

SS: Online Interaction

Craig Perrier & Jered Borup

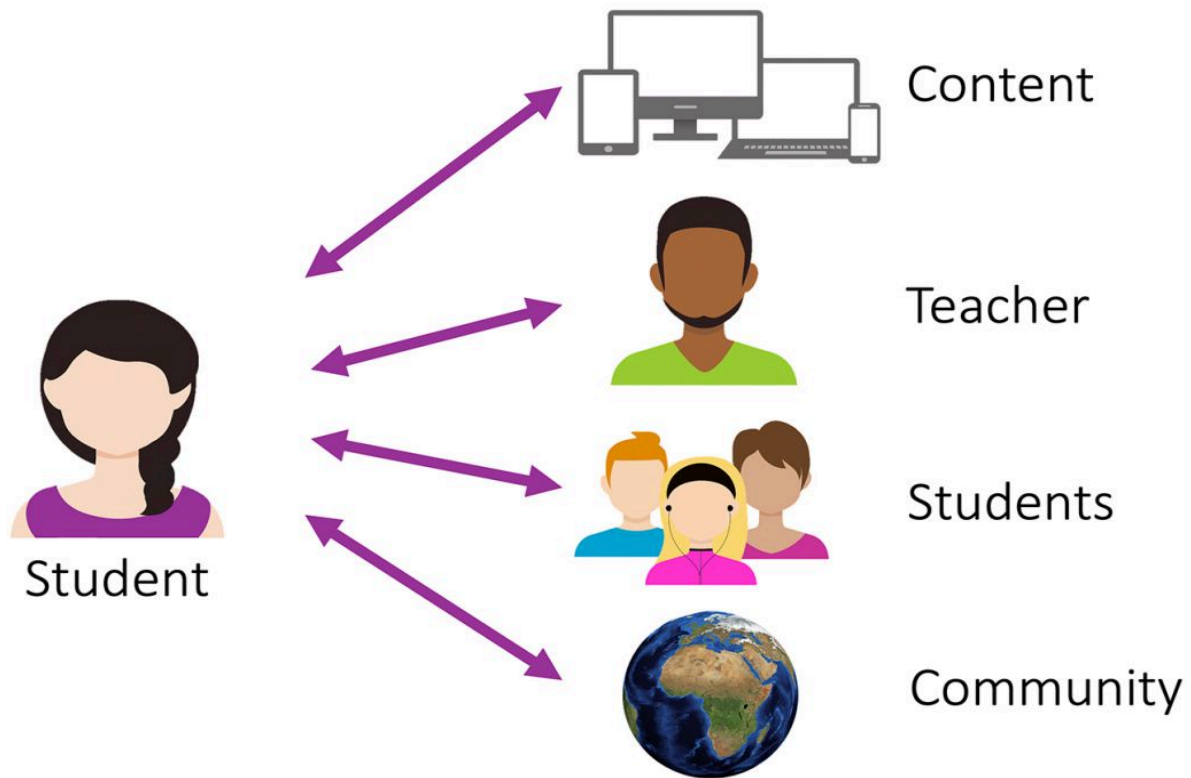


7.1 Online Interaction in Social Studies

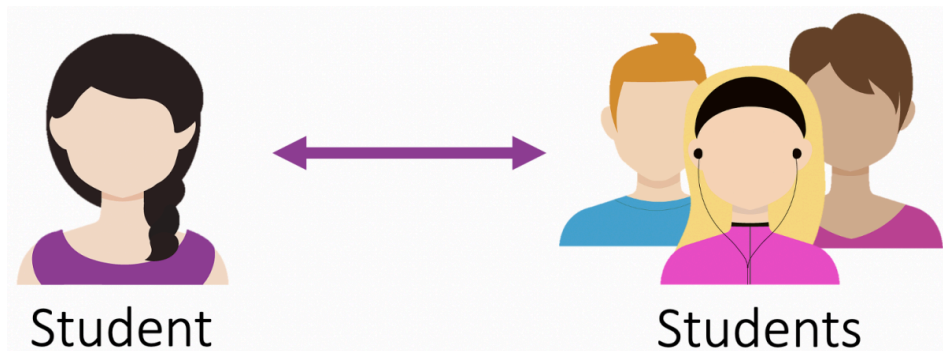
Review foundational knowledge about Online Interactions in K-12 Blended Teaching (Volume 1).

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



7.2 Student-to-Student Interactions



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!



Digital Tools

- 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.

Teachers Talk: Technology Exploration (5:34)



EdTech Books <https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2>

Online Interaction — Discussion

Ashley Brown

Social Science Teacher



Online Interaction

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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)



EdTech Books <https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2>

Online Interaction

Mark Stevens
~ Social Science Teacher



Online Interaction

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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.

Teachers Talk: Collaborating to Rewrite the Constitution (1:41)



EdTech Books <https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2>

Rewriting the Constitution

Merinda Davis

~ Innovative Learning Coach



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[Watch on YouTube](#)

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.

Teachers Talk: Online Interaction—Practice (5:38)



EdTech Books <https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2>

Online Interaction — Practice

Ashley Brown

Social Science Teacher



Online Interaction

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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.

Teachers Talk: Students Supporting Each Other (3:41)



EdTech Books <https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2>

Students Supporting Students

Mark Stevens

~ Social Science Teacher



Online Interaction

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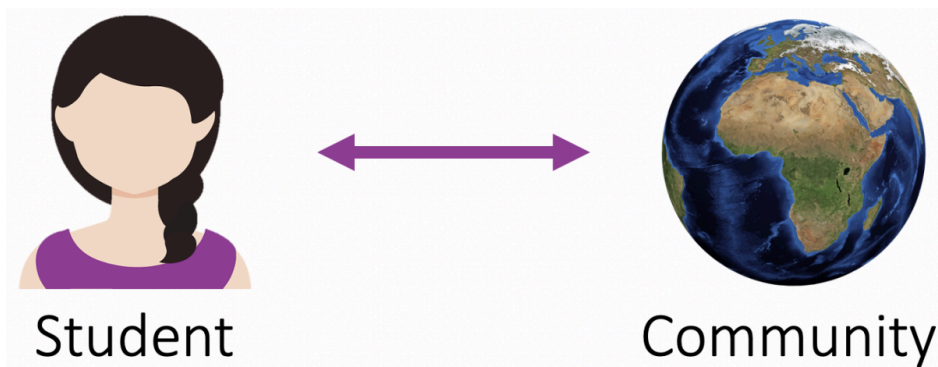


[Watch on YouTube](#)

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 activity in the online space increased the engagement and excitement of our in-person activities and interactions.

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

Teachers Talk: Sharing Current Events (2:13)



 EdTech Books <https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2>

Current Events

Merinda Davis

~ Innovative Learning Coach



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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?

Teachers Talk: International and Other Exchanges (4:16)



EdTech Books <https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2>

International and Other Exchanges

Merinda Davis

~ Innovative Learning Coach



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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.

The Immigration Project
Home
Ms. Babil's class
Mr. O'Brien's class
Rubric
Video editing tips
Interview Questions
Interview Tips

THE IMMIGRATION PROJECT



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

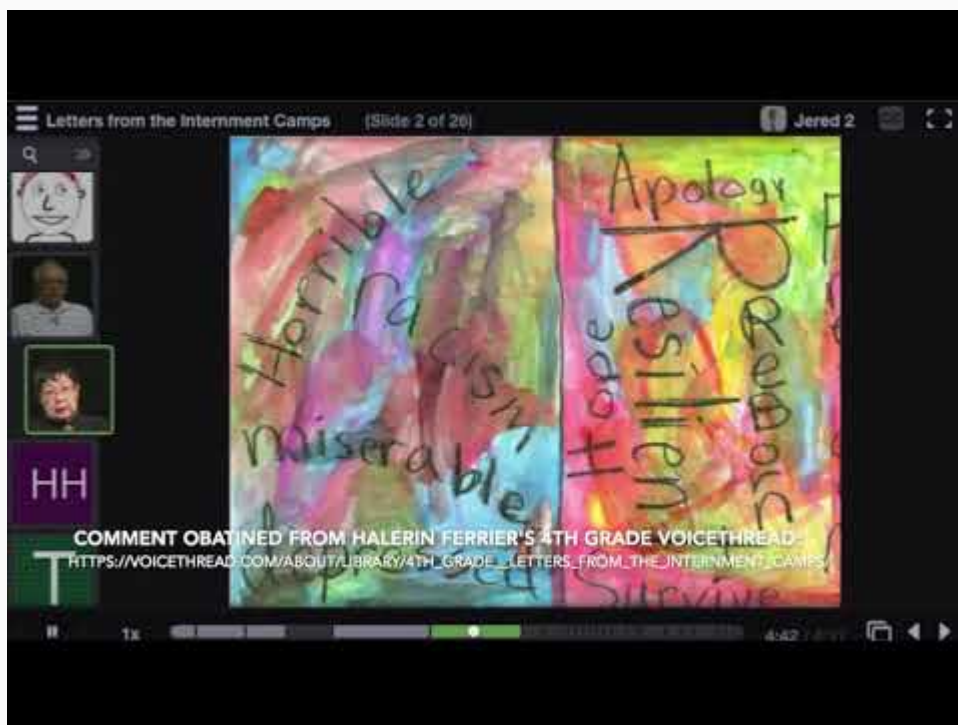


Mark Stevens

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, Halprin 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:

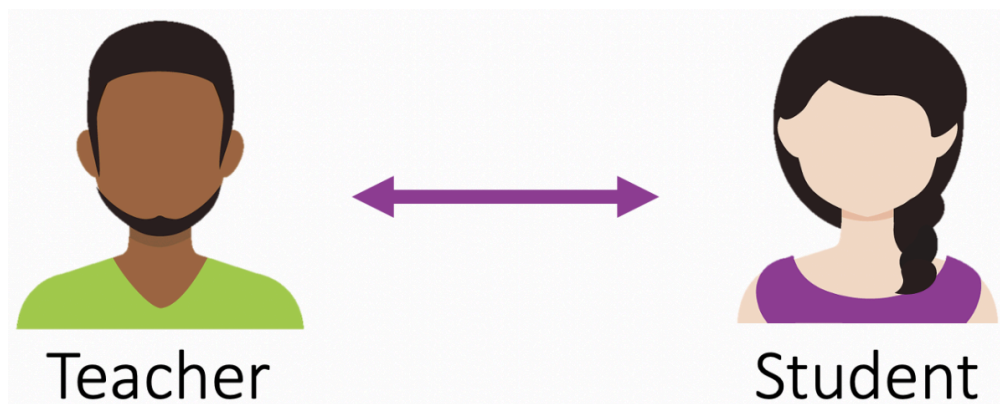


Resources for Exchanges

- [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



Teachers Talk: Quick Feedback



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.

Teachers Talk: Good Morning Videos and Recorded Instructions (2:59)



 EdTech Books <https://edtechbooks.org/k12blended2>

Good Morning Video/Recorded Instructions

Mary Catherine Keating

~ Social Studies Teacher



Online Interaction

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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.

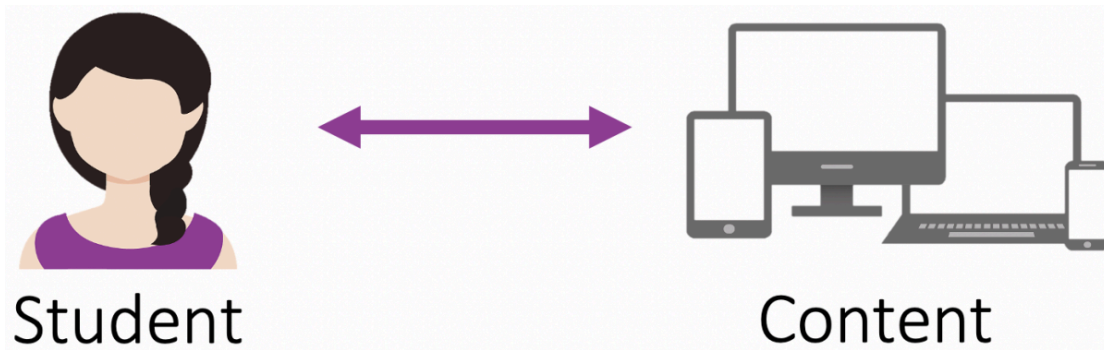


Mark Stevens

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



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."
- [The 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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