

Recommendations for Formal Learning



This book was designed to be readable on its own as an informal learning resource and also to be a ready-to-go complement for formal coursework in educational technology. To use the book as part of your coursework, consider some of the following ideas and activities:

1. Keep a Reflection Journal on Your Own Blog

As you read through chapters, reflect on the issues and questions central to each post or to each section. Post a short, written reflection on your own blog, which you can create through a free service like [WordPress](#) or [Tumblr](#). Then, comment on two or more peers' posts to ask questions, clarify points of disagreement, and explore complexities.

2. Create a 30-Second Video Summary

Using a free video creation tool, such as [Adobe Spark](#) or [Biteable](#), create a 30-second video that either summarizes one blog post's main ideas or highlights the different stances presented in two contradictory blog posts. Post your creation to [YouTube](#) or another video sharing service, and cite the blog post(s) in your video description.

Alternatively, this same assignment could be completed as a podcast.

3. Generate a Timeline

Using a free timeline creator, such as [Visme](#) or [Sutori](#), make a timeline of 5-10 important blog posts, using the original publication date provided in the editor's note for your date. Add in 5-10 major national or world events that might influence how educators are thinking about technology's role in education. Include a brief summary for each post in your timeline, and share your timeline with a neighbor, explaining how viewpoints, attitudes, and movements might evolve over time as the field progresses and in response to broader sociocultural shifts.

4. Ask the Author

Most authors whose blog posts are highlighted in this book have commenting features enabled on their blogs, or alternatively, they have an accompanying [Twitter handle](#) through which they may be contacted. Select a post that you would like clarification on, and direct your question(s) about the post to the original author (either via blog comments on the original post or via Twitter). Then, report back to the class about whether and how the author responded.

5. Summarize a Topic

Choose a topic from the [Index of Topics](#), and read each blog post that references it. Then, write a brief summary paper that answers the following questions:

1. How do different authors understand the topic? How are they the same? Different?
2. What are some of the important issues and tensions surrounding the topic that the authors address?
3. What solutions are provided?
4. In your estimation, where do we go from here?

6. Create a MindMap

Using a free mind mapping application, such as [bubbl.us](#) or [Wise Mapping](#), create a map of your knowledge as you read through the blog posts. Connect important ideas that relate to one another, and try to identify relationships between specific movements, topics, and issues. Once completed, share your mind map with the class, and explain what you think are some of the most important connections that you made.

7. Recommend a Blog Post

Operating from the [list of additional blogs](#) (or other sources provided by the instructor), explore blog posts that were not included in this book with the task of finding a post that you would like to have seen included. Submit your recommendations to an instructor-provided Google document, spreadsheet, or form along with a rationale, which explains the following:

1. What is the topic and central argument of the recommended post?
2. How does it represent an important voice or perspective on the topic?
3. How does it fill a gap in the conversation presented in the book?

8. Create Your Own Collection

Potentially building off of the previous activity, build your own open textbook or other open educational resource using existing, openly-licensed blog posts as your primary content sources. Organize contents in a meaningful way that either makes an argument or addresses a specific aspect of educational technology (e.g., MOOCs, open education). Build your collection as a Google Doc or in a blogging platform, provide sufficient narrative of your own to help your reader fit the pieces together, and release your collection under an open license.



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