SS: Online Integration & Management

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

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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](#)

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.

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

Reflection Questions: What mindset qualities does Merinda show in this video? Think about your own mindset. What can you do to prepare your mind and perspectives to be ready for blended teaching?

🏛 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

- 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](#)

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)

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

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.

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.

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)

[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)
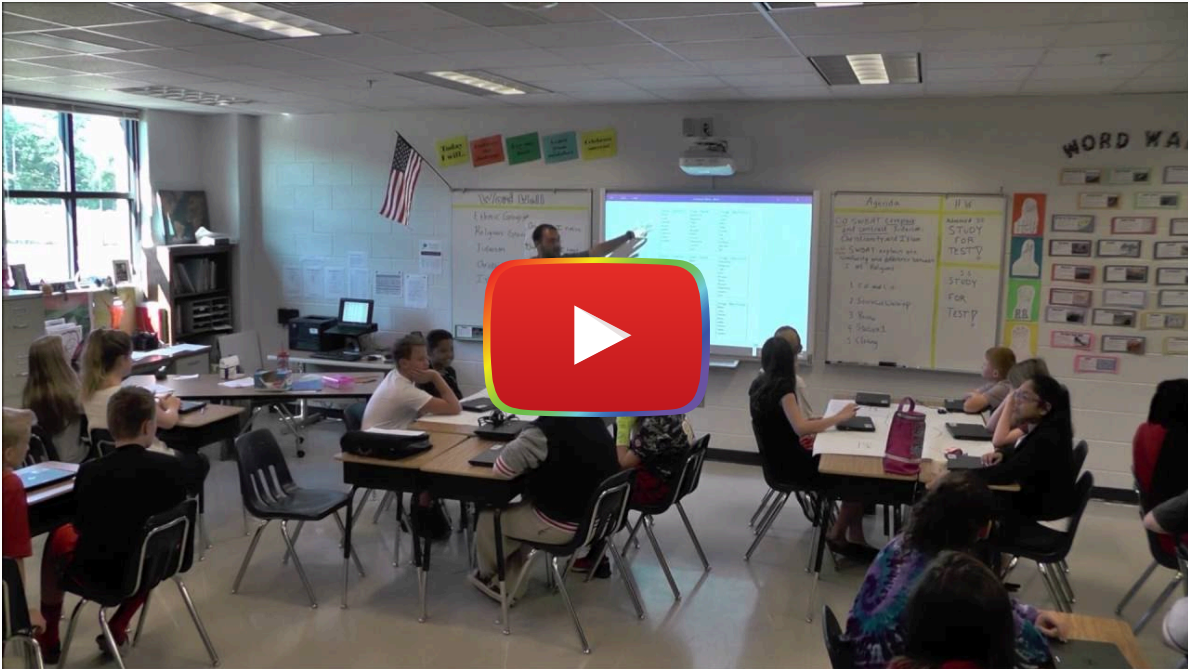
Reflection Questions: Explain how Mary Catherine uses a station rotation at the beginning of the year to train students in how to do a station rotation. What are some other ways you could use a station rotation?

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

[Watch on YouTube](#)

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.

Digital Internship (DI)—Authentic Problem/Project Based Learning

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 resorces 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.

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.

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

Reflection Questions: What does Mark Stevens see as the core principle of helping students stay on task? How can you develop that quality in your classroom?

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.

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.

Teachers Talk: How to Manage a Blended Classroom (5:13)

How to Manage a Blended Classroom

Ashley Brown

Social Science Teacher

Online Integration

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Watch on YouTube

Reflection Questions: What methods does Ashley use that might be effective in your classroom? How can you prepare to manage your 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.

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