and requirements are usually designated on the district, state, or even national level. However, students can benefit from being encouraged to set, track, and achieve their own short-term goals throughout their learning. As teachers help their students to make Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Based (SMART) Goals (see Figure 5), they show that students are responsible for their own learning and give students the tools to reach their potential (Graham et al., 2019).

Figure 7

SMART Goals

It is important that both teacher and student work together to set appropriate goals to help the student reach the outcomes for the course and for personal growth. These goals, which can be academic (performance-based) or behavioral (habit-based), will allow the student to feel accomplished as they reach their own milestones throughout the course. The personalization of goals and the individual process of setting them will help motivate struggling students, showing them that they are growing in meaningful ways, and challenge advanced students, allowing them to set goals at their own level. Students and their teachers can also decide on personalized means of assessing if the students are reaching their goals and the learning outcomes for the course.

Not a Personalized Goal	Personalized Goal
The teacher decides that students will work towards 80% mastery of an assessment for a specific state standard.	Students aim for different levels of mastery, based on their previous performance data.

2.7.3 Time

Photo by [Ales Krivec](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Like most people, students often have a preferred time of the day in which they are mentally more astute and a preferred amount of time they can efficiently spend on a single task. As teachers get to know their students, they may begin to understand what these times are for each student. Personalizing time in a classroom allows students to focus on their more difficult content areas while they are more alert. In a full-day class, this may mean allowing some students to write in the morning, while others may choose to do so after lunch. In a period-based schedule, this may mean working with students to adapt the times and dates assignments are due, motivating students to work on their assignments at a time that cognitively works best for them. Additionally, some students may wish to work at home or

on a project before or after school. Personalizing time means allowing students to have access to the materials they need when they need them. It should also be noted that allowing students to work at a time that is best for them may also mean allowing them to work at a pace that is best for them.

Not a Personalized Time	Personalized Time
The teacher chooses when the whole class will participate in an instructional activity.	Students choose how to spend their time during a class's "flex" time.

2.7.4 Place

The personalization of place consists of both the location in which the students are learning and the people with whom they are learning (Graham et al., 2019). Personalizing place in a classroom allows students to learn the types of environments and interactions that are most conducive to their individual productivity while in a structured, low-stakes setting. This knowledge will benefit them as they graduate and move on to more high-pressured environments, such as college and careers. Teachers can open the space in their classroom to allow students to work in different groups or stations, or they may allow more freedom in what happens in the classroom or at home. The teacher can be in only one place at a time, so technology often plays a role in allowing students to have flexibility in the location of their learning by providing them with access to learning materials.

It is important to note that personalization is not always a separating process. There are many ways to group students in a classroom: in pairs or in small groups, with similarly skilled students working together, or with students on a spectrum of skills helping and tutoring each other (Graham et al., 2019). Teachers must decide how much freedom they give their students in determining both the other students in their groups and their roles within their respective groups.

Not a Personalized Place	Personalized Place
The teacher creates a seating chart and each student is expected to sit in his or her assigned seat.	Students are given a choice of where to sit based on several flexible seating options.

2.7.5 Pace

Personalizing pace allows students to adjust the speed at which they complete learning activities and content. While teachers may need to set a minimum pace at which student are allowed to work, adjusting the flow of material for each student helps to ensure that those who need more time to absorb the material are not left behind, while those who may grasp a particular concept more quickly are able to advance to activities that allow them to further develop their knowledge.

Not a Personalized Pace	Personalized Pace
The teacher determines when the class begins and ends working on a lesson or unit.	Students are able to work through units at the speed that works best for them, working ahead or slowing down as needed.

2.7.6 Path

A personalized learning path consists of students choosing how they will achieve a specific learning outcome or personalized goal. While the personalized goal or learning outcome is the end result, with personalized paths the students are able to decide the learning activities they complete as they strive to reach that goal. These options can take a variety of forms: students choosing assignments from a list of different learning activities that all teach the same principle, students deciding whether they would rather listen to instructions through a recording or read them on a page, or students each choosing how they will show mastery at the end of a unit. While these methods help the students to

feel ownership and connection to their learning, it also can prevent the tedium of grading worksheets or multiple-choice exams for every unit.

Not a Personalized Path	Personalized Path
The teacher determines the sequence of activities that everyone in the class will complete.	Students choose from among a list of activities that will help move them towards mastery.

2.7.7 How to Begin Personalizing, Levels of Learner Agency

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While the task of personalizing a classroom seems daunting, it is important to realize that teachers do not need to start implementing all five dimensions of personalization across learning objectives, assessments, and learning actvities all at once. There are some domains that may already fit within a classroom's structure and others that may follow later. For example, a teacher may begin by helping students set their own goals, which might eventually develop into the personalization of path. The most important criteria are that a teacher starts with a student-centered mentality, builds a support system, and has a personalization plan in mind.

Becoming student-centered

The task of personalizing a classroom requires more than just a structural change in a classroom. It also requires the humility and patience to allow students more autonomy in their learning. The teacher must step away from a lecturing role and into the role of a facilitator and a guide, which often means getting to know the students in a more personal way. While it may be unfeasible to sit down with every student on a regular basis, even simple connections like sending surveys about students' preferences and needs can go a long way. These surveys can contain both multiple-choice sorting questions (Do you prefer reading instructions, watching video instructions, or both?) and open-ended, interest-

based questions (What do you like to do in your free time?) (Graham et al., 2019). The answers to questions like these can be used to develop a more student-centered classroom.

Short (2022) notes that teaching can incorporate four different levels of learner agency for personalization (See Figure 6). These levels are outlined as follows:

- Level 1 - Generalized Instruction. At this level, the instruction is largely teacher-centered and takes a "one-size-fits-all" approach to learning.
- Level 2 - Individualized Instruction. Instruction includes some differentiation, individualization, or adaptation. These modifications come from the teacher making decisions based on students' needs, interests, and abilities, or from technology that measures student knowledge or abilities and adapts instruction based on such data.
- Level 3 - Limited Choice. Students have some choice over their learning related to the goals, time, place, pace, and/or path of their learning. At this level, teachers provide students with options to choose from such as various levels of mastery to work toward, various forms of assessment to complete, or various videos to watch.
- Level 4 - Free Choice. Students fully direct the goals, time, place, pace, and/or path of their learning. At this level, students have full autonomy in directing their learning. It may be uncommon in K-12 contexts for students to reach this level all the time but there are opportunities for students to practice this level of agency. For example, students may freely choose the topic of an essay or whom to work with for completing a project.

Figure 8

Short's Taxonomy of Learner Agency
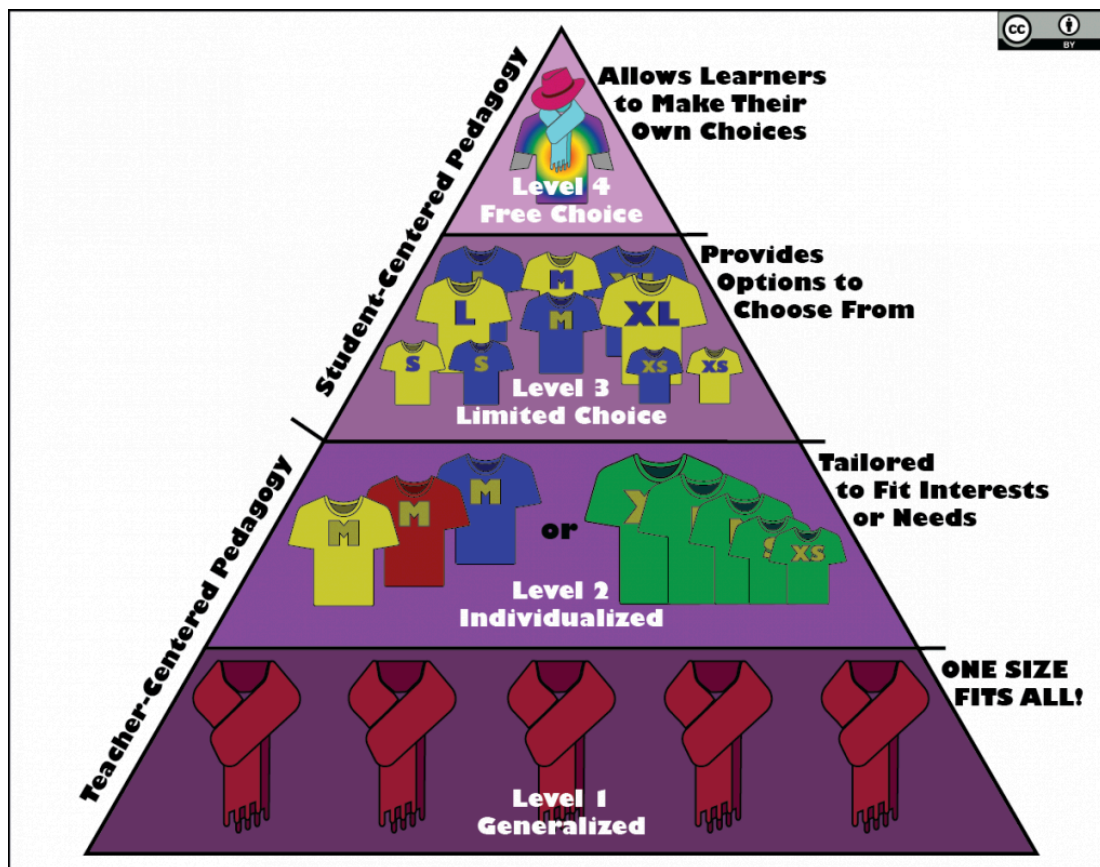
These four levels of agency can be applied to any of the five dimensions of personalized learning (goals, time, place, pace, and path) and to any of the three elements of instruction (learning objectives, assessments, and learning

activities).

Developing a support system

Personalized learning is not the same as giving students free reign in the classroom. In order to truly help students, teachers need to find a balance between the overall structure of the classroom and the flexibility of student choice within that structure. As the teacher begins a school year with a plan of what decisions the students will be able to make and which ones the teacher will resolve, the teacher will be more prepared to help students reach their full potential. However, in order to truly be student-minded, teachers must remember to maintain a flexible mindset as they create personalization plans. Once teachers begin to understand the unique individuals in their classrooms, they will be able to fine-tune their plans for personalization in a way that supports those students.

Personalization plan

Personalizing learning is not the same as giving students free reign in the classroom. In order to truly help students, teachers need to find balance between the overall structure of the classroom and the flexibility of student choice within that structure. As the teacher begins a school year with a plan of what decisions the students will be able to make and which ones the teacher will resolve, the teacher will be more prepared to help students reach their full potential. However, in order to truly be student-minded, teachers must remember to maintain a flexible mindset as they create personalization plans. Once teachers begin to understand the unique individuals in their classrooms, they will be able to fine-tune their initial plans for personalization in a way that supports those students.

Teachers Talk: Results of Personalization

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Personalization is by no means easy, but it is feasible. As teachers approach their classrooms with the students' needs in the center of their pedagogy, the needs and desires of the students will frame how the learning outcomes are presented, achieved, and demonstrated. Students and teachers will benefit from the preparation and dedication that each will put forward in the learning process.

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# Evaluating Blended Teaching with the 4Es and PICRAT

Jered Borup, Charles R. Graham, Cecil R. Short, & Joan Kang Shin

In the first chapter, we explored several scenarios and purposes for blending your students' learning. Regardless of your reasons for blending, it's important to evaluate your teaching and students' learning. Blended learning is the strategic combination of online and in-person instruction. But how will you know if your blended learning strategies are producing the intended results? As you implement your blended learning strategies, it's important that you examine and evaluate their effectiveness and how it has (or hasn't) benefited students' learning. Building on previous research and frameworks such as David Merrill's (2009) e3 and Liz Kolb's (n.d.) TripleE frameworks, we identified four evaluation criteria to determine the effectiveness of your blended learning strategies (see Figure 1). Specifically, our 4Es framework asks if your blended learning strategies:

- ENABLE new types of learning activities.
- ENGAGE students in meaningful interactions with others and the course content.
- ELEVATE the learning activities by including real-world skills that benefit students beyond the classroom.
- EXTEND the time, place, and ways that students can master learning objectives.

Figure 1

The 4 Es
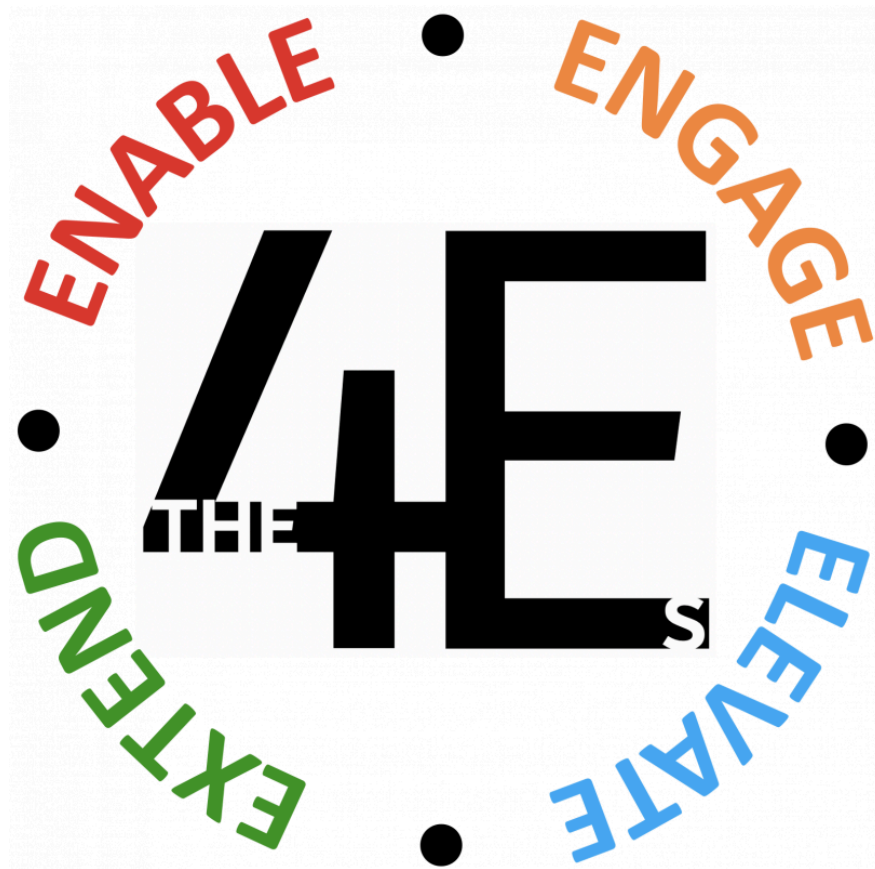
"The 4Es" created by Jered Borup, CC BY SA

🏛️3.1 Enable

> **Guiding Question**
>
> Do your blended learning strategies ENABLE new types of learning activities?

[Kimmons et al. (2020)](#) used the RAT framework to explain that blended learning strategies can use technology in ways that replace, amplify, or transform learning activities (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

The Rat Framework

REPLACES — Technology sustains current practice without making meaningful changes to the learning activity.

AMPLIFIES — Technology incrementally improves the learning activity in ways that may result in some improvements in learning outcomes.

TRANSFORMS — Technology fundamentally changes the learning activity in ways that may result in significant improvements in learning outcomes.

Education has a long history of using technology to simply replace or digitize learning activities that were previously done without technology. For example:

- handwriting an essay is replaced by typing an essay.
- writing on a chalkboard is replaced by writing on a digital whiteboard. Chalk on a board is replaced by pixels on a screen.
- reading a textbook is replaced by reading an eBook.

These replacements can be a fine use of technology. As long as students have access to the technology, digitizing learning activities can reduce costs following the initial investment to purchase the technology. Additionally, replacing a learning activity using technology can make some learning activities more efficient than they would be without technology. For instance, an essay typed in a word processor can be revised more easily and quickly than a handwritten essay. However, simply replacing an activity will not improve learning outcomes. Best case scenario, students will achieve the same learning outcomes—only more quickly and/or cheaply.

To enable new types of learning that improve learning outcomes, teachers need to use blended learning strategies that move beyond replacing to using strategies that actually amplify or transform learning activities from what could be accomplished without technology.

Amplifying a learning activity requires teachers to introduce technology in ways that enable incremental improvements while the core of the activity remains largely the same. For instance, teachers may find that many of their students have met the target learning outcomes when they are reading students' essays. As a result, the teachers may choose to amplify the essay writing process by having students work in a collaborative document that enables better collaborative opportunities, peer reviews, instructor feedback, and editing. Students can also include multimedia elements to enhance what is written in the essay. Or teachers may use technology in ways that allow students to publish and share their essays in authentic ways. Teachers may also use technology to improve pre-writing activities by engaging students in an online discussion activity to brainstorm and formulate ideas for their essays. What's important to recognize is that the core activity is still the same—writing an essay—but technology enables incremental improvements and enough of these improvements could impact learning outcomes.

Transforming a learning activity is different than amplifying it because the teachers' goal isn't to improve the activity; rather, it's to use blended learning strategies in ways that introduces a new learning activity that they wouldn't be able to do without technology. For instance, rather than making improvements to the essay, teachers may choose to transform

the learning activity by holding a film festival where students write a script, edit a video, and then "premiere" their videos to their classmates and others that are invited to participate.

🏛️ 3.2 Engage

> ## Guiding Question
>
> Do your blended learning strategies ENGAGE students in meaningful interactions with others and the course content?

Engagement is a term with many different meanings. Borup et al.'s (2020) review of research identified three dimensions of engagement:

- Behavioral engagement: the physical behaviors required to complete the learning activity.
- Emotional engagement: the positive emotional energy associated with the learning activity.
- Cognitive engagement: the mental energy that a student exerts toward the completion of the learning activity.

Teachers will often refer to these three dimensions of engagement when they talk about engaging students' hands, hearts, and heads (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

The Three Dimensions of Engagement

"Engagement" created by Jered Borup using images from Pixabay, CC BY SA

Of the three dimensions of engagement, behavioral engagement is the easiest to observe and categorize. Specifically, Kimmons et al. (2020) used the PIC framework to identify three types of behavioral engagement: passive, interactive, and creative (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

The PIC Framework

| **P** ASSIVE | Students simply consume presented information. |
| **I** NTERACTIVE | Students take some control over their learning by interacting with others or learning materials |
| **C** REATIVE | Students use technology to create original materials and artifacts. |
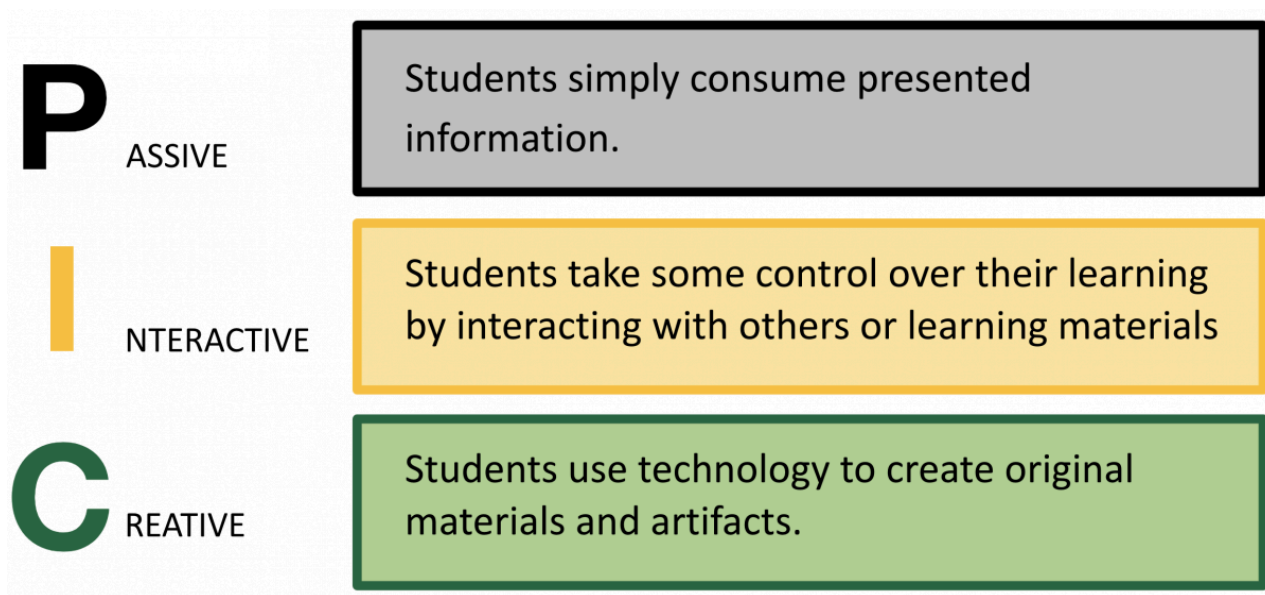
Passive learning examples include students watching a video, listening to a podcast, and attending a lecture. In some ways, these passive learning tasks represent the lack of engagement because they don't require or even allow for students to make meaningful choices or contributions.

Interactive activities are dynamic and require students to actively participate. Interactive activities include tasks where students are interacting with online content and tools. Interactive activities can also include opportunities for students to communicate with others such as the teacher, other students, and those outside of the classroom (see Figure 5).

Figure 5

Four Types of Interaction

Four Types of Interaction
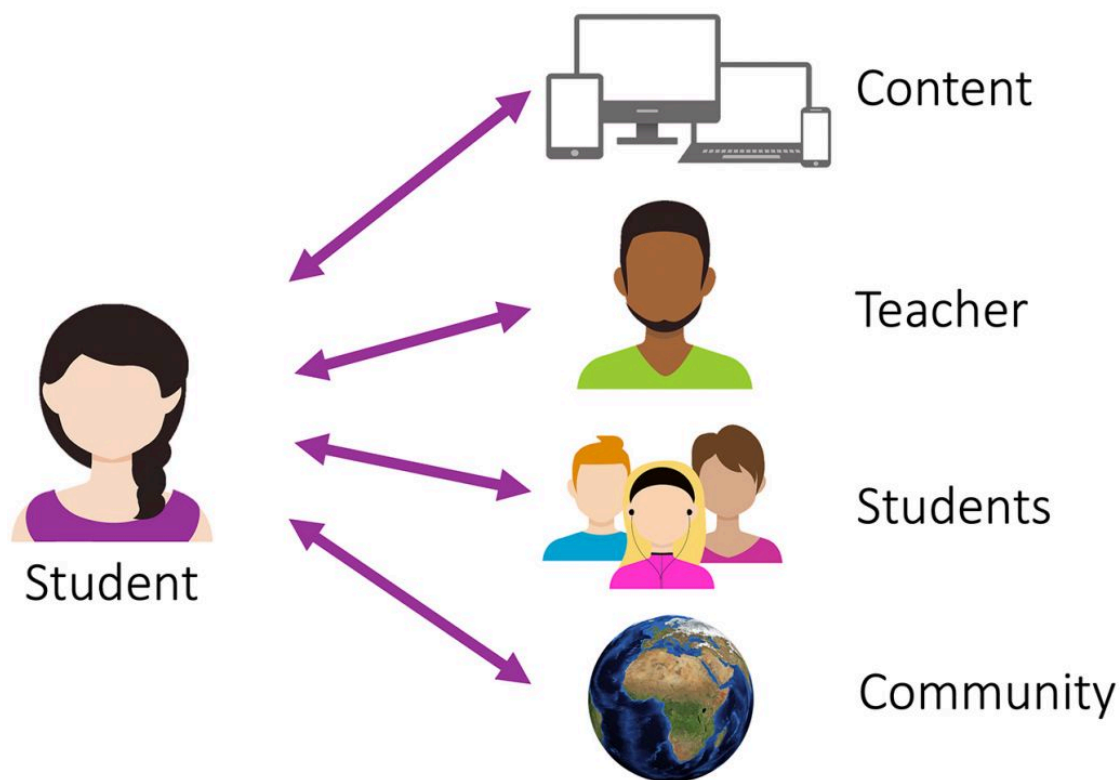
Creative activities go beyond participation to actually creating something original like a blog post, edited video, or digital poster. Table 1 shares some additional examples of online passive, interactive, and creative activities.

Table 1

Examples of Passive, Interactive, and Creative Activities.

Passive	Interactive	Creative
- Watching a video. - Listening to a podcast. - Reading an online article.	- Playing educational games. - Participating in an online discussion. - Asking a virtual guest speaker questions.	- Writing an essay. - Editing a video. - Making an infographic. - Creating a website.

It's important to note that each type of behavioral engagement is important at different stages of the learning process. For instance, students may passively listen to a short lecture or watch a video before interacting with their peers regarding their thoughts about what they learned during the passive activity. Similarly, if students are tasked with creating a video essay, they will likely start with passive activities to develop a background understanding of the topic or to learn how to use the video editing program. Students could then interact with their peers to collaboratively create the video. Instructors can also consider when and where passive learning activities occur. For example, sometimes a flipped classroom trades having a passive video watching experience online to make time and space for an interactive/creative learning experience in-person.

When evaluating your blended teaching, it's important to see the value of passive learning activities while also understanding that these types of activities are limited in terms of deepening students' learning. Passive activities like watching a video or reading an article alone do not require students to demonstrate their comprehension of content or encourage higher levels of cognitive engagement, such as applying, evaluating, or creating. Too much time spent in

passive learning activities will limit your students' engagement so be sure to leave ample time for interactive and creative activities.

The following table provides examples of how technology can be used to replace, amplify, and transform activities that don't originally include digital technology (see Figure 6). As you read the table, notice that passive activities can be amplified or transformed by using technology to make the learning less passive and more interactive. Similarly, teachers can amplify and transform activities that are already interactive by using technology to adjust the time and place of the interactions or by allowing students to move beyond interactive activities to creative activities.

Figure 6

Examples Showing the Use of Technology to Replace, Amplify, and Transform No-tech Activities

	REPLACES	AMPLIFIES	TRANSFORMS
CREATIVE ACTIVITY Students color and label a paper map of the continents.	Students label an online map and selecting colors for each continent.	Students use a tool like ThingLink to add videos and images that highlight the different attributes of each continent.	Rather than create a map, students collaboratively create a travel website that highlights the different continents for visiting extraterrestrials.
INTERACTIVE ACTIVTY Students engage in a classroom debate to demonstrate persuasive techniques.	During class time, students engage in a "silent debate" where comments are written on a discussion forum rather than spoken aloud.	Students engage in a debate that combines in-person communication with asynchronous online communication to increase student participation and reflection.	Rather than engage in a class debate, students collaboratively work on a school-wide or community campaign that includes digital campaigning using posters and public service announcements.
PASSIVE ACTIVITY Students listen to an in-person lecture to learn new concepts.	Students watch a video or online lecture.	Students watch a recorded lecture using a tool such as EdPuzzle that requires students to periodically answer multiple-choice questions.	Rather than watch a lecture, students learn concepts using adaptive learning software that automatically adapts what is taught based on student performance.

NO-Tech Activity   REPLACES **R**   AMPLIFIES **A**   TRANSFORMS **T**

Kimmons et al. (2020) combined the PIC and RAT frameworks to form the PIC-RAT matrix that allows teachers to to chart how technology is being used in their blended learning strategies (see Figure 7). The matrix is a helpful tool for teachers to consider what the technology is adding to the activity. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is the technology being used to increase student engagement by making learning activities more interactive and/or creative?
2. Is the technology being used to simply replace activities or to amplify and transform activities?

Figure 7

The PIC-RAT Matrix
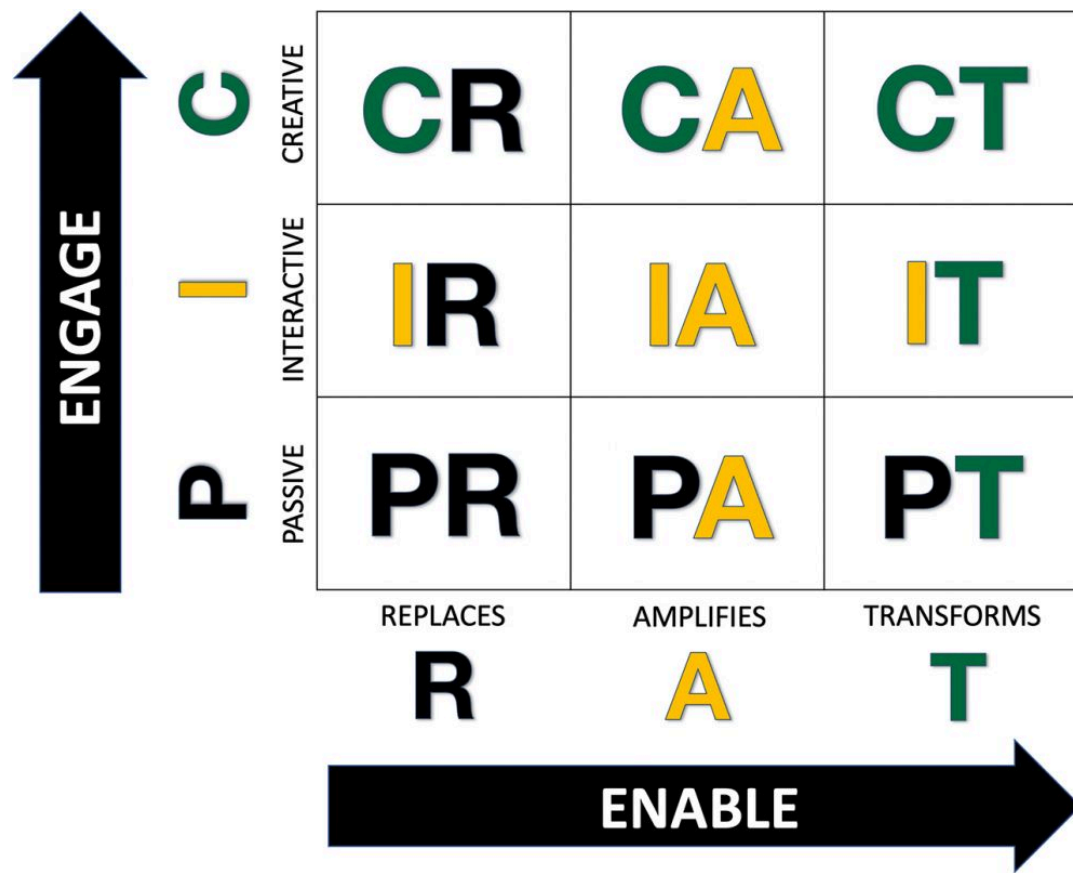
When planning new blended or online activities, we recommend starting by focusing on the learning objective(s), then pulling out a piece of paper or pulling up a word processing document and filling out the PIC-RAT matrix (see Figure 8) with various ways that technology could be used to teach the learning objective(s).

Figure 8

Blank PIC-RAT Framework for Brainstorming Activities Using Technology
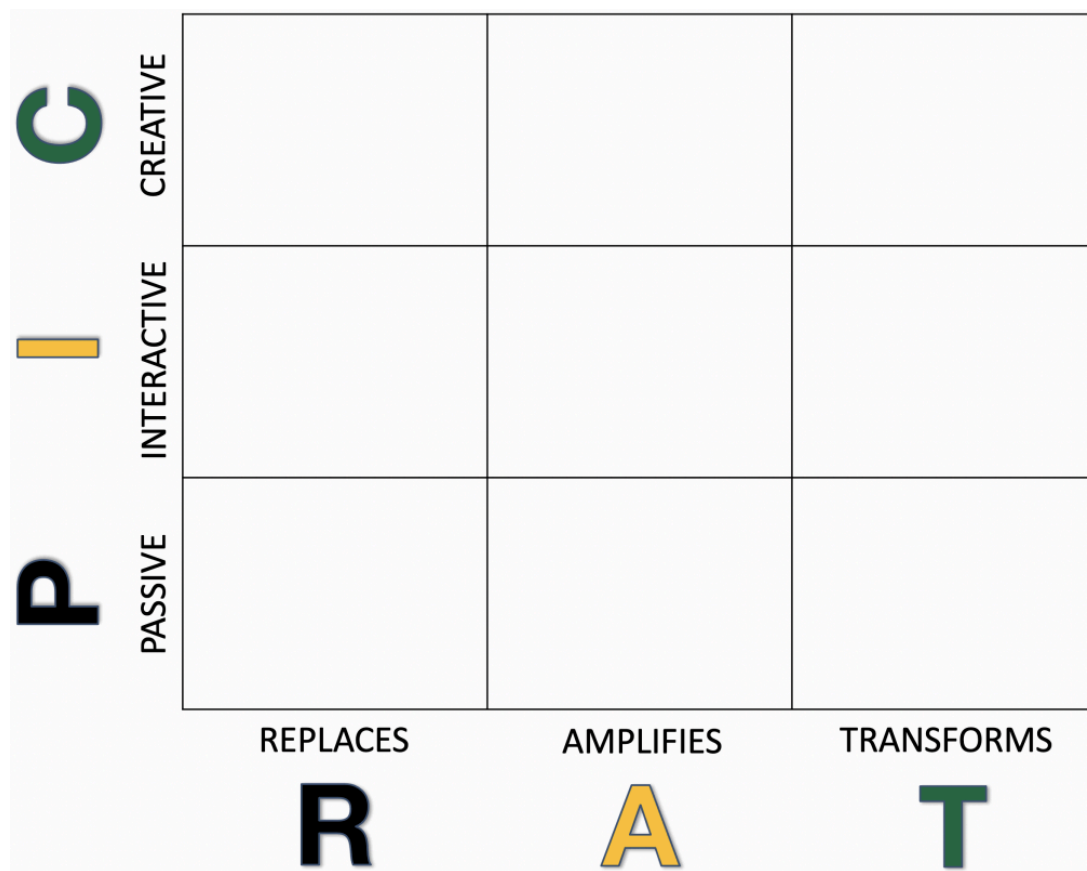
Moving up and across the matrix will likely improve the learning activity, but it's also important to note that the PIC-RAT matrix doesn't actually measure the quality of the learning activity. It's possible for teachers to transform a learning activity by having students create something that wouldn't be possible without technology and still not actually improve students' learning or experience. In fact, it is possible to transform students' learning for the worse. For instance, using the example shared above, a teacher may transform an essay writing activity so that students create an edited video instead. While this transformation may be positive for many students, there could be some students who detest making an edited video and refuse to participate. Similarly, a teacher may transform a passive learning activity into a creative learning activity that isn't as aligned to the learning outcomes. As a result, when amplifying or transforming a learning activity to increase students' behavioral engagement it's important to consider the other two dimensions of engagement—emotional engagement and cognitive engagement. Students will perceive the activity as "busy work" if teachers only engage their hands but fail to also engage their hearts and minds (see Figure 9).

Figure 9

Busy Work

Busy Work

BEHAVIORAL   EMOTIONAL   COGNITIVE
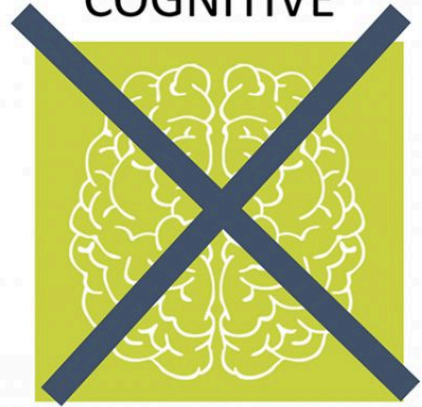
As you go through these chapters, you have the opportunity to reflect on what you have learned and to design your own activities in the Blended Teaching Workbook. Click on the link to access your workbook. Make sure you save a copy and keep it available, so you can return to it as you go through the chapters.

✎ **Blended Teaching Workbook**

In your workbook is a copy of the PIC-RAT grid. Use it to brainstorm activities you could use in your classroom. You can access the workbook here.

🏛️ 3.3 Elevate

Guiding Question

Do your blended learning strategies ELEVATE the learning activities to include real-world skills that benefit students beyond the classroom?

In addition to creating learning activities aligned with the course learning objectives, teachers' blended learning strategies can elevate students' learning to also include real-world skills that benefit students beyond the classroom. For example, the Partnership for 21st Century Learning stresses the need for students to develop the 4Cs—communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity skills (https://www.battelleforkids.org/networks/p21). While widely-referenced and important, the 4Cs also take a somewhat narrow view of the skills that students need to succeed beyond the classroom. For Ontario's education agenda, Michael Fullan (2013) expanded on the 4Cs to include character education and citizenship. Social-emotional learning is also critical for human development. These skills are best developed in a social learning environment. Clearly, students can't develop communication, collaboration, and citizenship skills in isolation. Even critical thinking and creativity skills are best developed when working with others. This provides more support for balancing passive activities with interactive and creative activities while urging teachers to elevate their instruction.

Learning activities are also best elevated when activities are situated in authentic tasks and projects. There are three levels of authenticity when you are considering the problems and stakeholders that students will be working on and with (see Figure 10).

- Unrealistic: These scenarios and problems can be out of this world—literally! Stakeholders and problems can be science fiction and include anything from time traveling to establishing a colony on Mars. They are intended to make the unit more exciting and emotionally engaging while still requiring students to demonstrate important knowledge and real-world skills.
- Realistic: These are scenarios and problems that feel like they are real but aren't. Real people can even serve as stakeholders but they are really just acting. For example, students might simulate creating a new business by coming up with a new product and working in groups to come up with the name of the product, a business plan, and a marketing plan. It is completely realistic, but they won't be really starting a new business!
- Real: This is the gold standard because you have real people who are really interested in and will benefit from students' work. These stakeholders can be of any age and in and out of the school. For example, students could work in groups to discuss some problems in their community, such as littering in their local park or school grounds. They might create memes, GIFs, and short video public service announcements to urge people to keep the park and playground clean that they can post on social media and distribute through local government social media.

Figure 10

Levels of Authenticity
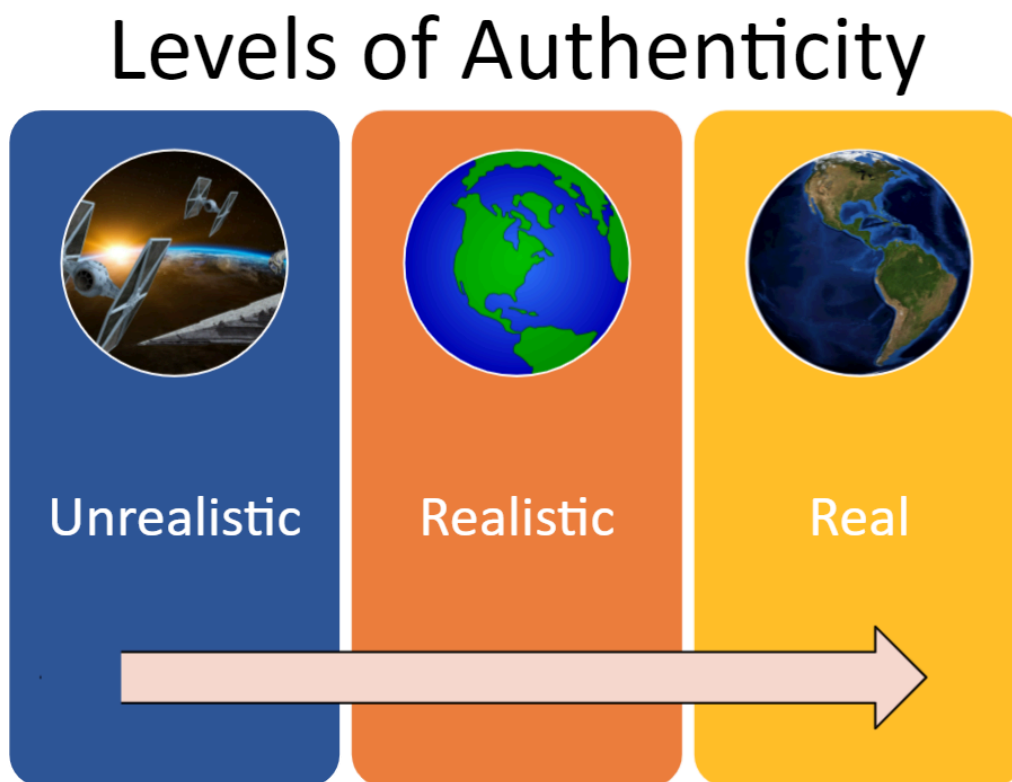
"Levels of Authenticity" created by Jered Borup using images from Pixabay, CC BY SA

Authentic assessments are often renewable rather than disposable. Consider the target audience of most assessments —who it is that students are completing assessments for—themselves, their community, their teacher? Often assessments are completed for an audience of one, the teacher. The teacher then evaluates the assessment, provides

the student with some feedback, returns the assessment to the student, and hopes that the student uses the feedback to enrich their learning before the assessment is discarded in the trash can (or on the floor, or left on a desk) when class ends. These assessments are often seen as "disposable assessments." They are meant to be used and then discarded without retaining any real-world value.

"A 'renewable assessment' differs in that the student's work won't be discarded at the end of the process, but will instead add value to the world in some way." ([David Wiley, 2016](#))

A movement toward assessments that can exist in a world that is larger than the four walls of a singular classroom can make learning more authentic and elevate what students learn and do beyond content-based curriculum and contexts. For example, a community college instructor found that having her students write an openly licensed textbook that would be shared with other students instead of traditional essays caused them to "write better than they've shown me in the past" ([Short et al., 2024](#)). Students want to know that their work matters and is destined for more than the nearest trashcan.

Table 2 gives some examples of renewable and disposable assessments.

Table 2

Renewable and Disposable Assessments

Renewable Assessments
• Students create a documentary about the life of a war veteran in their community.
• Students create tutorial videos to help teach math concepts to peers.
• Students create artwork to beautify the walls of city buildings.
• Students create a picture dictionary to share with younger students.

Disposable Assessments
• Multiple choice exam
• Short essay quiz
• 5-page paper to check understanding or ability
• Spelling test

Additional Resources
• [Renewable assignments: Student work adding value to the world](#)
• [Non-disposable Assignments in Intro to Philosophy](#)
• [From Consumer to Creator: Students as Producers of Content](#)
• [Are your assignments renewable or disposable?](#)
• [What is Open Pedagogy -> Killing the disposable assessment](#)

🏛️ **3.4 Extend**

Guiding Question

Do your blended learning strategies EXTEND the time, place, and ways that students can master learning objectives?

Another way that blended learning strategies can improve learning activities is by extending the time, location, and ways that students complete learning activities. Attempting to extend students' learning time and location is nothing new. For instance, students have long had flexibility in the time and location that they completed homework. However, too often students are tasked with completing homework without adequate support resulting in frustration for both students and parents, as hilariously shown in the following video clip.

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Using technology teachers can not only provide students with more sensory-rich learning materials, within a learning management system (LMS) they can also provide them with digital scaffolding and direction to successfully complete learning activities using those materials. For instance, it's relatively easy for teachers to create short instructional videos that can help students to learn new concepts or complete learning tasks. [One teacher (Farah, 2019),](#) explained that creating instructional videos allowed him to "clone" himself so students could receive his help in the moment they needed it, not when he was presently available to help them. Once teachers feel comfortable making quick videos, they can use them to provide targeted scaffolding anytime students find something confusing or difficult. This allows the teacher to tailor instruction to specific students or classes.

This use of technology can also provide students with the flexibility in the pace of their learning and allows teachers to implement mastery-based grading. For instance, when learning activities are clearly organized in an LMS, students can complete and submit assignments that the teacher can then review and provide feedback on until students achieve

mastery. Providing quality feedback efficiently is especially important in a mastery-based grading system. Although detailed feedback is always time-consuming, technology can help lighten the load as we will see in the following chapters of this book.

Teachers can also extend the ways in which students complete learning activities. For example, teachers may provide students with multiple learning paths to choose from using a choice board. A choice board is a graphic organizer, usually in a grid of 4, 6, or even 9 spaces, with activities that students can choose to do. Often teachers design them to appeal to their learners' interests, talents, and abilities. Creating multiple activities that all lead toward mastery of your learning objectives allows students choice in their learning path—hopefully with choices that will motivate them and inspire them to do their best work. Once learning has been extended, teachers can also provide students with opportunities to form their own learning path and/or set learning goals.

🏛 3.5 Conclusion

Combining in-person and online instruction doesn't mean that the blended learning will be high-quality—or even good. As you begin to blend your students' learning, you will likely find that some lessons or even entire instructional units don't go as well as expected. The opposite will also be true and you will find that other blended lessons and units go incredibly well. As blended teachers it's important to carefully evaluate what works and what needs to be improved or even replaced. The 4Es framework can help you recognize quality blended teaching and learning. Specifically, as you plan new blended instructional units or evaluate previous blended instruction, ask if your instructional unit would or did:

- ENABLE new types of learning activities.
- ENGAGE students in meaningful interactions with others and the course content.
- ELEVATE the learning activities by including real-world skills that benefit students beyond the classroom.
- EXTEND the time, place, and ways that students can master learning objectives.

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Discipline Specific Blended Teaching

Social Science (SS): Intro to Blended Teaching
SS: Why Blend?
SS: Online Integration & Management
SS: Online Interaction
SS: Data Practices
SS: Personalization

Social Science (SS): Intro to Blended Teaching

Lisa R. Halverson, Mark Stevens, Merinda M. Davis, Craig Perrier, Jered Borup, & Karen T. Arnesen

🏛4.1 Purpose
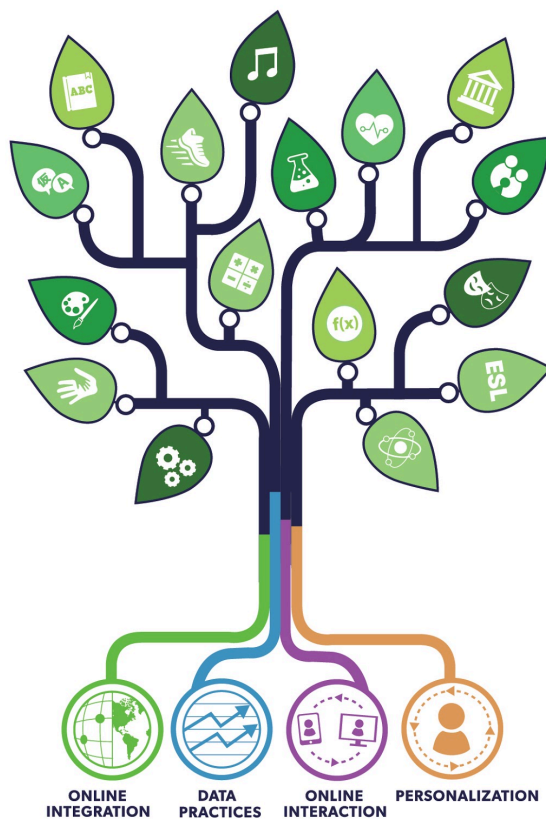
The purpose of this book is to help you prepare to design and implement blended learning within the Social Science (SS) classroom. The image on the cover of the book shows a broad range of disciplines, each represented by a branch of the tree. The four core skills for blended teaching are represented by the common roots of the tree that feed the branches.

While there are some broad commonalities in how blended learning looks across disciplines, there are also many subtle and unique approaches to blended teaching within each discipline. Social science teachers can benefit from examples

of blended teaching in SS classrooms. As a result, this book is geared towards providing examples of blended teaching that are specific to the secondary SS classroom.

In these chapters we also use examples from practicing teachers. They will help you see blended teaching in SS through the lens of the blended teaching competencies: online integration, online interaction, data practices, and personalization.

🏛️4.2 Meeting the Social Science Blended Teachers

In these chapters, you will receive instruction and ideas from experienced social science teachers. Learn more about these teachers below.

Meet Your Teacher–Ashley Brown (1:53)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Meet Your Teacher—Brooke Davies (1:32)

Meet Your Teacher

Brooke Davies
~ Social Studies Teacher

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Watch on YouTube

Meet Your Teacher—Merinda Davis (2:23)

Meet Your Teacher

Merinda Davis
~ Innovative Learning Coach

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Watch on YouTube

Meet Your Teacher—Mary Catherine Keating (1:54)

Meet Your Teacher

Mary Catherine Keating
~ Social Studies Teacher

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Meet Your Teacher—Mark Stevens (4:49)

Meet Your Teacher

Mark Stevens
~ Social Science Teacher

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[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Meet Your Teacher—LeNina Wimmer (2:02)

[Watch on YouTube](#)

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Access it online or download it at https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended_socialscience/ss.

SS: Why Blend?

Lisa R. Halverson

🏛5.1 Blending in Social Science Teaching

The first question you should ask yourself before embarking on the journey of blended teaching is "Why blend?" Teachers who are still searching for their answer to this question may end up spending a lot of time and energy implementing changes that do not serve any larger goal or purpose.

Guiding Question: Why Blend?
"Why blend?" Teachers must have a meaningful answer to this question It is not sufficient to blend just because it is popular or because others are doing it.

Teachers Talk: Self-directed Education
Mark Stevens Blended teaching gave me a way to allow students to be self-directed in a meaningful way. An essential skill of learning is to learn to direct your educational future. Blended learning—by its very nature—gives students more responsibility to be engaged in a tiny, little, seventh-grade way.

Blending takes time and effort and should be undertaken with clear pedagogical purposes. Instead of deciding to blend because a gadget or tool is new and eye-catching, we can consider aspects of the PICRAT framework (see https://edtechbooks.org/-Irr) and ask:

- What do I want my learners' relationship to tech to be? (Passive, Interactive, or Creative)

- How do I want the technology integration to alter traditional practice? (Replace, Amplify, or Transform)

As Mark Stevens suggests above, we can also consider our overaching desires and goals for our students. These pedagogical questions and goals can guide our answers to "Why blend?"

Blended teaching can also help us become better teachers, prompting us to change our attitudes, dispositions, and approaches. Brooke and Mark discuss how they experienced these changes.

Teachers Talk: The Teacher I Want to Be (4:24)

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Reflection Questions: How did Brooke use blended teaching to become a better teacher? In what ways would you like to improve as a teacher? How can blended teaching help you do so?

Mark Stevens

Every time I think of my blended learning journey, I hear a line from The Grateful Dead's song "Truckin'": "What a long, strange trip it's been."

It started back in 1995 when I wanted to use this new thing called the internet to get access to history documents I could get no other way. I was using the one data line that came into the school using a 2,600 baud modem. Over time, I received two iMacs for my own classroom and used them in a kind of station rotation way so students could access letters written by soldiers during the Civil War.

Several years later, after submitting a proposal based on what I had learned at a conference about using computers to make the in-class learning better, I was given a 15-computer mobile lab.

Blended learning really began to influence instruction as it does today when I was able to find meaningful sources on the internet. Imagine how much better history can be when students see a video made by Thomas Edison of cows going into a meatpacking plant in Chicago in 1897 or see and hear Jimi Hendrix playing the "Star-Spangled Banner" at Woodstock in 1969. It is the combination of sources like this in a blended approach that allowed one of my students to say, "I can see the Harlem Renaissance happening in my head."

5.2 Reasons for Blending

There are three primary reasons teachers choose blended teaching. Usually at least one of the following is primary in the mind of the teacher choosing to blend:

- **Improved learning outcomes—**Blended classrooms can increase personalization, allow for more individual and small group instruction, and make better use of classroom time.
- **Increased access and flexibility—**In blended classrooms students have access to materials anywhere and anytime. In addition, they have access to resources and activities that are unavailable to them without an online component.
- **Increased efficiency/cost—**Blended classrooms can help students complete learning activities in less time and with less energy**,** reduce printing costs, and help students stay more organized (less likely to lose assignments).

Mark Stevens found that blended teaching helps him teach critical thinking skills.

Why Blend-Learning and Critical Thinking

Mark Stevens
~ **Social Science Teacher**

EdTech Books   https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2

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[Watch on YouTube](#)

Reflection Question: Name three ways Mark Stevens supports critical thinking through blended teaching. Could you do some of the same things in your classroom?

Brooke Davis found that blended teaching helps her provide greater access and flexibility for her students.

Teachers Talk: Stop Losing Students

Brooke Davies

The original reason I was drawn to blended teaching was that I was losing a lot of my students to absenteeism and tardiness. Some struggled with low level skills, not knowing the English language, difficulty reading, difficult home lives, and special education needs. The diversity in my classroom tends to be pretty large. And I was struggling. My higher academic level students were bored and my lower level academic students were getting nothing out of my class. My middle students were maybe getting something. I wondered how I could get them all engaged with this big stratification in my course. Blended teaching offered an opportunity to do that.

Table 1 below shows some simple social science examples. Notice that each example may allow a teacher to achieve multiple purposes simultaneously.

Table 1

Examples of Multiple Purposes for a Blended SS Activity

Blended Example	Blended Purpose
Enables students to convey learning through multi-modal products that feature primary and secondary sources—images, text, maps, videos, sound clips, and more.	Learning Effectiveness: Students show more engagement when they get to use a variety of media to show learning. They are also more likely to learn well when they learn from different sources, including images, videos, text, and audio files.
	Access & Flexibility: Students have ready online access to historical photographs, for instance, or instructional film clips. In addition, they can access both the sources they are studying and the products they are creating anywhere, anytime.
	Increased Efficiency/Cost: Resources collected online can be efficiently and creatively shared with classmates and with teachers.
Facilitates student interaction with historical sources and promotes the skills used by historians: sourcing, corroborating, and contextualizing.	Learning Effectiveness: The internet brings countless primary sources to students' fingertips. Access to more sources allows greater personalization. It also allows students to do what historians really do: gather sources, recognize and account for point of view, identify corroborating and conflicting evidence, and build logical and defensible interpretations.
	Access & Flexibility: Access to a wider array of primary sources allows students to weigh evidence and understand contexts before passing judgment.
	Increased Efficiency/Cost: Instead of purchasing packets of primary source materials such as photographs, maps, or text selections, all of which are limited in scope, online resources offer more resources at little or no cost.

Blended Example	Blended Purpose
Promotes collaboration among students over the historical interpretations they construct together	Learning Effectiveness: Historical literacy is the ability to construct meaning with multiple sources (print, visual, audio, video, etc.) and to communicate those ideas to others. Historians know that historical documents do not have only one interpretation, but students often do not, believing a historical document has "one right answer." Sharing ideas online encourages the back-and-forth necessary in encouraging this exploration.
	Access & Flexibility: Teachers can "see" the collaborative process in online documents, and encourage student thinking through feedback.
	Increased Efficiency/Cost: Peer and teacher feedback can be shared in real time and without the need for students to print out draft after draft.

Think about why you would like to blend your classroom. In your blended teaching workbook, write your thoughts, creating your own purpose.

✎ **Blended Teaching Workbook**

Write a brief statement about why you want to blend your classroom. Which purposes and outcomes are you most interested in for your blend? Access your Workbook here. Make sure you save your copy where you can access it as you go through the social studies chapters.

🏛 5.3 Common Challenges to Teaching/Learning in the Social Sciences: Problems of Practice

Your choice to blend will be more meaningful to you and your students if it helps you address challenges that you and your students face. We refer to these challenges as "problems of practice."

Definition: Problem of Practice

A problem of practice is a current problem or challenge that you believe could be improved through blended teaching.

In the following videos, Merinda and Ashley address problems of practice their blended classroom has helped them overcome. Can you describe what they are?

Reflection Questions: Think about the many reasons Ms. Davis has for blending her classroom. Do any of her reasons apply to your classroom? Which ones? How could you introduce a blend into your classroom that would highlight some of the same advantages?

Problems of practice can fall under any of the three purposes outlined in section 5.2 above. However, the most meaningful and powerful problems of practice for social studies teachers deal directly with improving learning outcomes for their students. To review the five pathways to approach blended learning, revisit them in Chapter 1: 5 Pathways

Figure 1

Problems of Practice in Social Sciences.

5 Pathways
To approach Blended Teaching in SS

Pedagogy
I want to model historical literacy and teach the skills of sourcing, corroborating, and contextualizing primary sources.

Social/Emotional
I want my students to be able to practice historical empathy.

6 C's
I want my students to practice citizenship and be prepared to participate in America's democratic republic.

7 P's
I want my students to participate by sharing their unique but grounded interpretations of events from history.

Access
I want my students to have access to a variety of different primary sources.

The exact examples shown above may or may not be challenges in your current approach to teaching. But within these five pathways there are surely problems of practice that are relevant to you. Think deeply about those pathways and identify specific challenges you face. Then begin to explore what online approaches may be combined with your in-person approaches to make a better experience for your students and you alike.

If all this sounds a little overwhelming, it does not need to be. Start slow, add a little at a time. Soon you'll find your classroom changing in ways you like and want to do more of.

Teachers Talk: Burnout

Brooke Davies

Burnout is real, so you have to go slow. I did not do that when I first tried blended teaching. It was really frustrating and overwhelming. It's still easy to feel overwhelmed. I want to be overprepared and ready to go. I don't want to go with the flow. My learning coach helped a lot. She would say, "You don't have to try that yet. That's going to be way too much work." So, I think that going slow, having someone there, whether it's a coach or a collaborative team member to do it with you can really help you transition into blended teaching.

Finding Your Problems of Practice

So give it a try. Review the five pathways to identifying problems of practice. Now look at your own practice and try to identify a couple of challenges that you can consider as you continue throughout these social science chapters. What pedagogies and social/emotional student outcomes would you like to improve? What qualities of deep learning (the 6 C's) or characteristics of strong blended teaching (the 7 P's) can you better incorporate into your classroom? How can you offer your students increased access to resources and opportunities?

✎ Blended Teaching Workbook

Identify 2-3 problems of practice (PoP) that you can use as you consider blended options for your classroom.

Note: You should identify several problems of practice (PoP) because not every PoP has a good blended learning solution.

If you haven't already opened and saved your workbook, you can access it here.

Previous Citation(s)

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SS: Online Integration & Management

Mark Stevens & Karen T. Arnesen

🏛️6.1 Online Integration and Management in the Social Sciences

Blended learning involves combining the online and in-person space in ways that each enhances the other. Merinda Davis explains how this looks in her social science classroom.

Teachers Talk: Blend in Social Studies (1:59)

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Reflection Question: What activities do you already do that could be made more engaging or lead to deeper learning if you incorporated the online space?

Online integration is at the very heart of blended teaching. It has to do with how you combine your in-person social science classroom with online activities. (Remember the baker mixing dry and wet ingredients from Chapter 1?) Because the main component of blended learning is integrating online and in-person activities, online integration is a good place to begin thinking about blending your classroom. In this video Mark Stevens explains how he uses backward design to create an effective, meaningful blend.

Teachers Talk: Planning for a Blended Classroom (6:30)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Questions: How can you use a combination of primary and secondary sources, and a variety of strategies, in the combined online and in-person settings to engage all types of students? How can you employ backwards design to meet these goals?

This is where you as a social science teacher begin to think about what specific online practices can help you address the problems of practice you identified in Section 1. The more examples of blended teaching you have personally seen and the more experience you have with online teaching, the easier this process will be for you. But even if you are just starting out, you will probably have a few ideas of your own. This chapter will help you explore more ideas. Here are two teachers who share examples of integration from their blended classrooms.

Mark Stevens

Blended learning is great in social studies classrooms because technology can take you to so many places and to so many times with so many resources. For example, students examining the anti-war movement in the U.S. can be self-guided to locate relevant images, videos, and text-based websites they can use to develop and present an understanding of the times.A group of my students gathered pictures from searches of anti-war protest marches in Washington D.C., music videos from the Woodstock Music and Arts Fair in August of 1969, and text from sources accessed through the historymatters.gmu.edu site through George Mason University. Groups of students used what they found to produce a multimodal (text, images, video) presentation that not only showed what they had learned, but supported their friends who were struggling with understanding both the content and the English language in which the content was presented. These students had a greater sense of engagement because they used blended learning to direct their own learning and at the same time helped their friends by sharing what they learned online and in-person.

Large anti-war protest in Washington, D.C. - 1967

Teachers Talk: Tunisia Peace Week (3:00)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflections Questions: How did these students grow from their interaction with the students in Tunisia? How did they share what they learned with others?

Before you start, consider this advice from experienced blended teachers—think big but start small. Small beginnings allow you to wet your toes in the process, focus on specific pedagogies and activities, see the benefits and drawbacks, and make improvements on a small scale without becoming overwhelmed by the process. It also helps you keep your mind on the most important thing—serving the needs of your students.

Teachers Talk: Small Beginnings

Mark Stevens

Israelmore Ayivor said, "Accomplish your tasks by one step at each time" ([source](#)). In effect this described the start of my blended learning journey. Eventually that led to the desire to do with blended learning what Muhammad Ali described when he stated "If my mind can conceive it and my heart can believe it—then I can achieve it" ([source](#)).

I started trying things with technology just to see how they would work. As the tools were improved, the possibilities expanded. The internet really began evolving, and all kinds of primary and secondary sources not previously available were now in reach. I could teach about the Holocaust not just by telling stories, but by having students watch interviews with survivors. Eventually this evolved into my blending in a way that REALLY has engaged students more than I did before and has helped them learn better.

In this video, Merinda Davis explains how she started, made mistakes, learned, and grew through her beginning steps with blended learning.

6.2 Planning for Integration

You can take that first small step by doing the following:

1. Identify the problem of practice and the learning objective that you are interested in blending.

2. Think about activities, both in-person and online, that could support student learning. (A framework for this process is to think about activities that involve students interacting independently with content, activities that involve students interacting primarily with each other, and activities that might involve interaction with an instructor.)

3. Consider how the online activities and the in-person activities can connect.

4. Choose one of the activities you have considered and create a blended lesson.

See the following example for how this process might work. The teacher in this example explores several activities that could be blended. You have a similar chart in your Blended Teaching Notebook.

The teacher has identified this problem of practice: empower learners to

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- Consistently direct and support their own learning (supported by the teacher) by using a combination of face-to-face and online activities.

- Access and analyze a greater collection of primary and secondary sources relevant to the topics being explored.

- Use those combinations of multimodal resources (text, audio, video) possible in blended learning to prompt greater critical thinking, communication, investigation, and knowledge skill generation.

Here are some ways this teacher could empower the learners by combining the online and in-person activities, starting with Table 1, showing ways to have students interact with content.

Table 1

Planning for Online Integration: Student-Content Interactions

Student-Content Interactions

Online Activities:
1. Learners open their Google work documents on a lesson investigating the Holocaust. They read testimonies of Sonderkommando (death chamber) workers, view videos of concentration camp discoveries, and examine images of liberation. They record observation through responses that analyze the concepts of cruelty/evil, resilience, and triumph.

2. Collaboration using a jointly editable Google doc or a [Jamboard](). Students produce images/collages that show the conflict between capitalism and communism during the Cold War. Students participate in a discussion about the relevancy of these concepts to current times, using online class chat, mics, and face-to-face interaction.

3. Send communications to parents to alert them to what is being done, so they can support it at home.

In-person Activities:
1. Learners locate and analyze sources, record understandings on work documents, and engage with their peers in collaboration aimed at examining their content conclusions.

2. Learners interact with the teacher to get coaching and respond to comments and memes placed on their work documents related to content processing.

Connection: Learners are using the online environment to locate sources relevant to their activities. They are also using it by working with individual and jointly editable work documents such as Google Docs and Jamboard. The online environment also supports connections between parents, students, and teachers. The in-person environment is used to make the collaborative work and teacher coaching even more effective for processing content resources.

Brooke Davies shares how she uses the process just described to help her students develop resiliency.

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Questions: How can you use blended learning to facilitate deeper learning? How did Brooke's students use the content they accessed online to contribute to the in-person part of the class?

Merinda shows another way to use blended processes to interact with content—in this case interacting with place.

Teachers Talk: Interacting with Place through Story Maps (2:39)

Story Maps

Merinda Davis
~ Innovative Learning Coach

Online Integration

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[Watch on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com)

Reflection Question: How can you help your students be more aware of place through blended teaching?

In this video, LeNina Wimmer shares how her students use the online space to master content.

Teachers Talk: Industrialists' Trial (4:00)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Question: How does LeNina use both the online and in-person space to help students learn content and develop skills?

A second way to plan blended activities to overcome a problem of practice is to emphasize student to student interactions.

Table 2

Planning for Online Integration: Student-Student Interactions

Student-Student Interactions

Online Activities:
1. In a lesson students
    1. Decide who to collaborate with using online documents.
    2. All memebers of the group share their documents with each other, so they are all working in the same online space.
    3. Split up online resources they want to analyze.
    4. Share their understandings from the source analysis on the collaboratively edited document.
2. In an assessment students are combined (either by their own or the teache'rs decision) to collaboratively edit/revise the responses in a document-based question (DBQ) assessment related to why Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.
3. Teach students and have them practice following this basic mantra: Just Be Nice. Be polite and supportive when working together, or reviewing others work. Also, be watchful when you see someone online who has been left to work alone. Invite them in.

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Student-Student Interactions

In-person Activities:

1. Meeting in groups: Students sit in groups of between three and four people to pick and analyze four documents from a set of eight related to who Andrew Carnegie really was: a Captain of Industry or a Robber Baron.

2. Informal interaction (not full-on collaboration): This interaction derives from the sources students find and the understandings they have individually developed. Students are encouraged to talk to each other about what they are finding when looking for content resources. This is not necessarily a planned activity, just one that is allowed by the teacher and happens naturally.

3. Gallery Walks: Learners analyze documents with guiding questions (text and images) placed around the room. It is natural for them to engage in content related interactions while doing this. The guiding questions can require this interaction.

4. Individual work: Some students prefer working individually at times, and the teacher can allow this as a means to help students feel comfortable. Oftentimes keeping learners' basic work style desires in mind results in greater achievement. When necessary the teacher can move them into collaborative activity.

Connection: One of the basic truths of blended learning is that the modes, online and in-person, intertwine. They might be planned by a teacher or decided upon by learners. Collaborative work in blending is one way students can approach understanding. This connection between modes also occurs naturally when learners decide to reach out and informally support each other, or respond to teacher prompts to do so.

Brooke shows another way to emphasize student-student interaction when history and photography students work together on a project.

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Question: How can you use blended teaching to encourage interactions with students in other classes, other schools, and other levels of students (for example, high school and elementary school)?

Mary Catherine uses student interaction to learn, create, and share content.

Teachers Talk: Vocabulary Review (2:33)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Questions: How can learning vocabulary collaboratively benefit students? In what other ways could students collaborate online to increase learning outcomes and to develop 21st century skills?

A final type of interaction that can be developed during blended teaching is the interaction between teacher and student. These interactions build relationships and help teachers better understand the needs of the students. Some ideas of how to use these types of interactions are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Planning for Online Integration: Student-Instructor Interactions

Student-Teacher Interactions

Online Activities:
1. The teacher strategically places supportive comments and images/memes on online documents. If this is done while the student is on the document, they should be placed where the student is active.
2. The teacher gives immediate feedback when learners are actively working on documents. When they find a learner struggling, they can engage in direction that includes
   1. A "conversation" by exchanging text on the work document.
   2. Starting an answer, paragraph, or thought the student finds challenging, and letting them finish it.
   3. Placing links to supportive sources (text, images, videos) that would help the student.
3. If a student is struggling with learning the English language, the teacher can use Google Translate to let them hear certain words or phrases being pronounced, thus increasing their understanding.
4. Promptly replying to emails and questions.

In-person Activities:

Student-Teacher Interactions

1. Teachers can meet briefly with students
   1. Either individually or in small groups when they see a need based on work in previous classes.
   2. When they notice a lack of understanding or off-task behavior during a lesson.
   3. During the last half of a class based on an online survey given at the beginning of class then analyzed by the teacher.

2. Mind breaks where students actually stand up. You can even have them do something silly to dissipate the "work tension," like turning in circles two times in each direction. You can teach them intermediate and advanced thumb-twiddling. This seems strange, but such activities help learners see you as a person invested in their best interests (as well as giving them a little break).

Connection: The teacher will seek to use actions possible in the online environment to support their interfacing with students in the in-person setting, and vice-versa. Whereas effective teaching can be done in either setting by itself, intentional efforts to combine them result in more learning. One essential thing for teachers to keep in mind is that student-instructor interactions are not just for what the teacher does to support the students, but how the students reach out to get the help they need. With this in mind, teachers can design various methods, online and in-person, for students to be the interactors, and not just the ones being interacted upon.

✎ **Blended Teaching Workbook**

In your workbook, using one of your problems of practice, fill out the Planning for Online Integration table.

If you haven't already opened and saved your workbook, you can access it here.

Mark explains how he uses both the in-person and online spaces to interact directly with his students.

Teachers Talk: Online and In-Person at the Same Time

Mark Stevens

Sometimes I have both the online and in-person environments going at the same time. If we are giving feedback on someone else's paper, or editing them, I pair them up in the physical environment, but they edit each other's papers online. They have access to the papers in the online environment but can ask me questions at the same time either online or in-person.

I expanded this experience by sharing their papers online with a class of college students. The college students provided feedback, then their professor sent the feedback back to me, and I distributed it to the students. My students thought it was great that college students would pay attention to their papers.

🏛 6.3 Selecting a Blended Teaching Model

Once you have chosen an activity or unit to use when blending your social studies, consider which blended teaching model best fits the activity. The models we will here consider are the flipped classroom, station rotations, lab rotations, and the flex model.

6.3.1 The Flipped Classroom

A flipped classroom generally consists of the student receiving instruction online at home then use the time in class to practice, apply, or work with the content. For a more in-depth description see the [Flipped Classroom](#) section in Volume 1.

Mary Catherine often uses a flipped classroom approach. Watch as she explains what she does.

Teachers Talk: Flipping My Classroom (2:59)

Flipped Classroom

Mary Catherine Keating
~ Social Studies Teacher

Online Integration

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[Watch on YouTube](#)

Reflection Question: What advantages do both the students and Ms. Keating receive by flipping the classroom?

✏️ **Flipped Classroom Example: WWII**

A flipped approach often uses videos, but it does not have to be limited to that. The following flipped classroom example presents a plan for a unit on WW II, using a variety of flipped classroom approaches. In this unit, students can access the content at home (or during class time). They can work through the information and activities on their own. In-person time is used to target specific learning needs based on a survey the students take after interacting with the content.

The teacher splits the content into separate modules:

- Legacy of WW I and the Rise of Fascism: [module 1](); [module 2]()
- Allied Leaders, and Changes in U.S. policies: [module 1](); [module 2]()
- Allied Leaders, and Changes in U.S. policies: [module 1](); [module 2]()
- Pearl Harbor Attack and Island Hopping; [module 1](); [module 2]()
- [U.S. Homefront]()
- Holocaust: [module 1](); [module 2]()
- [Defeat of Germany and Japan]()

Each module is introduced with a short, engaging, teacher-made, multi-modal video (less than 3 minutes).

The content for each module is presented in a Google Site, LMS, or Blog, letting students see engagingly written text, images, and videos that support the text.

- After working through each module content presentation, students respond to a Google Survey asking them to share the main points learned, and any questions they have. Teachers use these results to prepare whole class or small group check-ins for the next day. Groups can be organized either homogenously (students need the same kind of additional help) or heterogenesouly (one or two student understand the content well enough to help the rest of the group.) This is a good opportunity to teach students how to help and teach each other.
- n class the next day students work in a teacher-monitored, self-directed way, being pulled into groups if needed (as explained above), and having the freedom to ask for support when needed.

If students have difficulties accessing or completing these activities at home, vary the flipped classroom approach by scheduling the content exploration and activity completion online but in the classroom.

6.3.2 Station Rotation Model

A station rotation typically involves students moving from one station to another, doing online, small group, collaborative, or teacher led activities at each station. For a more in-depth description see the [Station Rotation]() section in Volume 1.

In this next video Mary Catherine explains how she uses and trains her students to use a station rotation.

Teachers Talk: Using a Station Rotation (3:36)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)
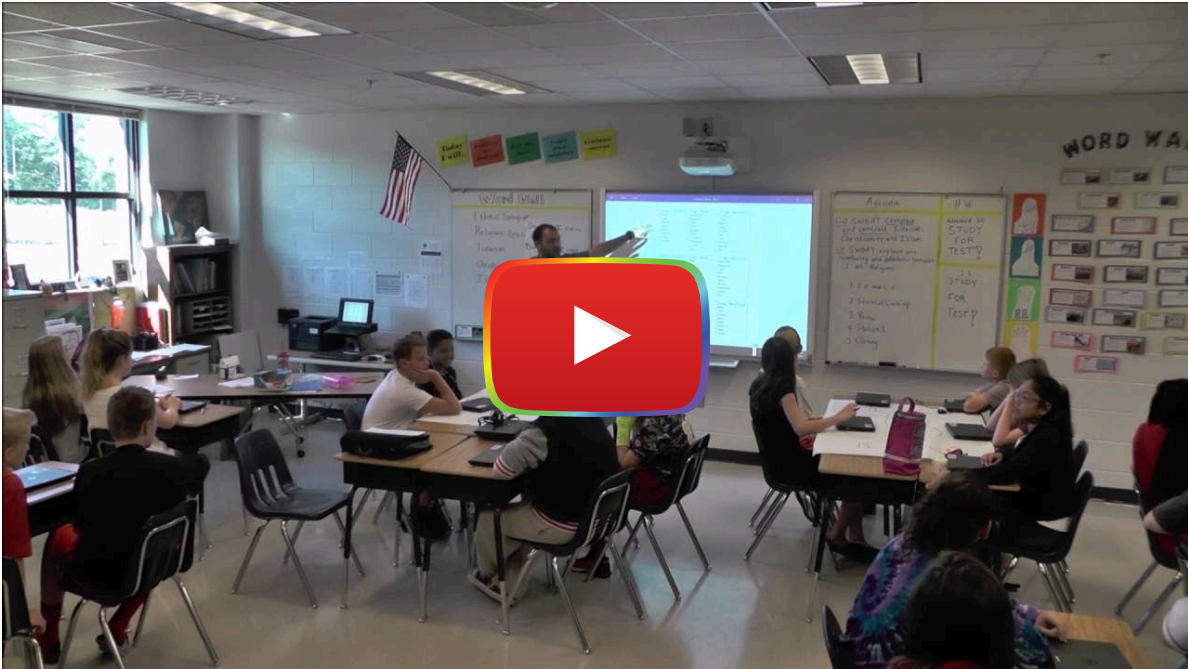
Reflection Questions: Explain how Mary Catherine uses a station rotation at the beginning of the year to train students in how to do a station rotation. What are some other ways you could use a station rotation?

The following video shows a station rotation with in-person and online stations in a junior high social studies classroom.

Reflection Questions: What kinds of online and in-person activities did this teacher include in his station rotation? What activities could you include in a station rotation, creating smaller groups of students you can work with?

✎ Station Rotation Example: Indigenous Americans and the Expense of Expansion

In this station rotation example, the teacher makes an introductory video sharing the purpose of the lesson: seeing this time in U.S. history through the eyes of the Indigenous Americans most impacted. It provides a brief introduction of each event that wil later be explolred more deeply in one of the following stations:

- The Navajo and The "Long Walk" of 1864, where they were removed from their land
- The Battle of the Greasy Grass (Custer's Last Stand) in 1876
- Massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890 (Access the video here: [Black Elk Speaks](#).)
- Choctaw soldiers using their language to transmit secret messages for U.S. troops during World War I
- Indigenous Peoples given U.S. Citizenship in 1924
- Navajo Code Talkers in WW II.

Each event/story is presented on a different digital station located on the learning management system. Students will have access to the app [Parlay](#) so they can chat with other students working at that time on the same station.

At each station students will view a Google Site, telling the stories of the event in text, images, and videos. They will be using the same processing document for each event they pick. The document includes the following questions:

- What group of Indigenous Americans were involved, and in what year the event occured?
- Describe, briefly, what happened.
- How was fairness present or lacking?
- How they would have been involved if they had been there.

The teacher will announce when it is time to move to a different station, with the goal being to get to at least 4 of the 6 stations done.

Before the end of class the teacher will conduct a whole class discussion (5–10 minutes) about the most important learning points.

Homework: Students will pick one of the events they explored in a station to share their main thoughts. On a shared document included in the LMS for each event/story, students will make comments and ask questions about events they studied. They can answer other student's comments or answer questions. They can respond to as many events as they would like.

6.3.3 The Lab Rotation

In a lab rotation, students rotate as a whole group, on a set schedule, or at teacher discretion. This station is usually used by teachers whose only access to computers is in a school computer lab, but it can also be used in the regular classroom but with students going through online activities as a whole group. This is especially helpful when the order of the modules is important.

For a more in-depth description see the Lab Rotation section in Volume 1.

> ✎ **Lab Example: 1920s History Unit—Harlem Renaissance Lesson**
>
> - Explain the lesson to the students, share relevant vocabulary, then make the work document available.
> - Rotation 1: a 5-minute Brainpop video or a relevant video you have made yourself. Students watch, answer 4 questions, and after 7 minutes participate in a debrief discussion.
> - Rotation 2: Great Migration graph. Students analyze, and "debrief" with a self-chosen partner. Teachers monitor and move students to Station 3 when they think appropriate.
> - Rotation 3: analysis of the painting *From Slavery Through Reconstruction*, by Aaron Douglas. Students analyze the story being told of African Americans, share their response in a Google Survey, which the teacher shares so students see each other's viewpoints. The rotation lasts 10-15 minutes before being moved to the next station.
> - Rotation 4: using at least one of 3 sources to learn the story of one of the following artists: (1) Louis Armstrong; (2) Bessie Smith; (3) Duke Ellington; (4) Zora Neale Hurston; (5) Langston Hughes; (6) Josephine Baker; and (7) Cab Calloway.
> - For homework students construct a Google Slide on a jointly editable document telling the story of the person they chose.

6.3.4 The Flex Model

In the flex model most of the learning ocurs online. Students work independently with in-person support as needed.

For a more in-depth description see the flex model section in Volume 1.

> ✎ **Flex Example: Civil Rights Lesson on Movements**
>
> If a chronological format is used, this unit likely comes near the end of the year. Students may be getting tired and have a harder time attending to their work. The flex model, which gives more freedom of pace and path as students

work more independently can help increase engagement.

- Students start work in the setting of their choice on the first part of the lesson where they work on understanding essential parts of the Movement for African American Civil Rights. They will analyze resources related to events from 1619 to current times. They will work for a set time followed by a debrieifing with the whole group.
- This is more of the flext part. Students then have choice of working, in any work format on any three of the following six movements: (1) Women's; (2) Disabilities; (3) LGBTQ; (4) Workers; (5) League of United Latin American Citizens (LULLAC); (6) American Indian. Their task will be to analyze provided sources to construct an explanation or summary that would be understood by their peers who might have learning challenges of one sort or another.
- There will be separate jointly editable documents for each movement onto which they will place their explanations/summaries. These can then be shared with teachers whose students need additional support.

6.4 Deciding What To Do In-person in a Social Studies Classroom

Blended learning is the *strategic* combination of online and in-person modalities. But how do teachers decide which activities to do online and which to do in person in a social studies class?

Table 4 contains two examples of the use of the online space and two of the in-person space. Read each scenario. See if you can discern why the teacher might have decided to use each modality. Would you have made the same decision? Why or why not?

Table 4

In-person or Online

In-person	Online
Examining anti-war sentiment in the U.S. during the Vietnam War. In person the teacher tells engaging, first-person stories of Vitenam War protestors or the war itself.	Online, the students are given a Google Slide with links to six different Vietnam War protest songs, such as "Fortunate Son," "I Feel Like I'm Fixin to Die Rag," "Give Peace A Chance," "War" (Edwin Starr), "The Unknown Soldier," and "Ohio." They choose two or three songs, make a slide for each one, and analyze each one using common questions. They share their "findings" in groups that change every 5-10 minutes.
Holocaust introduction: In this scenario, the online space is used in an in-person classroom, where the teacher introduces the lesson and monitors student work online, using that information to give face-to-face coaching and support.	Watch and listen to Holocaust survivors online. Have students record their impressions and understanding in an onlince document such as Google docs.
Black Elk and the Wounded Knee Massacre:	Black Elk, an Oglala Sioux, shared his experiences in the book Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux. An excerpt of the text relevant to what happened at Wounded Knee could be placed on a

In-person	Online
Ocassionally have the class meet in-person in a whole group discussion.	Google Slide presentation, illustrated to support learners struggling with reading comprehension, and recorded and shared through the Learning Management System. Students then share their understanding, as they work, in the online discussion app [Parlay](#),

Although the decision of what to do in person and online often becomes one decision, it is useful to consider what you do well in person, so you can effectively mix your in-person practices with online strategies. Look at your strengths as a teacher, the needs of your students, and the strategies that lend themselves to the effective use of the in-person space.

In social studies, where inquiry is often based on specific primary and secondary sources, in-person interactions might support analysis and critical thinking of sources the students have accessed online. These interactions could include student-selected discussion pairs, one on one coaching, small group conferencing, and whole class debriefing.

For example, your students may be investigating Civil Rights activists of the 1960s, such as H. Rap Brown (Jamil Al-Amin), Malcolm X, and Claudette Colvin. You may see several advantages to doing this in person, including some of the following:

- Students can either select a peer with whom they feel most comfortable or work on their own to watch and analyze videos about the three people being explored. (Be careful about forcing students to partner, as some may experience anxiety about having to work with someone they don't know very welll.)
- You can watch students work in-person or on their work documents. If you see an analysis of Claudette Colvin, for example, that is not in-depth, call the student(s) learning about her over and share an engaging story to help them think about her in a deeper way.
- While students collaborate online, you monitor student work documents. As they finish specific parts, invite them to join you in a small group discussion, using this time to extend or enrich what they have already done.
- Use whole class debriefings to reach out to students who are only nominally engaged by having highly engaged students share their understandings.

Such in-person approaches can keep students from getting stalled in the process and keep energy high. Deciding what activities could be done in person or online may take some trial and error. Here are some questions that can guide you as you make your decision.

- Can I put some instruction online so I have more class time to work with students individually or in small groups?
- Can putting an activity online increase student participation?
- Can I use the online space to allow my students to personalize the pace, path, time, place, or goals of their learning?
- How can I use the online space to target individual learning needs?
- Can I use the online space to help students increase ownership of their learning?
- Can I use the online space to give my students access to materials they wouldn't otherwise be able to have?
- Can I use the online space to teach the same concept in different ways, so learners will have more than one option in their learning?
- Can I use the online space to allow for greater learner-learner interaction and collaboration?
- Can I use the online space to adapt or differentiate materials to different students' needs?
- Are there new ways I can use the in-person space when I put some of the instruction and activities online?

🏛 6.5 Evaluating and Improving Blended Activities

Blended learning is not just about using technology in the classroom. It is about strategically combining technology with in person activities to improve pedagogy and student outcomes. When you blend consciously, learning can be better.

But most blended teaching takes practice and constantly seeking to improve . The case study below shows one taecher's efforts to improve a blended unit. Click on the Case Study link below to see how the unit improved over time.

✏️ **Case Study: Constantly Improving an Activity**

Developing as a blended teacher and creating effective blended lessons does not happen all at once. It often takes an approach known as Design-Based, a process that involves cycles of redesign in order to improve practice. The following example shows how an activity can go through that design based-process repeatedly to make the learning experience better.

<p align="center">Digital Internship (DI)—Authentic Problem/Project Based Learning</p>

I designed this activity through multiple iterations over a period of 5 years, each time seeking to improve it in different ways. I started by creating a blend that used content exploration through online resource modules, as well as a small degree of authentic learning. From the beginning I used collaboration with undergrad preservice teachers serving as learning coaches. All of these aspects have undergone revisions as described in the following notes.

Original design:

- Students learned content in-person using multimodal technology enhanced learning (MMTEL) content modules.
- They were paired up with college students who gave work advice.
- Authentic Learning: Students acted as assistants to U.S. President Grover Cleveland by finding sources from his future that explained what would happen during the Industrialization era, so he could make better decisions.
- Middle schoolers wrote annotated bibliographies to share their analysis.
- A double blind process was followed to share middle school student work with the university mentors for their review and feedback, so that neither college mentors nor their middle school students made unsupervised direct contact with each other.

1st iteration:

- All aspects of the unit were explained on a "syllabus" shared in Google Classroom. This included all necessary content links.
- Students explored content of the 1920s using MMTEL modules, which also provided links to other web resources, such as 1920s slang and in-depth content. The MMTELs included content such as Latinx People and The Great Migration in order to meaningfully embed a more equitable view of history.
- Authentic Learning: Students assumed the role of a 1920s radio show host. They wrote a script, including an ad and slang, on a topic they researched. They produced text that could be recorded in three minutes.
- In order to increase engagement college students made a slide introducing themselves to the student they worked with. The slide included brief text and NO pictures.
- I added two rounds of feedback on the scripts from college students.

2nd iteration

- Again, a syllabus shared all expectations and necessary links. This time the content explored was related to The Cold War era.
- I had the college students use the same MMTELS to review the content of the students they worked with, evaluating for completeness.
- Both college and middle school students exchanged introductions, thus increaseing engagement in both groups.
- College students began using the assessment rubrics to "grade" their mentees work.
- Authentic Learning: In this authentic problem-based approach students acted as employees of Global Learning Education Expositions to make a presentation (images, text, video) to show the young people in the soon to be freed Soviet Union what happened in the West during The Cold War. Their presentations would be shown on an imaginative, virtual stage sets at the Monsters of Rock concert (ACDC, Black Crowes, Pantera, and Metallica) at Tushino airfield outside Moscow in September, 1991.
- Some students were engaged enough to simulate the hair twirling of Metallica's base player, which they saw in a video from the concert.

3rd iteration

- Authentic Learning: This time the work product was again the 1920s radio script. Students were encouraged, but not required, to record their scripts.
- I added resoruces that increased the voice of Indigenous Americans by focusing on their experiences, including citizenship in 1924.
- In addition, students were required to include, as one part of their script, a component related to either The Great Migration or Harlem Renaissance.
- College mentors again reviewed middle school content notes, with notes of affirmation or needs for improvement.
- Students were required to note on their final drafts of the script how they used mentor feedback, or why they decided to not do so.

Notice how in this process the use of in-person and online elements were modified in a continual effort at improvement.

Evaluating your blend is a powerful tool for improving your classroom. We learned in chapter 3 (Chapter 3: Evaluating Blended Teaching) two methods for evaluating a blend: the 4 E's and PIC-RAT.

✎   PIC-RAT Framework Applied: WWII People Investigation

Here is an outline of a unit about different groups of people and their experiences in and views of WWII. Read through the unit then see how PIC-RAT helped the teacher evaluate technology and its effect on the classroom and on learning in the unit.

Goals of the Unit:

1. Content: Students understand how different people experienced WWII. (They will use provided resources and resourced they find through own investigation into the lives of different groups of people who fought to support the U.S. during WW II.)
2. Skills: Students will develop the following skills: Knowledge, Investigation, Communication, Critical Thinking.
3. Engagement: Students will experience the fun of learning when they can make a lot of their own decisions.

Approach of Unit

Students will have access to modules that allow them to explore these ten groups:

1. 761st Tank Battalion
2. African American scientists in the Manhattan Project
3. 333rd Field artillery: African Americans at Battle of The Bulge—Bastogne
4. 4442nd Regimental Combat Team—Japanese Americans
5. Dine' (Navajo) Code Talkers
6. WAAC (Women's Army Air Corps)
7. Factory Workers at Home (Men and Women)
8. 158th Regimental Combat Team, a large percentage of which was Latino and Native American
9. E Company, 2nd Battalion of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division
10. 459th Bomb Group—757th Bomb Squadron

Web-based multimodal technology-enhanced modules present all content in chunks that support and engage learners of any level. Understanding of this content is supported by use of an online note gathering guide and lesson check-ins with the teacher.

Students (either on their own or with a partner) become either the WW II news correspondent Ernie Pyle or news cartoonist Bill Mauldin. They will create a Google Slides presentation that has

- News stories written as they would have been in WW II, sharing stories from at least five of the 10 possible groups listed above
- At least two images related to what they share. (They use paper/colored pencils and scan them or digital drawing tools.)
- Several rounds of peer review simulate the process of editing/revision that happens in the real world.
- Student work products will be shared within folders in a Schoology class to which counselors and administration have access so they can see the good work being done.
- Optional: Students may also create a podcast featuring an interview with someone from one of their groups
- Optional: Those students wishing to are coached on making videos of each news story.

The product is posted online where other students and administrators can see them.

Evaluation Of Unit with the PIC-RAT Rubric

PIC

Passive: Some of the technology use is passive—students are reading or watching videos.

Interactive: Students take notes online. Some of the videos could be made more interactive by using EdPuzzle to ask the students questions or by creating online quizzes, flashcards, or discussions about the content.

Creative: Students use technology creatively, using various online tools to develop and share an authentic product.

RAT

Replace: The technology replaces paper, allowing students to easily access materials not available elsewhere.

Amplify: Using resources in various modalities (text, audio, video, images) supports content learning, as well as reading comprehension skills. The use of shareable presentations for the work product amplifies learning as students collaborate, teachers monitor and coach, and other school personnel can enjoy seeing student creativity.

Transform: Technology transforms the teaching by allowing students to learn from a variety of resources to learn content, to practice skills, and to share their work online.

While there are many ways to evaluate your blend, remember that the final evaluation is in the responses of the students. Here Mark shares an insight he gained from watching his students interact with "engaging" content.

Teachers Talk: Balance

Mark Stevens

Variety truly is the spice of life. We as adults often think like that, and sometimes students do the same. Think of your practice to this point. Have you ever seen students "check out" if you have them process too many sources, even if you have designed engaging activities? Or what is the impact on learning if you use the same format of blending two weeks of classes in a row? Even if the sources are music of the Cold War , which can be very groovy and instructive, it might not be useful to have students identify the message in as many as five songs, and then try to share the context clues they used to show how they reasoned messages in the songs. Sometimes lack of engagement may result not from the activity itself but from the repetition of the activity.

6.6 Planning Blended Routines and Behaviors

Good blended teaching depends on good blended classroom management. Students need to use devices carefully and responsibly, regulate their behavior so they can work independently, and manage their time. They have to be accountable for their learning, their actions, and their assignments. Mark explains how he approaches such accountability in his classroom, then in the video he discusses a number of strategies he uses to help students.

Teachers Talk: Student Accountability

Mark Stevens

I still have students say to me to my face, "But I did that." And then I explain to them, "The online records don't lie. It's either there or it's not." And sometimes they will hand in something that doesn't sound like a seventh grader wrote it, even if they're a really intelligent one. I point this out to them, and show them the website where they got it from. It allows me to just make them a little more accountable for the process and products of their learning.

The key to giving this kind of accountability feedback is to do it in a way that makes it clear you have their best interests at heart. Build relationships with the whole class from the beginning, so they know you really are on their side. Help them see the goal is not only to help them while they are your student, but to prepare them for their future, bit by bit.

Establishing routines in a blended social studies classroom is crucial. Starting off the year with clear expectations, as Mary Catherine explains, can go a long way to creating a management system that will help your students understand the structure of the class.

Teachers Talk: Making Guidelines (3:38)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Question: What routines do you want to establish in your classroom and how can you teach them?

These routines include the following:

- When and how to move around the classroom, with or without computers.
- How to open, login to, and use an LMS or other online programs.
- How and when to charge computers, either at school or at home.
- How to communicate civilly and respectfully. (Just be nice.)
- How to use LMS calendars, due dates, and submissions to keep track of work and access content.
- When and how to ask questions of you and each other.

In addition, make plans for how to manage off task behavior in a friendly, yet insistent and consistent way. You can prepare for situations that are sure to arise. Table 5 contains tips from teachers about how to establish these routines.

Table 5

Blended Learning Routines

Blended Learning Routines—Teacher Tips

Student Movement	• Limit time for students to regroup, if they choose to collaborate, after introductory discussion. • If you do a gallery walk, analyzing sources posted in the room, (or any whole class movement) explain the movement patterns desired, practice the patterns (especially at the beginning of the year), and make announcements when it is time to move. • Have an entering the classroom routine. It may include some of the following: get computer out and turn it on. log into any discussion apps being used; prepare response to questions online or on board; go to the class LMS to open any activity document for the day. • Remind students that when moving with a computer to a new work location, close it first. Never hold it by the screen alone.
Hardware Management	• Don't waste time plugging in computers between periods, unless you know the batteries are failing. If you have a mobile lab, make sure they're plugged in at the end of the day. • If you are a 1:1 computer school, have some charging capability available and let students know where they can charge their computers. • Be comfortable with the appropriate use of cell phones. For instance, cell phones can be effective when doing a whole class Kahoot. Students might also use their phones to make recordings of themselves pretending to be people from the history/civics they are studying. • If a class needs it, make a Computer Procedures checklist, and post it on a poster in the room and in the LMS. • Enlist students to help clean computers every once in a while. • If you have a mobile lab, assign specific computers to specific students to increase student accountability. I have a little form, and I always tell my students to do a little inspection of their computer if it's missing keys or anything like that. They need to fill out a report as soon as they pick up their computer because otherwise they're going to be responsible for that. And it's worked really well (Merinda Davis). • Remember, the browser saves their browsing history. If you want to see whether they are researching the assigned topic, you can check.
Software Management	• Teach and practice how to share work documents when working with a partner. This is especially useful when researching specific history topics.Tell them this is NOT cool on assessments. • Teach tools (and support with brief videos in the LMS) that will be necessary when gathering images related to a specific historical topic. Teach students how to locate/search, copy, paste; to use a snipping tool when getting just part of an image/page; how to find non-copyrighted images and to cite them. • Teach the use of apps you commonly use, like Peardeck, Kahoot, etc. • Employ chat apps, such as Parlay. This allows students who are reluctant to speak in front of others to have a voice and to ask questions . They may know what Black Elk did at the Massacre at Wounded Knee but be reluctant to share before checking with you. • Demonstrate effective searching on websites like: (1) Library of Congress; (2) National Archives; (3) United States Holocaust Museum; (4) Native American Museum; (5) National Museum of African American History and Culture; (6) Veteran' History Project. Make brief videos to support. • Practice using the LMS, opening it, finding assignments/assessments, locating discussions, checking grades, using folders, submitting assignments, etc. • Teach basic skills, such as how to download, upload, and organize files.

Blended Learning Routines—Teacher Tips

Student Questions	- Familiarize students with your style of LMS use and assessments. - Suggest they ask a peer before asking you. - Create and post how-to videos on important skills, such as primary/secondary source investigation and analysis, how to think critically using that analysis, and how to write paragraphs using information from sources to answer a prompt, such as "Why did Japan attack the U.S. at Pearl Harbor?" - Provide and teach specific ways to contact you outside of class, and how to address you politely. - Have a group of "expert" students who offer help to others.
Classroom Configuration	- Create stations in your room for collaborative work, such as source analysis, discussion, and writing. Prepare students to work together, even if both don't have computers. - Create quiet work spots for students who prefer quite spaces. - Situate students so you can easily see their screens. - Be willing to get up and walk around. (Get your steps in at school.)
Off-task Behavior	- Use software, if available, that allows you to see what is on the screen of each student. Leave comments and memes to motivate them to stay on-task. - Also, if software allows monitoring of browser history, use it when necessary. - Design social studies inquiry activities with steps that prompt students to monitor themselves. - If students' focus on source analysis or activity work wanes, jump in with a whole class discussion related to the content being explored or the skill you want students to develop related to the content. - Have students work on Google docs, which they share with you. Access these documents while students are working on them. Give coaching and compliments as necessary. - Keep a table near your desk. If there is a student who is really having a difficult time understanding and staying on task, call them over temporarily for a coaching session. Privacy helps them commun.

In this video Ashley describes how she works with students and devices in her classroom.

Social studies teachers say they typically spend four to six weeks at the beginning of the year establishing routines and expectations and teaching students how to use the technology. But, they say, it pays off in the long run with a smooth running class and increased opportunities for interaction and personalization—all of which they see as positives in their blended classroom.

These routines and practices begin on Day 1 of class. Brooke and Mary Catherine share how they begin teaching these routines at the beginning of the school year.

Teachers Talk: Starting on Day One

Brooke Davies

I start teaching my students my procedures on the first day, going slowly to teach and reinforce for about a month. For example, day one, we're going to open Canvas and change our picture. Day two, we're going to have a discussion board saying something fun, that's building a relationship, but also giving them some exposure to Canvas.

My advice is to build the practices into your classroom management plan at the beginning of the year and slowly build their abilities. I intentionally put some time in the beginning of the year to make sure I get everybody on board with the technology, so we're all ready to work together.

Teachers Talk: Beginning of the Year Station Rotations

Mary Catherine Keating

On the second day I set up stations. At one station students learn how to access the textbook. At another they do a syllabus quiz. At another they fill in an online "get to know you" form. Finally, they learn how to create a Flipgrid video. By the end of the day, we have learned some important technical skills they'll need to use all year. And I've made great strides in learning students' names. Before computers and Flipgrid, it took me almost two weeks to learn students' names. Now I can spend five to ten minutes going through the Flipgrid videos, and I learn the names so much quicker.

Finally, your greatest tool may be the relationship you have with your students and your understanding of them. Notice how Mark uses this information to help redirect a student.

Teachers Talk: The Boy Who Smiled Too Much

Mark Stevens

A couple of years ago, I wrote a paper called "The Boy Who Smiled Too Much." We were studying the Holocaust, and one of my students was smiling. When you're studying stuff about the Holocaust, you shouldn't be smiling, and he was smiling. So, it alerted me to take a look at his document then have a short little conversation about refocusing. He really did get back on track, and it was done with humor instead of aggression.

Online integration, combining the in-person and online spaces, can be a powerful tool in helping students learn and develop important 21st century skills. It may seem daunting at first, but just as your students can learn, you too can learn. It will be an adventure you can share with your students as you learn together.

Previous Citation(s)

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SS: Online Interaction

Craig Perrier & Jered Borup

7.1 Online Interaction in Social Studies

Review foundational knowledge about Online Interactions in K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume 1).

Social studies classrooms thrive on interactions with and between students. Both in-person and online interactions provide students with ways to share and support their positions, give and receive feedback, and present both written and spoken opinions and positions with both civility and evidence. Online interactions also allow social studies students to interact with community members and organizations well beyond the classroom. Studies suggest that these interactions often result in internal interactions as students think about their personal beliefs and knowledge in the context of sharing them with others. As students engage with others and with social studies content, their understanding of concepts, lived experiences, and contemporary issues will also be impacted. Opportunities to process and reflect upon changes to their world view are best done through intentionally designed interactions. In this chapter we will explore strategies and tools for facilitating students' online interactions with their content, teacher, peers, and community.

Four Types of Interaction

Content

Teacher

Students

Community
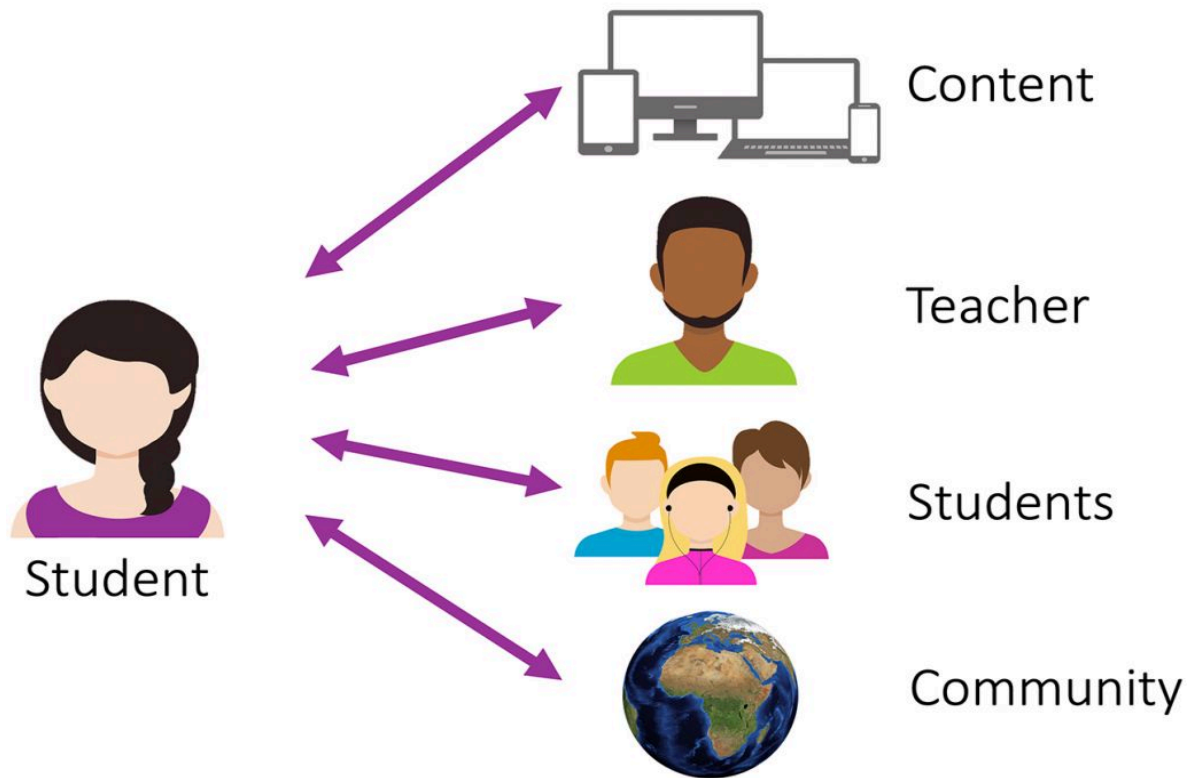
Student

🏛 7.2 Student-to-Student Interactions
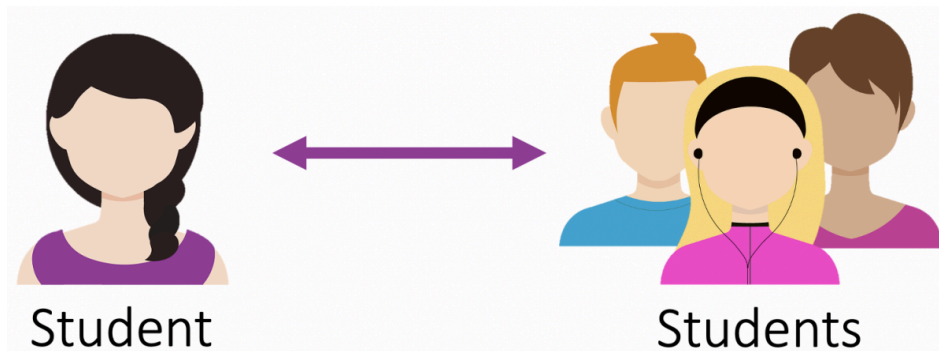
Student   Students

Reading, asking questions, researching, writing, discussing, sharing, and applying knowledge and skills are at the heart of social studies courses. Designing learning activities that ask students to discuss social studies content supports students' development of their skills and dispositions. Furthermore, students can collaborate on tasks with other students to practice critical thinking skills, express themselves, and listen and respond with civility. Discussion and collaboration therefore empower students to revise their opinions, develop writing and speaking techniques, and construct their understanding with peers.

7.2.1 Technologies for Student-to-Student Interaction and Collaboration

There are many technologies (digital tools) that support online discussions and collaboration. Here are a few of them and how they can be used in social studies. You might want to become proficient with one technology then branch out to another one. Technologies are like a box of chocolates—best not to try too many at once!

- Discussion Boards: Usually part of a learning management system (LMS), they allow threaded discussions that can be tied to the grade book. There are many ways to use discussion board prompts. For example, you can ask students to reply to a prompt or image, provide details on how they relate to content, develop their own questions, or provide commentary to you and their peers.
- Padlet: An online bulletin board where students can post and reply to comments using text, images, audio, and video. Students can also create timelines, storyboards, and collages individually or collaboratively.
- Flipgrid: a video discussion board. Instead of using a text-based discussion, Flipgrid allows students to post and respond with video, which can increase the sense of nearness, empathy, and community in the discussion. Flipgrid also allows students and teachers to create and share screencast videos and audio-only comments.
- GoReact: Another video tool that allows students to submit videos of themselves for observation and feedback. This can be useful for helping students create, evaluate, and receive feedback on their presentation and oral skills.
- VoiceThread: A video/audio tool that allows students to add pictures or text on a project, give feedback on writing, and explain their work. It can also be used to make instructional videos with interactive abilities (that can also be turned into quizzes), and create situations where students think aloud about their writing process and share their videos with each other.
- Google Docs: A collaboration tool, where students can write and receive feedback and suggested edits on their writing and where students can collaborate on projects and all forms of writing.
- Google Slides: Similar to Google Docs, Google Slides allows students to individually or collaboratively create presentation slides. Google Slides is also increasingly used to generate quick ideas and brainstorming, with each student or group of students having one slide.
- Jamboard: Another Google tool designed with a similar "note posting" format like Padlet. Jamboard allows users to create multiple sequential slides which provides for a series of tasks or specific boards for groups to be collected in one space.

It's not all that difficult to find online communication tools. The challenge comes in pairing the technology with the discussion activity. Doing this intentionally helps students learn to dialogue respectfully and thoughtfully, while developing and maintaining relationships. In the following video Ashley shares some of the tools that she is using to engage her students in discussions. She shares examples of the discussion activities that she tends to use with each tool. This is a nice segue to the next section that will focus on discussion strategies and activities.

Reflection Question: What tools might work well in your classroom? How can you teach digital citizenship in a way that helps students when they speak in person as well as online?

7.2.2 Online and Blended Student-to-Student Interaction Strategies and Activities

Technologies are important, but in the end what really matters are the outcomes that the technologies enable. There are endless ways that students can engage with each other online. Just like in-person discussions and interactions, online interactions can become stale if they do not include variety and choice, which invite students to think deeply and creatively. The following table and Teacher Talk boxes present some ideas that are relevant to a social studies classroom.

Table 1

Online Discussion Ideas

	Description	Online and Blended Examples
Deliberations	Students are assigned or select a position to defend regarding a contemporary or historical question. Team members are assigned roles in the process being used (opening statement, closing statement, evidence example, researcher, etc,). NOTE: we strongly	In-person deliberations can be a powerful experience. However, as the deliberations go on students can rely more on emotion and less on evidence. As a result, teachers may choose to have the closing statements online so that students can have the time to process what

	Description	Online and Blended Examples
	discourage assigning students to defend a morally questionable stance or one that would go against their ethical stance. [Process description from Street Law](#)	was said and form statements supported by evidence.
Comparison/Contrast	Social studies teachers commonly present two people, events, or things and ask students to compare and contrast them.	First, in a full-class explanation (with video backup) explain what it means to compare and contrast two items. Second, divide the class into small groups (4–6 people). Give each group two things to compare and contrast. For instance, students in a Western Civilization course may be asked to compare and contrast the city-states of Athens and Sparta. Give each student time to individually record their initial thoughts on paper. Then provide the each group with a Jamboard template with a Venn Diagram and allow them to collaboratively discuss statements as they place them on the Jamboard.
Fish Bowl Debate	Students seated inside the "fishbowl" actively participate in a discussion by asking questions and sharing their opinions, while students standing outside listen carefully to the ideas presented. Students take turns in these roles, so that they practice being both contributors and listeners in a group discussion. This strategy is especially useful when you want to make sure all students participate in a discussion, when you want to help students reflect on what a good discussion looks like, and when you need a structure for discussing controversial or difficult topics. [Full Process description from Facing History and Ourselves](#)	A Fishbowl activity can be blended by introducing the topic in person before students discuss or debate in an asynchronous discussion board. In the online space, students can take turns being in the fishbowl (commenting) and observing. The teacher can then help to wrap up the experience in person.
Socratic Seminar	In a Socratic Seminar activity, students help each other understand the ideas, issues, and values reflected in a text through a group discussion format. Students are responsible for facilitating their group discussion around the ideas in the text; they shouldn't use the discussion to assert their opinions or prove an argument. Through this type of discussion, students practice how to listen to one another, make meaning, and find common ground while participating in a conversation. [Full Process description from Facing History and Ourselves.](#)	Often Socratic seminars can be blended by starting the discussion in-person, moving the seminar online where all students have equal opportunity to participate, and then finishing the seminar in person.
Narrative Creation: Connecting to an Image or Text	Narrative is a disciplinary skill for social studies. It emphasizes the ability to make, evaluate, and revise stories about the past and	Students can collaborate to create a cause and effect example or design for their own using online technologies for classmates to

	Description	Online and Blended Examples
	analyze the meanings they convey. This concept is especially powerful as it asks students to tap into their lived experiences and background knowledge as a valuable source.	engage with. A sample narrative task graphic organizer is provided here. A blank template is available here.
Periodization Options	Periodization is a disciplinary connect for social studies. It emphasizes the ability to explain & evaluate existing timelines and to create new ones of the past in order to know the present better. Students can structure and modify their work by labeling the event a starting point, end point, or turning point for their timeline.	Students can collaborate using online technologies to create a cause and effect example or design their own for classmates to engage with. A sample Periodization task graphic organizer is provided here. A blank template is available here.
Cause and Effect	Cause and Effect is a disciplinary concept for social studies. Asking students to work in pairs or groups to research short and long term causes and effects gets students involved in deeper learning. You can structure the exercise by using categories like "political", "economic", and "social" cause and effects.	Students can use online technologies to collaborate to create a cause-and-effect example or design their own for classmates to engage with. A sample Cause and Effect task graphic organizer is provided here. A blank template is available here.
Continuity and Change Over Time (CCOT)	CCOT is a disciplinary concept for social studies. Students identify a current idea, event, group, process, system etc. and describe how it has changed over time. Setting the number of antecedents and a timeline help structure the task.	Students can collaborate using online technologies to create a CCOT example or design their own for classmates to engage with. A sample CCOT task using a "2 Event" graphic organizer is provided here. A blank template is available here.
Global Connections	Students use a printed world map to identify how people, ideas, things, and events are connected or related. A key can be made with notations describing the connections.	Students use a digital world map to identify how people, ideas, things, and events are connected or related. Hyperlinked posts on the map are used to describe the connections.

Teachers Talk: Using Online Discussions to Prepare for In-person Discussions

A Social Studies Teacher in Utah

Online discussions give my students the opportunity to participate. I think they actually communicate better online. The top five or six students in my class prefer in-person, but the rest feel nervous to speak in front of others. So, I like to start many of my discussions online. Then my kids can see other people's ideas, take time to think of their own ideas, and bring them back to the classroom. Kids who might not have had an opinion or a thought or a question beforehand now feel like they can add to the discussion that's happening in class. I also use nearpod. I might ask my students to put up three things that Dr. Martin Luther King said. Some students can't think of anything, but now they can see what everyone else has written, and even if they just copy it, they remember more than if they were in an in-person discussion and just stopped listening because they didn't have to participate. For those classroom teachers who are saying, "Well, it's better in person," I think they're going to find that when they do it online, it gives more opportunity for more kids to actually go back and feel more confident about speaking in their in-person discussions.

A good online discussion requires good preparation. Here Mark Stevens shares with us several ideas for facilitating online interactions as well as benefits he sees in his classroom.

Teachers Talk: Online Interaction (3:53)

Watch on YouTube

Reflection Questions: What are the greatest benefits Mark sees from having his students interact online? What benefits might you see in your classroom?

[The Big List of Class Discussion Strategies](#), compiled by Jennifer Gonzalez, is a longer list of ideas that could be done online, include Socratic seminars, gallery walks, affinity mapping, etc. Use your creativity to modify them for use in both the online and in-person space.

An online discussion is most effective when the instructions are clear. For a review of how to create an effective discussion board post, see 5.2.2 in [Building Community and Setting Expectations](#) *K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume 1).*

In addition to discussions, you can engage students in collaborative activities. Often these collaborations will occur in class using technology, but online technologies also afford students the opportunity to continue their collaborative work from home.

Reflection Questions: How did Merinda Davis use blended learning to make difficult content more accessible to her students? For what content could you do something similar?

✎ **Blended Teaching Workbook**

In your Blended Teaching Workbook create an online discussion prompt for the lesson/content area that you are addressing with your problem of practice. How will you make it engaging for the students? How will you target your problem of practice?

If you haven't already opened and saved your workbook, you can access it here.

Not all online interaction has to take place in a discussion. In the video below Ashley discusses some of the tools and methods she uses to help students interact in other online spaces.

Reflection Question: How you could use one of these tools to help students meet a learning objective?

Online interaction can build relationships among students as they reach out to each other and help one another. Online technology can provide students with a platform that facilitates those types of interactions. Mark Stevens describes how he sees this happening in his classroom.
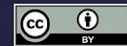
[Watch on YouTube](#)

Reflection Question: In what ways did students in Mark's class support each other using online affordances?

🏛️ 7.3 Student-to-Community Interactions
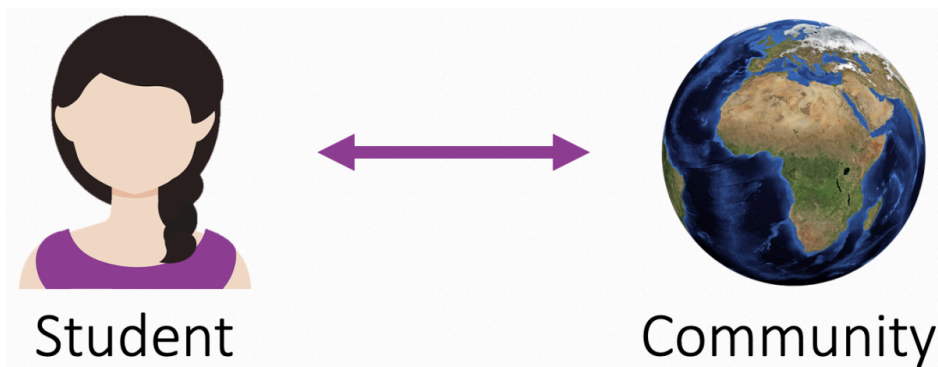
Blended teaching allows student to student interactions to expand beyond the classroom to the school, other schools, and even to the world. For example, Merinda Davis has facilitated several virtual exchanges where students can connect using video conferencing tools. In the following she describes a recent exchange:

Teachers Talk: Sharing Current Events with Pakistani Students
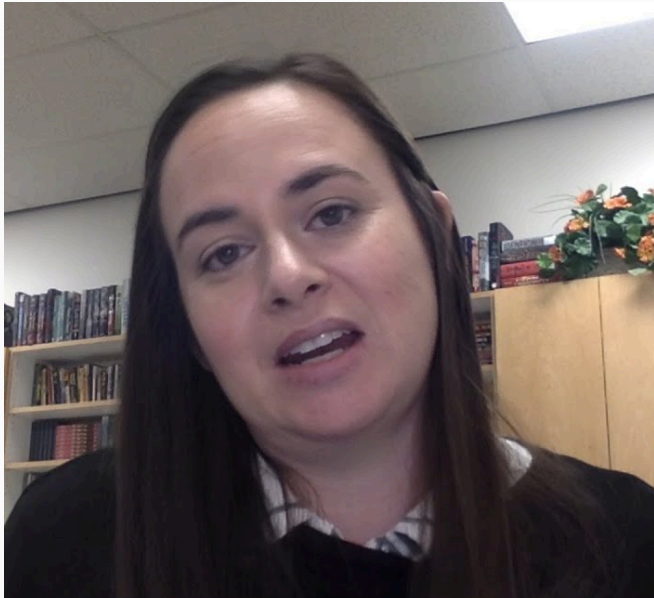
Merinda Davis

One year we were able to share current events with students in a school in Pakistan. Each week students would look up a current issue or current event and share it with their peers in Pakistan. The students in Pakistan did the same. They talked about the event and reflected on it. But the interesting thing is what it did to our in-person class. Students were coming up to me in the hallways, so excited and telling me about these different current events and current stories that they had learned. Their activitiy in the online space increased the engagement and excitements of our inperson activities and interactions.

In the next two videos, Merinda Davis shares the excitement and insight her students experienced her students as they interacted with students from other cultures.

Reflection Questions: Why were these students so excited to share current events with other students in another country? How can you incorporate something similar in your classroom?

International and
Other Exchanges

Merinda Davis
~ **Innovative Learning Coach**

Online Interaction

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[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Question: How can you facilitate interactions between other classrooms in your school, your state, the nation, and the world?

International exchanges can be a wonderful experience for students, but you can also facilitate exchanges closer to home. For instance, Janet Babic and Patrick O'Brien taught the same course in the same school district but in different schools. During a unit on immigration, Janet and Patrick teamed up and had their students collaboratively create a website to share digital stories of immigrants. Using Google Documents, students collaborated to create interview questions as well as tips for conducting interviews and editing the video recordings. Once the videos were edited, they placed them on a Google Map using placemarkers showing the countries of origin.

In another example, two social studies teachers, Ahlam Yassin in New Jersey and Jessica Culver in Arkansas, used a shared Padlet to engage their students in a conversation on how Covid-19 had impacted their lives. However, their conversations soon turned to other topics, including politics and free time activities. Interestingly, each group believed that their daily lives were uninteresting but enjoyed learning about other group's lives. The activity went so well that following this exchange, Ahlam facilitated new exchanges with other teachers around the world.

"Our town is rural in the Ozark Mountains. While my students are very smart, inquisitive, excited, and creative, they have had very limited chances to travel so to them, a suburb of New York City is very interesting."
  --Jessica Culver (Arkansas)

"The kids started talking about what they do in their free time. One of my students said, 'These kids go out in the mountains, they hike, they do all of these different things' … They were so intrigued, as I was too, about this thing called 'mudding'"
  --Ahlam Yassin (New Jersey)

## Teachers Talk: Collaborating to Create a 1920s Radio Show

Mark Stevens

For a number of years now, I have collaborated with another professor at my undergraduate alma mater. Her students mentor my students, and there's a constant back and forth, exchanging advice and ideas. The students don't know each other, but they do get some good support. To study the 1920s, one project they worked on together was preparing a two-minute radio script for a 1920s radio show. They wrote the show and included an ad. They did a lot of online research and also received coaching from these university students. This year a bunch of them decided to take the project a step further and actually record it. They already had the content, but they loved taking it to the next level. And they were so engaged. It was fun to see.

Not only can students interact with other students outside their class, blended teachers can use online technology to facilitate interactions with guest speakers. Guest speakers can have a powerful impact on students. However, they can be difficult to arrange. Live video communication tools allow you to broaden your search to those who live outside of your area. However, coordinating schedules can still be difficult, especially if you have multiple classes. One solution is for students to interact with others asynchronously using a tool such as VoiceThread. In this example, Halerin Ferrier's 4th grade students wrote letters as if they were living in a Japanese internment camp. They then recorded their letters on VoiceThread. Finally, actual Japanese internment camp survivors responded to some of their letters.

Teacher Talk: Virtual Guests Using VoiceThread (1:27)
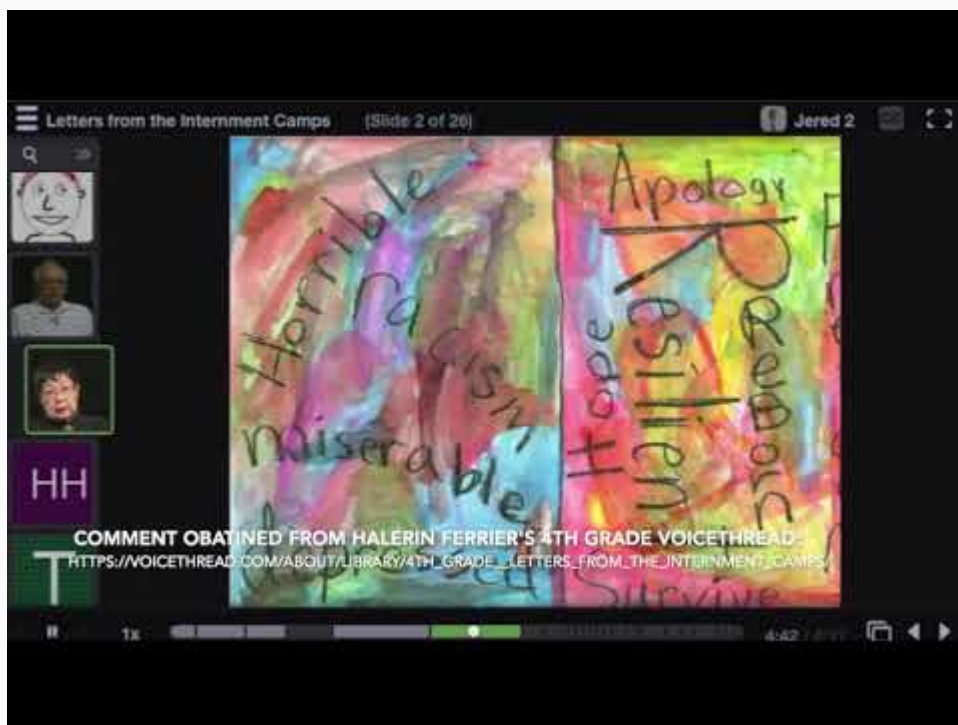
Watch on YouTube

Don't know how to get started with an exchange? Check out the following resources:

Resources for Exchanges

- [Pen Pal Schools](#): Quick, simple, and easy. This site includes hundreds of lesson plans in a variety of content areas for all ages. It has built-in assessment and tracking tools for teachers. They have asynchronous and synchronous options.

- [Global Nomads Group](#): Synchronous exchange with multiple projects to choose from; some may have a fee involved if you don't follow through with your commitments. There are also some amazing non-exchange projects your students can do, especially if you're looking for PBL ideas.

- [Generation Global:](#) Dialogue is at the heart of the program. They offer flexible and easy to use teaching resources on a range of global issues. Through facilitated video conferences and online community, students interact directly with their peers around the world, engaging in dialogue on issues of culture, identity, beliefs, values, and attitudes. All resources and video conferences are free for educators and young people.

- [JDO Foundation](#): This is a year-long synchronous exchange that requires an application and interview. Classes are matched up on projects and age groups.

- [The Stevens Initiative:](#) The Stevens Initiative is an international effort to build global competence and career readiness skills for young people in the United States, Middle East, and North Africa by growing and enhancing the field of virtual exchange.

- [iEarn:](#) iEARN empowers teachers and young people to work together online using the Internet and other new communications technologies. Over 2,000,000 students each day are engaged in collaborative project work worldwide.

- [Digital Exchange Program](#): The first-ever youth-led, digital learning experience that uses design thinking, community journalism, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals to strengthen language learning and cross-cultural collaboration. This has an application deadline to participate.

- Here's an [article that lists 5 virtual pen-pal resources](#)

Keep your eyes and ears open. Develop a network of teachers. Use social media (Instagram, twitter) to connect with other teachers. Even communicating with other social science students in another part of your own country can be very instructive for your students.

🏛️7.4 Teacher-to-Student Interactions

Teacher ↔ Student
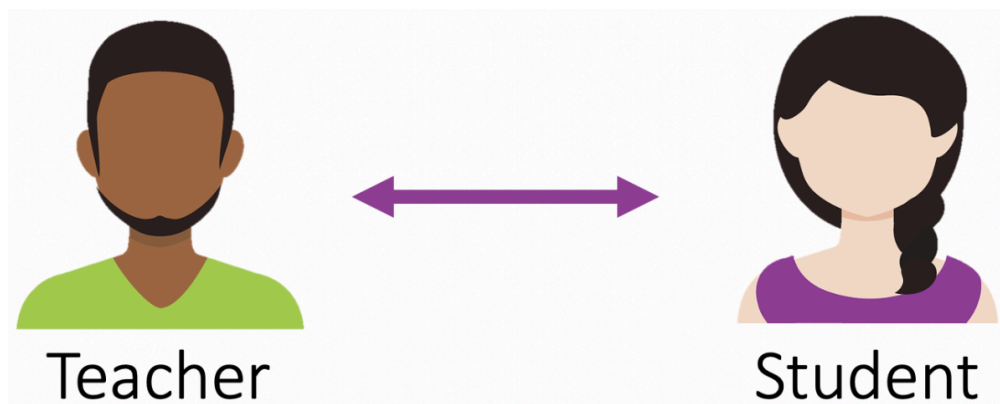
LeNina Wimmer

I feel like I give a ton more feedback now than I used to, because it's just so much faster and easier. I can easily type feedback, or I can give them a red, yellow, or green checkpoint. Before I blended my classroom, all they saw was a checkmark, which showed that I had read it. But now they're getting a "Yep, you're good." Or, "Hey, this is something you want to look at." Even if I'm being lazy in my feedback, it's still more feedback than I would have given before. And I can very quickly give really in depth feedback if I want to.

What are some ways teachers can foster these interactions?

Interactions between students and teachers are also important in a social studies course. Teachers often report that their interactions with students online have strengthened relationships and contributed to student growth.

Reflection Question: How can you use the online space to foster relationships with your students?

- Share who you are outside the classroom: Students learn from teachers they like and know. If you want students to share who they are, it is essential that teachers model this activity. Inject images and stories about you, your family, your hobbies, travels, pets, etc. These additions will have large benefits.
- Participate in online discussions. You don't have to chime in and respond to everyone's posts. Instead your role in a discussion board is to guide and facilitate the discussion. You can monitor what is said for civility as well as content. If a discussion is going in a nonproductive direction, you can gently guide it back. You can respond honestly to good ideas and interesting insights. You can suggest further resources.
- Provide feedback. Students appreciate and need feedback. Teachers find that giving some types of feedback online is much easier than feedback with traditional paper and pen.
    - Give feedback on assignments through the LMS you use. Check out the ways your LMS allows you to communicate with students about their assignments. If you are using rubrics for grading, you can give very specific feedback then allow your students to improve the assignment. Your LMS may have additional ways to contact students.
    - Use written, audio, or video feedback. Some students prefer written feedback because they can access it easily; others prefer audio or visual because it's easier for them to understand and feels more personable. There are also times when it's easier to provide audio or video feedback compared to typing out feedback comments. For instance, [Mote](#) is a Chrome extension that allows teachers to quickly add audio recordings to Google Document and Google Classroom gradebook. There are also several free screen-recording tools that allow you to create quick video recordings and then share them with students using an unlisted link. There are times when text, audio, and video feedback are the most effective, and you can use all three during the year.
    - When students are online working during class, walk around the classroom, answering questions and giving verbal feedback as needed.
    - Schedule one-on-one meetings with students to discuss their progress and provide feedback.
    - Alternatively, if students are writing online on a Google Doc, for example, you can pull up as many documents as your computer will allow and give real-time feedback as they are writing. Students are more likely to rewrite when they receive feedback during the process of composing writing.
    - In your feedback, share personal anecdotes that their writing brings to your mind. Let them get to know you.
- Explain to students your process for receiving emails from class members. Encourage them to email you with questions, explain when you will be available to look at emails, and answer them as promptly as possible.
- Email students who are not in class, letting them know that they were missed.

LeNina Wimmer and Mary Catherine Keating both found that online communications helped them build relationships with their students and improve learning outcomes.

Teachers Talk: Interacting with the Middle Kids

LeNina Wimmer

Being able to interact online has allowed me to interact more with kids that are seen as just the average kind of kid. You have some kids that are super smart and are going to always ask questions in class. So, they're always going to get my attention. And then you have the kids who are going to goof off in class. So, they already have my attention, too. And then there's that middle group of kids. They're just going to do whatever they're told to do, but they're never going to raise their hand and let the class know that they didn't understand something

Now those kids have a forum where they can interact with me. I often tell them when they submit something, if there's something they want me to look at, let me know. "I might be just looking at the argumentative claim here, but if you want me to look at something else, let me know." They'll email me and say, "I didn't really understand how to do this. Will you please take a look at it for me?" Or "Will you please look at the rest of my paragraph, because I went ahead?" Those middle students get a lot more instruction and interaction with me because they can do it online.

Teachers Talk: Immediate, Formative Feedback

Mary Catherine Keating

When I first started teaching, I never knew what the kids didn't get until they handed in their final work. But in blended teaching, I can monitor and guide the students in the process. I can see the way they are thinking about concepts. I can give immediate and formative feedback. I can open up their documents or assignments while they are still working on them and leave comments for them: "Hey, you need to address this" or "You missed this." "What about these generals?" Even something as simple as vocabulary I can address early on. Then when the kids go back to their work, the first thing they see is my feedback and they can make corrections or rethink their approach while they still have time to work on it. I love looking at their papers and seeing that they totally got that Charles the Second was the best thing ever. When I see a misunderstanding or gap in their learning, I can address it as a whole class or in groups. I'm able to direct them because I can see what they're doing. I don't have to wait until they turn the paper in. I'm there every step of the way.

The online space significantly increases opportunities for interaction between students and content, students and other students, and students and teachers. Students who never or rarely speak in class may find themselves suddenly

communicating on a regular basis. The results of learning through a combination of content, interactions, instruction, and feedback can improve student outcomes, investment, and engagement with the subject matter. You don't have to start all at once. Just choose one interaction that looks promising to you--and begin.

Teachers Talk: Another Way to Build Relationships

Brooke Davies

Online interactions provide another opportunity for my students to interact. Students have strengths and weaknesses, and they may be more willing to speak in one class or situation than in another. So I like to vary what I do. In the in-person space I don't just use one method. I don't just use cold call or raising hands. I mix it up. I might have them share peer-to-peer or participate in a small group or large group discussion. Online discussion is another format and opportunity for students to communicate with each other and share their thoughts. It's also a unique way to build relationships in your class. I know, even in some of the classes I've taken, I get to know people I wouldn't have interacted with otherwise because we communicate in the online space.

Mark Stevens

One of my students was literally non-verbal. She would not talk in class. When I started to make online questions and online work documents and stuff like that available, she started communicating. The online space gives students like that the chance to participate. I understand that shyness aspect, and being able to give this girl a voice was really great.

🏛️ 7.5 Student-to-Content Interactions

Student   Content
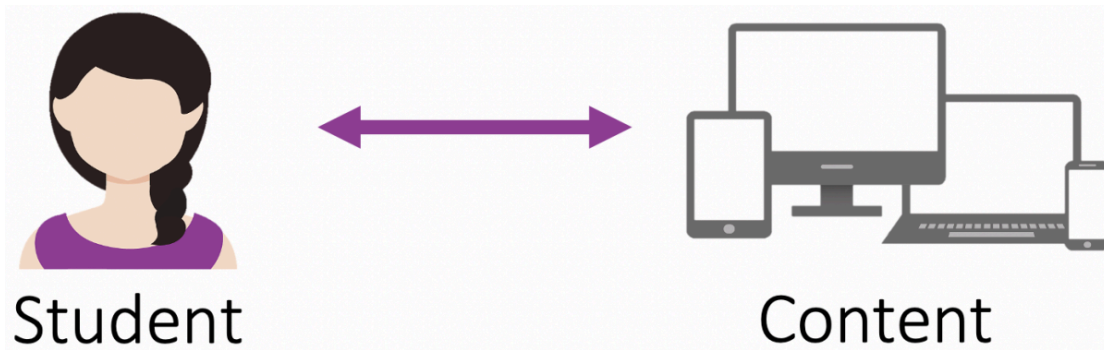
Digital history projects can be defined as "an approach to examining and representing the past that works with the new communication technologies of the computer, the internet network, and software systems" ([Source](#)). Furthermore, they draw "on essential features of the digital realm, such as databases, hypertextualization, and networks, to create and share historical knowledge" ([Source](#)). In short, we live in an era where students and teachers can learn from and interact with digital content. Moreover, this content exists in a range of formats including:

- Archive: a site that provides a body of primary sources. Could also include collections of documents or databases of materials.
- Essay, Exhibit, Digital Narrative: something created or written specifically for the Web or with digital methods, that serves as a secondary source for interpreting the past by offering a historical narrative or argument. This category can also include maps, network visualizations, or other ways of representing historical data.
- Teaching Resource: a site that provides online assignments, syllabi, other resources specifically geared toward using the Web, or digital apps for teaching, including educational history content for children or adults, pedagogical training tools, and outreach to the education community.
- Gateway/Clearinghouse: a site that provides access to other websites or Internet-based resources.
- Podcasts: video and audio podcasts that engage audiences on historical topics and themes.
- Games: challenging interactive activities that educate through competition or role playing, and finding evidence defined by rules and linked to a specific outcome. Games can be online, peer-to- peer, or mobile.

The list below is only a few of the digital projects that exist. We encourage you to use these in your class and to continue your search for more. Like any content, the most important aspect to their value is the teaching and learning experiences you design for your students.

✎ **Curriculum Resources**

- [C3 Inquiries](): "The Inquiry Design Model (IDM) is a distinctive approach to creating curriculum and instructional materials that honors teachers' knowledge and expertise." C3 Teacher [State]() and [Organizational]() Hubs are the place to find resources and people who are putting the C3 Framework into action.
- [Stanford History Education Group:]() SHEG seeks "to improve education by conducting research, working with school districts, and reaching directly into classrooms with free materials for teachers and students."
- [TED-ED:]() TED-Ed's mission is "to spark and celebrate the ideas of teachers and students around the world. Everything we do supports learning—from producing a growing library of [original animated videos](), to providing an international platform for teachers to [create their own.]()"
- [Choices—Brown University:]() "Choices curriculum empowers students to understand the relationship between history and current issues while developing the analytical skills to become thoughtful global citizens."
- [Khan Academy—Arts and Humanities:]() Provides a "free, world-class education to anyone, anywhere."
- [GapMinder:]() Gapminder "identifies systematic misconceptions about important global trends and proportions and uses reliable data to develop easy to understand teaching materials to rid people of their misconceptions."
- [National Humanities Center:]() "The Center's [Education Programs]() strengthen teaching on the collegiate and pre-collegiate levels. Model programs developed at the Center provide teachers and faculty with new materials and instructional strategies to make them more effective in the classroom and rekindle their enthusiasm for the subjects they teach."
- [Crash Course:]() "At Crash Course, we believe that high quality educational videos should be available to everyone for free."
- History for the 21st Century: "A grant-funded, collaborative project designed primarily to serve students in introductory college history courses and their instructors. We hope you will join us as we build, assess, and progressively improve an enquiry-based, modular curriculum that is free to students and instructors."
- [Thinglink:]()"This tool uses hyperlinked "hot spots" to be placed on a map, image, text, or other item. Students can add links to text, video, and other media to create a unique resource that highlights their understanding."
- [National Archives](): These editable "Document Analysis" organizers "allow your students to think through primary source documents for contextual understanding and to extract information to make informed judgments."
- [Knightlab Interactives:]() Focusing on the power of story telling to "make information meaningful," Knightlab offers multiple visualization tools like ["Story Line"]() and ["Story Map"]()that "contextualizes and augments social studies content."
- [The Smithsonian Learning Lab:]()"Create and share your own interactive learning experiences—or adopt exemplars made by teachers and Smithsonian experts using the Smithsonian's artifacts."
- Website Annotation Tools: [Page Marker]() and [Web Paint](): "Annotate and augment websites using text, shapes, and symbols and then share your screenshot."
- [Anchor:]() "This is a free, beginner-friendly platform for podcast creation, containing tools that allow users to record and edit audio, arrange it into podcast episodes, and publish podcasts to listening platforms."
- [Book Creator:]() "It does exactly what it says it does! Students share their learning by authoring a book they can share or co-author with classmates."
- [MindMup](): Using mind maps supports "students' organization, understanding, and application of knowledge. Create unlimited mind maps for free."
- [Insertlearning:]() "This amazing tool lets you augment websites, and embed questions, discussions, and links to other tools and content."
- [Answer Garden:]()"There is power in simplicity. Use Answer Garden for real time audience participation, online brainstorming and classroom feedback by creating and sharing prompts and a link. It is that easy!"
- Infographic Makers [Canva]() or [Piktochart](): Both tools are easy to use infographic creators for teachers and students. Combine text, data, and images with intentional design and layout.
- [Mentimeter:]() "This dynamic tool uses live polls, quizzes, word clouds, Q&As, and more to get real-time input."

- Parlay: "The Parlay Universe is a library of open discussion topics created by teachers in the Parlay community. Their focus is on the practice of discussions and tapping into the power of this pedagogy."

✎ World History Content

- World History Commons: "This website provides more than 1,700 annotated primary sources, 100 teaching guides, 30 overviews of methods and approaches, and 250 website reviews."
- World History Project: "A standards-based world history course that builds upon foundational historical thinking skills in preparation for AP, college, and beyond."
- The Indian Ocean in History: "This web-based resource helps teachers incorporate the Indian Ocean into world history studies by illustrating a variety of interactions that took place in the Indian Ocean during each era. The material has been assembled into an integrated and user-friendly teaching tool for students in upper elementary, middle, and high school."
- Slave Voyages: "The new SlaveVoyages website is the product of three years of development by a multi-disciplinary team of historians, librarians, curriculum specialists, cartographers, computer programmers, and web designers, in consultation with scholars of the slave trade from universities in Europe, Africa, South America, and North America."
- he Fallen of WW 2: "An interactive documentary that examines the human cost of the second World War and the decline in battle deaths in the years since the war. The 15-minute data visualization uses cinematic storytelling techniques to provide viewers with a fresh and dramatic perspective of a pivotal moment in history."
- 68-77-89 Project: "A curriculum designed for teachers using the stories of artists, students, and everyday individuals to teach about how a nation peacefully transitioned from 41 years of Communist rule to democracy in 1989."
- Our Shared Past in the Mediterranean: "Our Shared Past is a collaborative grants program to encourage new approaches to world history curriculum and curricular content design in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and North America."
- New Approaches to Curriculum on the Middle East and North Africa: "Our research-based curricular project analyzed the common categories used to describe and teach the Modern Middle East and North Africa in existing U.S. World History textbooks. Based on this research, we offer robust alternatives for Grade 9-12 social studies teachers and multicultural educators that integrate new scholarship and curricula on the region."
- Throughline Podcast: "The past is never past. Every headline has a history. Join us every week as we go back in time to understand the present. These are stories you can feel and sounds you can see from the moments that shaped our world."

✎ US History Content

- [American Yawp:](#) "The American Yawp offers a free and online, collaboratively built, open American history textbook.
- [Digital History:](#) This Web site was designed and developed to support the teaching of American History in K-12 schools and colleges and is supported by the [College of Education](#) at the [University of Houston](#)."
- [ThoughtCo-US History:](#) "ThoughtCo is a premier reference site with a 20+ year focus on expert-created education content. We are proud to be one of the top-10 information sites, as measured by comScore, a leading Internet measurement company."
- [Globalizing US History:](#) "The project is a dynamic resource (updated monthly) that addresses the scarcity of professional development programs and resources dedicated to this approach. The content we have assembled are designed to inspire, support innovation, and develop your teaching strategies for U.S. History in a global context."
- [Gilder-Lehrman Institute of American History:](#) "The Institute is the leading nonprofit organization dedicated to K–12 history education while also serving the general public. Its mission is to promote the knowledge and understanding of American history through educational programs and resources."
- [Mapping American Social Movements:](#) "This project produces and displays free interactive maps showing the historical geography of dozens of social movements that have influenced American life and politics since the late 19th century, including radical movements, civil rights movements, labor movements, women's movements, and more."
- [American Diplomacy Simulations:](#) "The National Museum of American Diplomacy Education Program connects high school and college students with the world of American diplomacy, increasing their understanding of diplomacy and inspiring them to be involved in foreign affairs."
- [e Washington:](#) "Be Washington is a first-person interactive leadership experience. Come face to face with challenges that George Washington confronted as commander in chief or president in four key scenarios."
- [Teaching Hard History Podcast:](#) "Teaching Hard History brings us the lessons we should have learned in school through the voices of leading scholars and educators. It's good advice for teachers and good information for everybody."

Government and Civics

- [Constitute Project](): "Constitute offers access to the world's constitutions so that users can systematically compare them across a broad set of topics—using an inviting, clean interface."
- [iCivics:]() "We champion equitable, non-partisan civic education so that the practice of democracy is learned by each new generation. We work to inspire life-long civic engagement by providing high-quality and engaging civics resources to teachers and students across our nation."
- [Bill of Rights Institute:]() "The Bill of Rights Institute engages, educates, and empowers individuals with a passion for the freedom and opportunity that exist in a free society."
- [Educating for American Democracy:]() "The initiative involved a diverse collaboration among over 300 academics, historians, political scientists, K–12 educators, district and state administrators, civics providers, students, and others from across the country."
- [Civics 101 Podcast](): "Civics 101 is the podcast refresher course on the basics of how the U.S. government works. We offer graphic organizers and other [educational resources]()for teachers looking to use Civics 101 in the classroom."
- [Constitution Center:]() "The National Constitution Center brings together people of all ages and perspectives, across America and around the world, to learn about, debate, and celebrate the greatest vision of human freedom in history, the U.S. Constitution."
- [Street Law:]()"Since 1972, we've been hard at work in communities and schools across the country and around the globe, developing programs and teaching materials that educate people about law and government."
- [C-SPAN Classroom:]() "C-SPAN Classroom is a free membership service for social studies teachers. Our mission is to enhance the teaching of social studies through C-SPAN's primary source programming and websites."
- [World Press Freedom Index](): "The Index ranks 180 countries and regions according to the level of freedom available to journalists. It is a snapshot of the media freedom situation based on an evaluation of pluralism, independence of the media, quality of legislative framework, and safety of journalists in each country and region."
- [Democracy Index](): "The index provides a snapshot of the state of world democracy for 165 independent states and two territories. The Democracy Index is based on five categories: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation, and political culture."
- [Civic Online Reasoning](): "The COR curriculum provides free lessons and assessments that help you teach students to evaluate online information that affects them, their communities, and the world."

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SS: Data Practices

Lisa R. Halverson

8.1 Collecting Data in Social Science Courses

Data is a powerful tool that leads to improvements and understanding in education. Every student is unique, and data can inform us of each person's successes and struggles.

Data helps **students** know their strengths and allows them to shape their pathways of learning. Using data, students can set and evaluate goals for themselves.

Data allows **parents** to better champion their child's needs, interests, and abilities. Parents can be informed more quickly of how their child is faring with data.

Data enables **teachers** to help students succeed in their own individualized ways. Teachers can speedily know what is going well and what needs improvement.

Because of technology, the ways that data can be recorded, collected, organized, and used is increasingly timely and efficient. Teachers can readily use data to change and enhance their pedagogy, group students, plan remedial and extended activities for students who need it, and target specific needs of individuals, groups, and the whole class.

In this video Mark Stevens discusses the many ways he collects and uses data in his social science classroom.

Teachers Talk: Using Data (3:44)

Watch on YouTube

Reflection Question: What is one way Mark uses data that you could use in your classroom?

One powerful way to use data is in deciding how to groups students. The next two videos show two different teachers making these decisions to support student learning.

Teachers Talk: Using Data for Grouping (2:44)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Questions: What kinds of data do you have access to in your classroom? How can you use it to improve student engagement and learning?

Teachers Talk: Using Data Practices to Regroup and Reteach (3:20)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Questions: What kinds of data did LeNina use to gather this small group of students? How did it help her target instruction?

Data is most helpful when it is organized in a meaningful way. You may want to use subjective and objective data, observations, performance criteria, and areas of a rubric aligned with a certain learning objective. Here are a few examples:

Table 1

Collecting Data—Some Ideas

Desired Data	Ways to Gather the Data Using Technology
Collaborating	How well are students able to collaborate? Data may come from your own observations; student self-reflections on their contributions and the process of collaboration; evaluating collaborative student work in a shared document; and reports from the team members. Training/resources needed to obtain/access data: A system for compiling observations.
Curating information	How well can student curate information and express understanding? Multimedia options are particularly useful in a social studies setting, and students can utilize blogging, podcasting, video creation, graphic organizers, photo essays, Wikipedia entries, and more to share learning. Different tools allow different competencies and understandings to be expressed. Training/resources needed to obtain/access data: A system for compiling observations including a differentiated rubric for the various skills different media should exhibit.

Desired Data	Ways to Gather the Data Using Technology
Help-seeking	Do students seek help? Observe their behaviors and record what you see, considering these questions: Do individual students seek help online, from other students, from you? Are they afraid to ask for help? Do they seek help when they might figure it out on their own? Training/resources needed to obtain/access data: A system for compiling observations.
Mastering concepts	Have students mastered core concepts? Your LMS or an outside mastery tracker may include data from activities and assessments. This data can include student's comprehension, critical thinking and reasoning skills, inference-making abilities, written argumentation abilities, and more. Training/resources needed to obtain/access data: Training in using the grade book or other grade tracker.
Setting and progressing towards goals	Are students setting and progressing towards goals? Goals and the progress students are making can be tracked in spreadsheet or goal sheets you create. Training/resources needed to obtain/access data: Training in Excel or Google Sheets.
Students' personal characteristics	What are your students like? You may create resources such as a Google Form survey that can help you get to know your students. Questions might ask about their learning preferences (alone, in groups, reading, watching, writing), their best times of day for studying, their hobbies and pastimes, their perceptions of their strengths and weakness in the subject area, what they want from the class, what they are nervous about in the class, the types of assessments and activities they prefer, and so forth. Combine their answers with your own observations, noticing and taking notes on students' participation, interest in reading materials, friends, attention, outside interests, interaction with others, clues about home life, etc. Training/resources needed to obtain/access data: How to create a Google Form and find the results. A system for compiling observations.

✎ **Blended Teaching Workbook**

In your blended teaching workbook, you have a blank table like the one above. Decide what sources of data you would like to use in your classroom. Fill out the chart based on what data you want to collect. You may have to ask others for ideas on types of technology and what you need to learn to use the technology.

If you haven't already opened and saved your workbook, you can access it here.

🏛 8.2 Utilizing Data in Social Science Courses

8.2.1 Mastery Levels in a Social Science Class

According to the National Council for the Social Studies, "The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world." Some of the content necessary for mastery in the social studies is easily assessed through exams with "one right answer." But measuring civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life—can sometimes be difficult.

Data practices combine nicely with personalization to overcome this challenge. Having a system for categorizing the types of learning that various assignments, activities, and questions assess can allow you to see what skills a student does well at and which they struggle with. For example, a student may excel at mastering basic facts but still struggle with perspective taking and historical empathy. They may feel comfortable treating a secondary source as the "objective" truth but be challenged to assess primary sources with all the messiness of understanding context, point of view, and bias. The data that assessments provide you can help you to structure lessons that teach the various skills of social studies learning and civic compentencies. Using this type of information also enables students to set measurable goals and create mastery paths.

When students have similar problems, you may want to group them together to learn and offer support. At other times, students who excel can become mentors for those who need help and in turn can have students strong in areas in which they are weak become mentors for them.

Here Ashley shows how she uses data to help her work with her students on mastering content in a self-paced classroom.

Teachers Talk: Data, Data, and More Data (6:01)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Question: How does Ashley use data to help her students master content and to foster interactions in the classroom?

8.2.2 Using data to help improve pedagogy

Data come from student performance and student activity. Consequently, that data can give insights into how to best teach your students and what pedagogy to use. Consider reflecting on these questions to evaluate yourself as a teacher and your students as learners:

- What activities lead to the best results for what kinds of learning outcomes?
- What confuses your students?
- What competencies and skills—critical thinking, perspective-taking, inference-making, evidence-based argumentation, healthy skepticism—do students seem most comfortable with, and which do they need additional modelling in?
- When are they most engaged?
- Does their engagement also lead to understanding and mastering learning outcomes?

As you think about these questions, what insights do you have about strengthening your pedagogy? What changes might help students achieve mastery as well as their goals?

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Ideas: Using Quiz Data

Data from quizzes can be helpful. If your LMS lets you align questions to specific learning outcomes, you can determine outcomes in which students need more help.

1. If many students miss the question, check to see if there is a problem with the question (miskeyed, difficult wording, unclear answers or expectations). If there are no problems with the question, check the standard to which the question is aligned. Pinpoint specific areas of confusion, analyze your instruction, and modify where needed.

2. If most students answer correctly, check to see if the question is too easy. If it isn't, review your teaching strategies for strengths that you might be able to use for similar learning objectives.

3. If just a few students miss the question, you may want to pull those students out in a small group and reteach, remediate, give extra practice, etc.

</div>

Teachers use data in all sorts of ways. Here LeNina Wimmer and her cohort use student work to fine-tune and test a rubric, as well as to evaluate the way they teach concepts to make sure they are all consistent.

Reflection Question: What do you learn from the process LeNina and her cohort use to create and use a rubric as well as to evaluate their teaching?

Here are some other examples of ways teachers have used data in a social studies classroom. What ideas do their experiences give you?

Example 1: Using Data to Immediately Adjust Lessons

- When my students fill out a google form or when they are doing an online quiz, I can get data from those sources immediately. I can scan them quickly, then immediately, even before the next period, make any changes I need to improve the lesson or make assignments better (Brooke Davies).

Example 2: Using Data to Create Groups

- Data has really helped me when I want to group students strategically. In blended teaching I have access to a lot more data, and it is always present. When I grade student papers or they take a quiz, I don't hand them back and lose access. They are still available to me. So, for example, if I want to group students who think more conservatively with students who think more liberally so I can generate diverse discussions, I can review their writings and get a good idea of who to put in a group (Brooke Davies).
- In my Canvas grade book I can sort students by their scores on assessments. If I'm doing a review, I sometimes group the top student with the bottom one and make pairs moving towards the middle. Other times, I scoop off the bottom four or five (based on their scores) and do some remedial work with them, while the other students collaborate, read, or do an activity online (Brianne Anderson).

Example 3: Using Data to Learn about and Build Relationships with Students

- Sometimes, if a student is not very verbal or is shy about having face to face conversations, the only way I get data is to look at what is going on in their online documents. There I can see their work and their ideas. I can leave comments of encouragement or support on the document, but I can also walk over to their desk to talk to them or to call them out in the hallway so I can have a more private conversation. Monitoring what I see online facilitates my in-person support with those students (Mark Stevens).

> ✎ **Blended Teaching Workbook**
>
> Think of one source of data that you are not using but that you could use in your classroom. In your workbook, outline a way to collect that data and ways you can use it. If you haven't already opened and saved your workbook, you can access it [here](#).

Collecting and using data may be new and thus feel uncomfortable or even overwhelming. But if you think about it, you are already pros at data collection. You are no stranger to data collection. You observe your students, interact with them, listen to them, read their papers, and keep track of their progress and abilities. You are more than ready to explore additional ways to include data in your understanding of your students. Data collection can open new ways of seeing their learning patterns and needs as well as your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher.

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SS: Personalization

Merinda M. Davis

9.1 The Importance of Personalization in a Social Science classroom

When we personalize our classes, we give our students some control over their learning.

As mentioned in the Data Practices chapter (chapter 7), social studies students vary widely in their abilities to think critically, employ evidence from multiple sources, organize information, read critically and analytically, and use various types of media. Students are on different reading levels, or English may not be their native language. Some have strong skills in writing; others do not. Some know how to lead a group but not how to participate in one. Others might have strong analytical skills but not know how to communicate their ideas in either writing or speaking. Some might need to develop collaborative skills or editing or rewriting skills.

Because students vary in essential social studies and historical literacy skills, personalization becomes a way to help students develop their strengths and overcome their weaknesses. It allows students to focus their attention on areas where they can really grow and not spend time doing exercises in areas they have already mastered. It allows students to use their time efficiently for their own growth. It can also help students gain confidence in their ability to communicate in a variety of different media and in their ability to have something to contribute.

One of the challenges with personalizing a social studies curriculum is the teacher's mindset that students must all memorize and repeat back the same information, such as names, dates, places, and events. When teachers can move past this mindset, the advantages of personalizing learning become more apparent. Recognizing the inherent advantages of the social studies curriculum will allow for a more engaging learning environment for students.

Here is how Merinda Davis allowed her students to show their knowledge through research and simulation, rather than through memorized facts or tests.

Reflection Questions: What historical skills did these students use in the simulations? How did they show their knowledge? What effect did these activities have on students?

Students can be involved in the same or similar activity but be working on different areas of growth. For example, in a unit on the American Revolution students can study key groups and people. They do not all need to research the same group or person to learn the same concepts. Students can work on developing their individual skills as they conduct and record their research. Some students could focus on identifying quality sources, while others focus on using corroborating sources to support their analyses, or contextualizing their evidence. Still others could be honing skills on a multimedia presentation, videos, infographics, or podcasts. Personalization looks a little different for each student, but it can benefit all of them. In this next video, Mark Stevens explains how and why personalization benefits students.

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Reflection questions: Which of the benefits that Mr. Stevens mentions means the most to you? How can you create that benefit in your classroom? What do you need to change in your thinking for this to happen?

It takes time and a mind shift to figure out how personalization will work for your classroom. Once you have figured out how to manage and effectively use personalization, you will be happily surprised with the results. You will see increased student engagement and learning.

One of the great advantages of personalization is that it allows students to participate in different ways as their circumstances allow. It this video Brooke Davies tells how blended learning allowed her to include a student who was unable to attend class.

Teachers Talk: Reaching the One (4:22)

Reaching the One

Brooke Davies
~ Social Studies Teacher

Personalization

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[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Question: How could you use blended teaching to increase the participation of students in your class?

Ashley uses personalization to engage students through their choice and input.

Reflection Questions: How does Ashley use student feedback to personalize her classroom? What other methods does she use? Would any of these methods fit your classroom?

Understanding what personalization is and what it is not can help you prepare your blended class to be effective. Below are the definitions of differentiation and personalization. Both can be used effectively in a classroom, but they are not the same. Recognizing the differences will help you use both to increase learning.

Definitions: Differentiation vs. Personalization

Differentiation and personalization are similar but not the same. As you think about the activities and ideas in this chapter, decide if the activity is differentiated or personalized. Both have an important place in classrooms, but personalization with its extra emphasis on student (not teacher) choice tends to foster greater growth in areas such as student ownership and self-regulation.

Differentiation: The teacher tailors instructional materials, pacing, and path to address student needs. She makes significant decisions for and about the student.

Personalization: Student makes their own decisions about their goals, time, place, pace, and path, giving them increased ownership over their learning.

It is helpful to approach personalization and the idea of student control in two different ways: through allowing students to personalize along the dimensions of personalization and through allowing students to personalize the learning

objectives, assessments, and activities we use in our teaching.

9.2 Personalization Dimensions in a Social Studies Classroom

One way to think about personalization is to examine the ways students can personalize. The five dimensions of personalized learning are guidelines for ways or methods we can apply to allow our students to personalize their learning. These dimensions are goals, time, place, pace, and/or path.

Figure 1

Five Dimensions of Personalized Learning

In the sections below we will explore each of these dimensions.

9.2.1 Personalizing Goals

Goals are a means of making choices specific and purposeful. Facilitating goal setting increases student ownership of their learning, encourages lifelong learning skills and attitudes, and increases motivation and self-regulation abilities.

In order for students to personalize their goals, you and they need to understand something of their needs and proficiencies as learners. This is where you can use the data you have gathered from the activities mentioned in the Data Practices chapter.

Information from such sources helps you understand where students are in their abilities, skills, and aptitudes. Learning outcomes and standards give focus for where students are expected to be. The difference between where students are and the course outcomes is the place for growth—and goals.

Teachers Talk: Discovering They Couldn't Reach Their Goals Together

Merinda Davis

One year I had three boys who always sat in the back and just sat back and laughed and joked around. On one particular project, the students were going to work in groups, and I gave them the choice of who they wanted to work with. They chose to work together, but as I checked up with them on their deadlines and asked how they were doing on their goals, they were not getting much done. Eventually, partway through the project, they decided, yeah, we're not as successful together as we could be. We like each other, but we don't work well together. They came to that conclusion themselves and ended up doing similar but separate projects. One of them did a prototype for a water filter straw before they were widely available on the market. Another one did the math and created his own water filter. He went and found all the parts and made his own filter. He got really excited because he was like, wow, I actually did this! He felt really accomplished. This kid went from being the kid who just goofed off in the back of the class to actually being a leader in the school.

Goals are not goals if they are just aspirations. Writing goals down and tracking them are important processes for achieving them. Here are a few ideas about goal-setting conferences and how they might be used in a social studies classroom.

In-Class

- Teach and discuss the purpose for setting goals.
- Help students develop a growth mindset; create a culture of growth.
- Introduce a goal-setting process such as SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound).

Conferencing

- Some teachers meet with a few students a day or week, taking several weeks to met with every student.
- Others plan a station or lab rotation, where students are working independently, then pull students out individually for a short consultation.
- Use these conferences to review current data and areas of growth.
- Invite the student to evaluate where new growth can take place in your content area and make goals for that growth.
- Record progress toward previous goals and new goals. Include a chart to help students visualize progress.

Monitoring & Tracking Progress (Between Conferences)

- Pair and share—place students in pairs (which either you or the students choose). The students share their goals with each other weekly and help their partner revise the goals if necessary. They also report their progress.
- Collaboration—Students can keep an online daily or weekly journal in which they reflect on and record their progress toward their goals or struggles they are having. Teachers check in weekly and address individual student needs.
- Consistency—Students turn in an online exit ticket daily, reporting that day's progress, struggles, or need for help.
- Tracking—Create charts to record student progress during the year.

Teachers Talk: Goal Setting

Merinda Davis

When I taught Utah studies, we blended it with *Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens* (Sean Covey, 2014), which included weekly goal setting. Each week they wrote two weekly goals—one academic goal and one personal goal. We would follow up on that goal at the end of the week. We also had daily starter goals, especially when we were doing projects. Each group would set a goal for the day, what they would be able to accomplish that day, or when they would be able to have something finished. Then I held them to their own deadlines.

9.2.2 Personalizing Path

When you allow students to personalize their learning path in your classroom, your students are not all doing the same assessments and activities. You may find that you have become a curator of resources and activities that will best help your students. These resources/activities can be compiled in playlists or choice boards, which give the students choice about the order in which they complete the activities or about which activities they choose to do.

While this may take time to figure out a system that is appropriate and manageable for your classroom, personalized pathways allow students to take ownership of their learning. This also allows you an opportunity to build positive relationships with your students, thus increasing teacher efficacy, which has the highest impact on student achievement (Hattie, 2017).

Teachers Talk: Choosing Media

Mark Stevens

There are so many ways to give students choices. We just finished studying the Holocaust. I gave the kids all kinds of resources. They could choose a brain pop video or a text-based resource like a Newsela article. And if they chose Newsela, there were four or five different Lexile levels; they could pick the one that works best for them. I also gave them the choice to use one resource or both of them. Or maybe they needed to have the article read to them. Instead of just listening to a machine voice read it to them, sometimes we had the teachers take the text of one of the mid-level Lexile levels and record the audio for them to listen to. The students make the decision that works best for them. Is it all three modes? The audio, the video, and the text? Or is it one or two of them?

Teachers Talk: Environmental Entrepreneurship (4:29)

[Watch on YouTube](https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2)

Reflection Question: In what ways was this project personalized?

9.2.3 Personalizing Pace

Personalizing pace means allowing students to take more or less time to master content, based on their own ways and pace of learning as well as their personal and family life circumstances. It often includes giving students a window of time on due dates for completing activities, assignments, and assessments. Personalizing pace encourages students to manage their time. They know what they need to do and when it needs to be completed, but they also know the other demands on their time (sports, school, play, and family and work obligations) and learn to plan for these situations. While students are still learning how to manage their time, it is important that you provide scaffolding and support.

Teachers Talk: A Year of History in One Semester

LeNina Wimmer

We allow students to progress through the US History content as fast as they want to. We grade on content and cognitive skills. Cognitive skills are 70% of their grade and content is 30%. If students finished their entire content work by the end of first semester and they demonstrated excellent cognitive skills, we let them be done with US history. We had many students finish the year's content in one semester. They were able to take another semester class, maybe US government or some other elective. Because those students were able to work so well on their own, I was able to spend more time helping students who needed more help in developing skills and learning the content. Flexible pacing helped all of my students.

Teachers Talk: Personalizing Pace

Brooke Davies

Personalization helps me and my students not waste time. I don't have to have my students do busy work or wait while others catch up. The online format has allowed them to move a little bit more at their own pace because I can give them choice, I can extend it a little bit easier. I can give them opportunities to go deeper if they finish earlier; if they're working slower I can also sometimes see that and assess it faster than if we were doing just like a paper and turning it into me at the end of the class period. I've seen engagement increase and greater authenticity in what we're doing. With blending we have this chunk that's all together that hopefully they'll get, and then they can move at their own pace to finish the work.

9.2.4 Personalizing Time

In a traditional classroom, students may have a class period to finish an assignment. In a blended classroom, this time can be expanded to include time outside the class. Because activities can be accessible outside of the classroom, students can choose times that work well for them. For example, some students may have a difficult time learning in the morning, when they have class. But because they can access the assignment later in the day, they are able to complete it and do a good job. Time is closely related to pace. Because students are not bound to a specific time to do an assignment, they can increase or decrease their pace according to their own preferences, needs, and abilities. Remember learning doesn't just happen in the timeframe of your class period, which may not be the optimal time for some students.

9.2.5 Personalizing Place

Personalizing place revisits traditional practices about classroom space and where students learn. Because blended courses often include online instruction, students can choose to do activities at home or at school. Remember, your classroom is not the only place where students can learn. In addition, they can access instruction when they have to miss activities because of illness, travel, or extra-curricular activities. Another aspect of place is the configuration of the classroom. Classrooms are often viewed as rows of desks or sometimes desks grouped into tables. But classrooms don't have to look this way. They can be made more comfortable, inviting, and conducive to the kinds of activities that take place in a blended classroom.

Flexible seating allows students to recognize where they learn best. "The students in the classroom need to be comfortable in the place they are learning which will lead to students being more engaged. The students will then be more attentive and will be more likely to participate in discussions that create a more meaningful, impactful learning experience" (Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, White, & Salovey, 2012, p. 700).

Teachers Talk: Flexible Place (4:29)

Reflection Questions: What advantages did these students receive from learning in a flexible classroom? What is a first step you could take to make your classroom more flexible?

Merinda found these same benefits from providing a flexible classroom.

Teachers Talk: Flexible Spaces

Merinda Davis

I tried something last year, and it actually kind of worked. I got swivel chairs, and I made more space in my classroom for students to move around in groups. I put desks along the back wall. The students' backs were to the front and their faces were to the wall. Each desk had a clipboard, so if they wanted to take notes about what was going on in the front of the classroom, they could turn toward the front with their clipboards. The majority of the time, however, they are working on the computers, and I can see their computer screens facing the front. I also have small groups of tables in the middle of the class for collaborative work or small group instruction.

🏛 9.3 Personalizing Activities and Assessments

Approaching personalization through the five dimensions is one way of planning to personalize. Another way is to look directly at what you already do in your classroom. Typically teachers plan assessments and activities around learning objectives to make sure they cover the material they are mandated to cover. Finding ways for students to exercise choice in some or all aspects of these activities and assessments is another way to foster personalization in your classroom.

9.3.1 Personalized Assessments

What do assessments look like in your classroom: A multiple-choice test? An essay exam? A final paper? A presentation? Do all your students do the same thing?

Personalizing assessments means giving students choices in the ways they demonstrate mastery of a learning outcome. Often this means creating a list of ideas that students can choose from, while also allowing them to suggest their own ideas.

If your students need to take a multiple-choice test consider using frequent formative assessments, then have a summative performance-based assessment. This allows students to show their learning in different ways especially if they are given a choice for how they achieve the performance-based assessment. The video below shows how one teacher supported personalized assessments in her classroom.

Teachers Talk: Developing Skills through WWII and the Cold War (4:06)

WWII and the Cold War

LeNina Wimmer
~ Social Studies Teacher

Personalization

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[Watch on YouTube](#)

Reflection Questions: What kinds of skills could LeNina Wimmer have evaluated in her students presentations? What are some ways you can give students choice when you want to evaluate skills and content?

The following video shows an example of a personalized assessment. The online space gives students more variety for tools to use as they choose and create the project they want to do.

Teachers Talk: The Peace Project (3:41)

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Reflection Questions: How did Merinda connect history with the students' lives? Why was this project so powerful for them?

Link to video referenced in this video: [Roman Kent](#)

✎ **Blended Teaching Workbook**

In your Blended Teaching Workbook, create a few ideas of personalized *assessments* that students can choose from in order to show mastery of the content area you chose earlier.

If you haven't already opened and saved your workbook, you can access it [here](#).

9.3.2 Personalized Activities

Personalized activities are based on data and goals. Students can choose activities that help them accomplish their goals from playlists and/or choice boards that give them choice in path, pace, time, and place. They may include online interaction as well as online integration of activities that are personalized or differentiated for individual students.

Mary Catherine differentiates her assessments and activities to fit the unique needs of her students.

Teachers Talk: Differentiating for Struggling Students

Mary Catherine Keating

I have a large number of ELL learners and IEP students. With blended teaching there's so much more I can do to help them succeed. For me that has been the greatest benefit of blended teaching. It involves doing really simple things—like giving them the ability to listen to a device read out loud to them. Or modifying a multiple choice quiz. I can easily change a quiz to meet the needs of a student by having only two answers to choose from instead of four or using pictures as answers instead of text. I also have more time to teach these students because I'm not spending time erasing answers or finding pictures in a book. I can give them more things that are appropriate for their learning level.

Table 1 contains more ideas for personalizing activities in a social science classroom.

Table 1

Personalized Activities

Personalized Activities
Create a choice board of activities for exploring a concept; person, place, or event, etc.
Corroboration—Introduce comparing and contrasting activities by providing links to several different artistic renderings of a text in different forms: film, poetry, art, music, graphic novel, etc. Students choose two and fill out a compare/contrast chart.
Students create a PSA to teach others about how we can apply lessons from history to our lives today. This can be in any format of the students' choice.
Students identify and develop a solution to an issue. Then they present their solution to appropriate stakeholders in the format that is most applicable to them.

✏ Blended Teaching Workbook

In your Blended Teaching Workbook create a few ideas of personalized *activities* that students can choose from in order to show mastery of the content area you chose earlier.

If you haven't already opened and saved your workbook, you can access it [here](#).

Personalization is a powerful pedagogical tool. It allows students to grow where they need to grow and in a way that is meaningful to them. It combines all the other competencies of blended learning— online integration, online interaction, and data practices—to create a unique learning experience for each student. Throughout these chapters, you have

learned how to use these competencies in a social studies context. Now it is up to you! You are ready for that first small step.

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Appendices

Charles R. Graham, Jered Borup, Michelle Jensen, Karen T. Arnesen, & Cecil R. Short

Appendix B: Research

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Appendix B: Research

Charles R. Graham, Jered Borup, Michelle Jensen, Karen T. Arnesen, & Cecil R. Short

This book was written for practitioners and so does not reference research throughout, as you might see in an academic publication. However, the editors are well-published researchers in the area of K–12 blended and online teaching.

If you are interested in the research related to the K–12 Blended Teaching Readiness model that is used to organize this book, below are some references that you can look up. Also, please feel free to reach out via email to charles.graham@byu.edu or any of the other editors.

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