

HOW WE MOVE THROUGH OUR (DIGITAL) CLASSROOMS- DEVELOPING AN ENGAGING DIGITAL PEDAGOGY

MARNIE ETHERIDGE

Marnie Etheridge shares the possibilities of digital pedagogies for teaching English to senior students. . .

English teaching has always been a physical construct for me. As someone who has spent twenty years in classrooms, my love of movement has manifested in colourful whiteboard notes, paper puzzle activities and gallery walks. I spent many an evening clipping resources in front of the TV ready for my senior class in the morning. I also spent many post-lessons trying to wrangle tiny pieces of paper and post-it notes filled with student inspiration that could be shared, refined and expanded upon in future lessons.

However, a movement into Aurora College two months before the first pandemic lockdown forced me to reconsider English pedagogy. I teach students entirely online. How can I get movement of thinking and agility of response into my classroom?

This article seeks to share the wonderful possibilities of digital pedagogies for teaching senior students.

Through the use of:

- OneNote- a digital note keeping program that allows students to make notes and keep handouts in a digital cloud environment.
- JamBoard- a cloud-based collaboration tool that collates student responses to stimulus questions or prompts.
- Mentimetre- an online survey tool that utilises student responses to develop word clouds, charts or ratings.
- Flipgrid- an online video recording environment that can be curated and managed entirely by the teacher

They're not complex software solutions that require hours of training or tricky concepts to communicate. But what they can offer are ways for students to collaborate, in a meaningful way, that records their initial ideas and reveals a progression that allows students to reflect personally on how their learning is being refined.

My suggestion is to bring one of these tools into your toolkit once a term in a way that is simple and easily

integrated into the teaching and learning cycle. That way you can embed the tool effectively and be confident before seeking the next challenge.

The best teaching we know is mostly undertaken when teachers are not always centre of the learning, but when students have agency in their learning. When classrooms are principally traditional “top-down” pedagogies, we limit the creativity and efficacy of student understanding and this can mean that students only achieve limited results in the Stage 6 classroom ([Baroutsis 2018](#)). Newer and more creative ways of bringing critical thinking, conceptual understanding and the ability to transfer knowledge have never been more essential to high achievement in the HSC classroom. Combine this with the expectation of parents, employers and tertiary education for technologically fluent students (Howell 2022) and then using digital pedagogies effectively in our classrooms becomes more than just *nice*— it becomes *imperative*. Digital technologies and pedagogies are one way to do this in a way that is engaging and that records great ideas and conversations to be referenced at a later date, embedding the cyclic and recursive nature of quality English instruction.

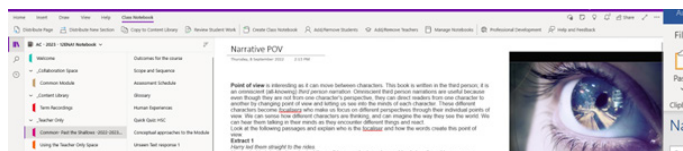
The key to incorporating digital tools into your classroom is to understand what end point you are hoping to achieve. Do you want students to be working and collaborating authentically? Do you want to be able to evaluate student drafts in real time? Do you want students to be inspired to have challenging and robust discussions around texts and concepts? Whatever you want your students to achieve should inform how you utilise technology in the classroom. It sounds like a paradox, but these tools are wonderful for creative, critical and collaborative activities— rather than isolating students, I have found these tools increase and foster connection in learning experiences.



ONENOTE

This is a recording notebook software that is part of the Microsoft Office suite of programs. Most schools that have Microsoft Office 365 for staff and students have OneNote available to them as part of that suite of tools. OneNote provides students with a digital repository that allows for individual, class level and faculty-based resourcing. In each OneNote created for a class through One Drive, teachers can set up class notebooks for each of their students, create resources pages quickly and efficiently, and distribute these electronically. Teachers can also watch students work in real time through the 'Review Student Work' feature.

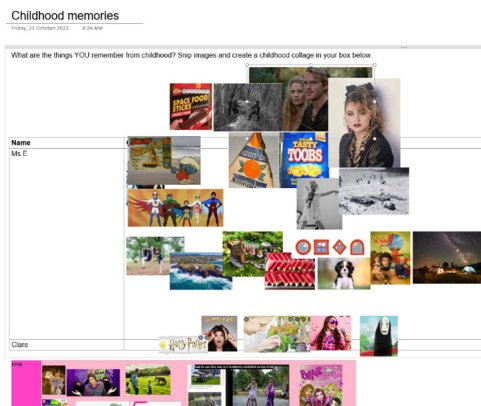
I can create "handouts" that students can type or draw in, that includes links, images, videos, audio recordings and drawings. I can record feedback to students either by writing, typing or recording audio files. Once I have created these resources and saved them automatically in my Teacher Section, the "book" becomes a textbook for me to refine and reuse for my next class through a simple Move/Copy function.



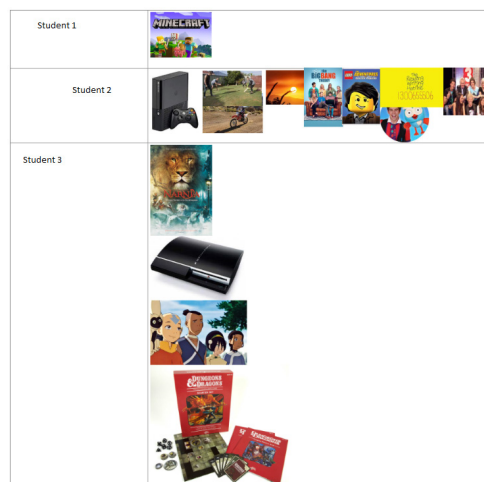
The Move/Copy function has become important for the faculty at Aurora College- staff simply and quickly share One Note sections for programs that have worked successfully with other teachers, who are then able to adapt these for their own classrooms.

But this is just a tool for resource sharing- how to use it in pedagogically engaging ways? The Collaboration Space in OneNote is a fun place for students to collaborate over conceptual ideas. Gone are the days where you could drag out a crusty old pile of magazines and while away a double period on a Friday cutting out pictures of people to paste together in a collage. Students can snip and paste images they have found quickly into the same document with everyone else. The pasted images can also be tracked through the "Hide authors" button, which records the initials of students who are pasting images that are off track. When students' initials appear in the

page, teachers are able to keep track of which students are (or are not) contributing to the work, much like the 'Track changes' function in Microsoft Word.



Students can see each others' ideas, and this often sparks them into more creative and inspired ways of thinking about concepts. OneNote allows the teacher to watch student responses develop in real time. I have used it to monitor student drafting processes, commenting on, and annotating, student writing in real time to keep students tracking in the right direction.



Within 'The Yellow Wallpaper', the representation of abuse is a constant throughout the piece. Even when it is not the focal point of the plot in a particular chapter, the ripple effects of a constant and malevolent nature of abuse are still present. This is best observed in the character of Miles. Considering that most of the piece is focused through Miles, it makes sense that the audience is provided with the most context and insight into her reaction to this consistent abuse. The way in which Miles grapples with abuse, in both the physical and psychological senses, is gripping and makes for beautiful storytelling that have been able to penetrate my mindset and challenge pre-existing assumptions made into the concept of abuse.

Early on the language in your first paragraph is clear, articulate and incisive. This is the style you should write with in the HSC. Your second paragraph gets a little bit wordy- for example "perplexing linguistic undercurrent"- and you need to explain further what you mean by certain statements you make such as "submerged characters contingent to their own contexts". This writing is verbose message is confusing to a reader.

I love using OneNote and have been using it for note-taking during my Masters lectures that run through Zoom- it is a great way to take down thoughts quickly, especially if I need to respond to reflection questions or

screen snip a great diagram or quote.

There are plenty of places to learn how to use OneNote, and Department of Education employees have access to online training through LinkedIn Learning in the Staff Portal.

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-au/microsoft-365/onenote/digital-note-taking-app>

JAMBOARD

Jamboard is a collaboration tool that offers students the ability to share ideas quickly in a brainstorm style activity. It is part of the Google Suite of tools and offers students the chance to collaborate quickly in real-time. I have built digital “gallery walks” with Jamboard, which allows you to develop a range of “slides” that students can respond to. As students move through the slides, they respond to the stimulus slides and then move on when instructed. No more collating post-its. Jamboard records all ideas and it remains in your Google Drive. Getting students to snip the images of the slides and paste them into One Note means that the notes are kept and are easily accessible. This sharing and collating of ideas, thinking, analysis and reflection writing all work together to expand upon student ownership of their learning. In combination with a positive classroom culture, students find that their learning is also expanded through meaningful discussion. This tool can, however, be tricky in terms of classroom management - some students like to move post-its around or write inappropriate responses. Choose this tool if you trust your students to collaborate authentically.

<https://jamboard.google.com/>

What are some experiences that make us particularly human?
Go to the Jamboard and share your ideas. Snip and paste the completed Jamboard below.



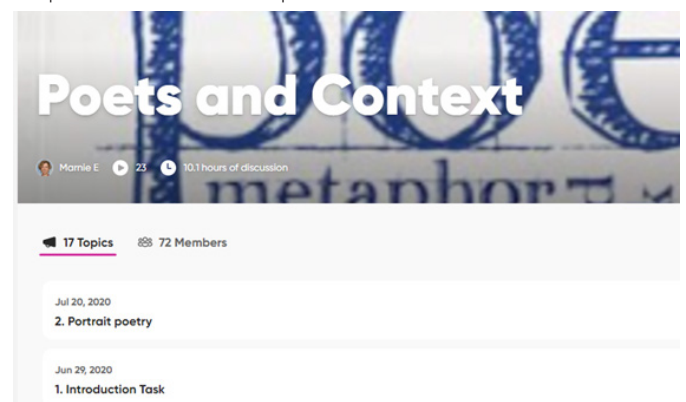
MENTIMETRE

Quick polling is sometimes a way to garner student opinion and spark an interesting conversation- Mentimetre is a quick, visually pleasing way to do this. By asking students to respond to a stimulus or a question, you can quickly collate responses and evaluate the quality of these, enhancing conversation, and perhaps encouraging students who normally wouldn't contribute to respond. The polls use a slide format, and allow for chart, post or word cloud display of results in real time. Mentimetre does require a subscription which can be individual or school based. Aurora College uses Mentimetre to garner staff feedback and understanding during professional learning sessions and our teachers have also used it during HSC Study Day sessions for students across the state. Mentimetre is easy to use with a laptop and you can find training and more information below.

<https://www.mentimeter.com/>

FLIPGRID

In this world of TikTok reels, video communication is king. Flipgrid is a video recording software, from the Microsoft corporation, that I have used previously to record student speeches and responses to text. Students record the speech using Flipgrid (with or without the filters and stickers, a feature that can be switched on and off by the teacher) it then is available for the teacher to watch and mark at their leisure. The task I developed, using this tool, was a poetry response task where students were required to record their own speech and respond to two other speeches from the class.



This peer feedback component was easily completed by students either in class or at home. Students were encouraged to think critically about the speeches they watched. The ability to record their feedback quickly, in

a short video or via a comment, made for easy submission and marking. Students could integrate slides or pages that had quotes or images from the poems they were discussing and even add special effects to their visuals. This is an engaging tool for students to communicate their learning and to reflect on each others' work. Also, teachers have the ultimate control over this you can lock all responses, before they get published and viewed by others, to review content appropriateness. The videos are not available to an online search- only to your class The students you add will be able to see them. You can also add other teachers as "co-pilots" and share between classes. Once your students have moved on, you can also hide the videos so no one can access them at a later date.

Flipgrid is a free subscription, which you can sign up with using a Microsoft, Google or Apple credential.

<https://info.flip.com/>

Technology can be leveraged in the classroom to spark creativity and collaboration—approaches that we know work to increase student critical thinking when it comes to text analysis for the Stage 6 classroom. These tools don't require a lot of time or energy; they just require the courage to test them out with your class. Which tool will you use?

REFERENCES

Baroutsis, A, 2018, *How digital technologies can change teaching practices (in a good way)*, EduResearch website last accessed 24/11/2022 <https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?tag=digital-technology-and-pedagogy>

Howell, J. & McMaster, N, 2022, *What is a digital pedagogy and why do we need one?* https://www.oup.com.au/media/documents/higher-education/he-samples-pages/he-teacher-ed-landing-page-sample-chapters/HOW-ELL_9780195578430_SC.pdf Oxford University Press

OneNote Information:

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-what-is-onenote-be6cc6cc-3ca7-4f46-8876-5000f013c563>

JamBoard Information:

<https://support.google.com/jamboard/answer/7424836?hl=en>

Mentimeter

<https://www.mentimeter.com/education>

Flipgrid

<https://info.flip.com/en-us/about.html>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marnie Etheridge has worked as a teacher of English for 23 years in rural, regional and urban communities in New South Wales and the United Kingdom. She is Head Teacher of English, HSIE and Languages (relieving) at Aurora College - New South Wales' only public online selective high school for rural and remote communities. Marnie is also a Teacher Librarian who has a passion for teaching the transformative nature of literature to students of all abilities and leveraging technology, through teaching and learning, to increase understanding and engagement in classrooms.

Marnie also has a keen interest in educational leadership and is currently undertaking a Masters at the University of Wollongong, examining the impacts of authentic instructional leadership through dispersed models to effect change in school communities.

