

University of Wisconsin-Stout
Assessment of Student Learning in the Online Classroom
Midterm: Jigsaw Assessment Toolbox

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Collaboration in business and education has become easier and increased in importance with the development of the Internet. Thousands of companies collaborate with offices in hundreds of cities all over the world. Educators, governments and businesses communicate and collaborate via the Web, sharing research, ideas and projects. Technology makes it possible for people to work together despite differences in language, education, cultures, values and interests. Perhaps as collaboration skills are developed, people everywhere will work together in a more dynamic and respectful manner.

Jigsaw is a cooperative learning technique that is used in schools to promote cooperation, collaboration, and team-building. It was developed at the University of Texas by Elliot Aronson in the early 1970s to reduce racial conflicts by promoting these values. Research over the last 40 years has shown that Jigsaw helps children learn better, improves motivation, and increases their enjoyment of the learning experience. It is used in elementary and secondary schools, all the way through graduate and professional schools (1).

With the development of the Web, **Jigsaw** has evolved into a useful and successful tool for online learning. Research suggests that it may work better online than in a face-to-face classroom because students have more time to reflect and formulate their research and writing (2).

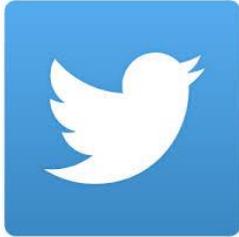
Our “jigsaw puzzle” is a small team of three, but we are diverse. We live across three time zones, have different ages and technical skills, interests, and job-related goals. We collaborated in Google-Drive on the introduction, conclusion, layout, and written voice, and helped each other with our topics as needed.

We reviewed and evaluated Jing and Twitter from Category 5 and Edublogs from Category 6.

References

- 1 [The Jigsaw Classroom](#)
- 2 [Migrating Successful Student Engagement Strategies Online: Opportunities and Challenges Using Jigsaw Groups and Problem-Based Learning](#), Amador, J. and Mederer, H., JOLT, v. 9, no. 1, March, 2013.

Twitter Mac Patrick



Introduction

Twitter was founded in 2006, and their headquarters is in San Francisco, California. Twitter messages are limited to 140 characters called tweets. Registering for Twitter is free and only requires an email address and a user-created 15 character Twitter handle that starts with @ (ampersand). A

Twitter account can be open to the public or can be private. As long as an account is public, any Twitter user can follow that user. Anything that is posted by a user will appear in a timeline. A tweet can include pictures, videos, and hyperlinks to various sites and articles. A tweet can also be followed by a # (hashtag) preceding one word, abbreviation, or phrase. This provides a way to search a tweet based on topic or keywords. For example, during last week's State of the Union Address, tweets were followed with #SOTU which allowed users to search and read only tweets related to the event. Twitter also offers the option for groups and for lists which allows the user to organize and separate their normal feed into categories or more specific users.



Uses, Benefits, & Application

How can Twitter be useful in the modern classroom? Twitter provides mobility because the app can be used on any mobile device wherever there is Wi-Fi or some kind of network connection. Teachers can send out a reminder about an assignment or add depth to a lesson by tweeting articles or videos. If a teacher sets up a # (hashtag) for each class, then each tweet will be easier to locate (example #MPGovernment3). Any

tweets from a third period Government class could include the example hashtag allowing students to search and respond.

A teacher should follow respected people or organizations in the field they are teaching and retweet topics that would be of interest. There are numerous museums, libraries, and organizations that are able to offer great insight into their work through Twitter. Teachers also can use Twitter to bring together classrooms for projects from anywhere in the world. The ability to interact with students from other cultures would bring another element to any lesson. Twitter can be used for students to vote or respond to polls on a given subject. Students also can use Twitter to ask questions about class or to discuss a topic further. Use of Twitter can be assessed by frequency of student tweets, use of links, original content to discussions,

responses, and appropriate retweets. On Twitter, the user is able to set up various groups. An option like this could allow a teacher to invite students to join a classroom group and then accept (or decline if necessary) any requests.

One interesting trend in Twitter is “live tweeting.” During major events or speeches, users are encouraged to contribute thoughts and discuss *what* is taking place *while* it is taking place. During the raid that resulted in the killing of Bin Laden, a local tweeted about explosions that could be heard. “Live tweeting” does not necessarily have to be in relation to a current topic. During the time of historical events, the History Channel as well as other news outlets will talk about an event as if it is taking place now. The History Channel did this with the 100th anniversary of the Titanic in 2012 and the 50th anniversary of President Kennedy’s assassination. Though these events are well-documented, it gives a fresh take on times past. Twitter really can be employed for a range of purposes and a valuable communication tool within the classroom. A teacher can have the students link their twitter account to a blog. This would broaden the ways to communicate and use these applications.



Challenges

Some possible drawbacks to Twitter use in the classroom are that conversations taking place are not done face-to-face. Although this may be becoming an antiquated form of reasoning in the virtual classroom, this still could lead to something being taken out of context, and in severe cases, cyber-bullying could become a concern. Since tweets are posted immediately, there may be some unease about censoring posted items. Twitter also could be a distraction causing students to lose focus or interest on the topic at hand. The 140 character limit also could be seen as a double-edged sword for communication in the classroom. A character limit could force the student into more thoughtful, concise communication, but it also could be viewed as too concise or disproportionate.

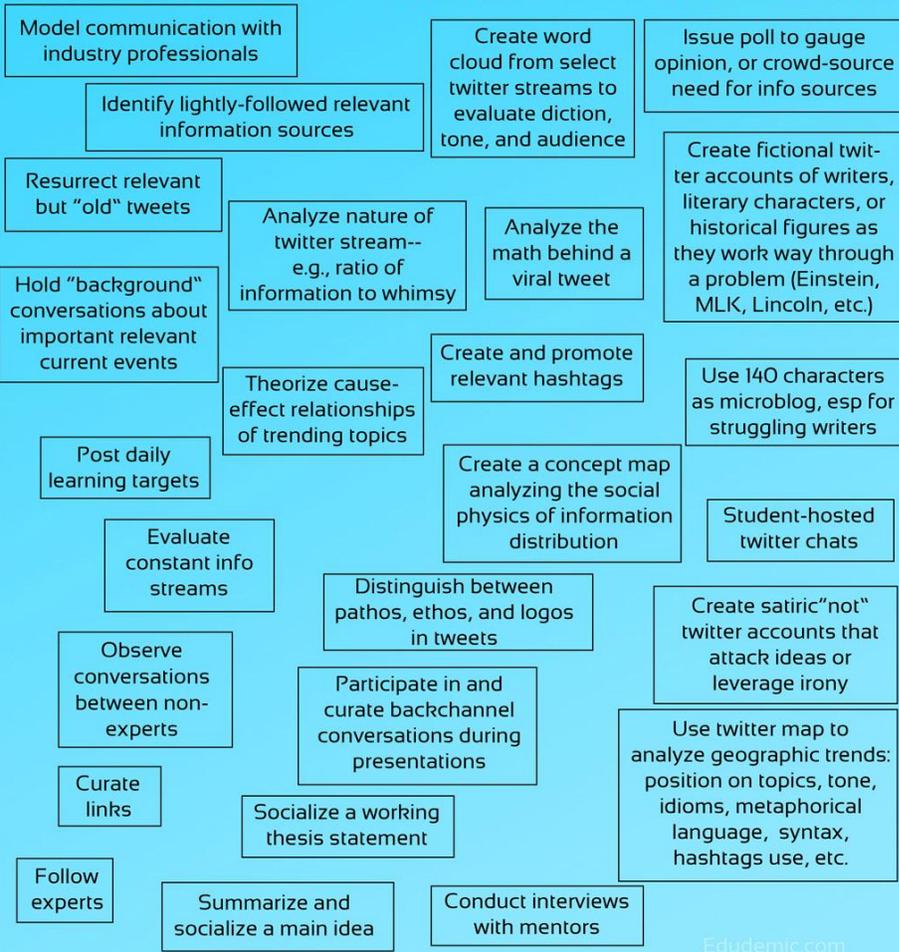
The Twitter Spectrum For Educators

Edudemic.com

WATCH

TALK

PRODUCE



Learning Objective

Students will display their ability to effectively communicate using Twitter with 100% participation and 90% accuracy based on the provided rubric.

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Jing in Education

Jing is a web based tool that is easy to use for creating authentic assessment. Jing is a free application that allows the user to capture and annotate basic video, animation, and still images. These screen captures and screencasts can be used in a number of ways to engage students in instruction and assessment.

This paper describes how Jing operates and how it can be integrated into online courses for assessment, as well as the benefits and challenges Jing presents.

Jing was developed by Techsmith, a computer software company based in Okemos, Michigan. TechSmith provides screen capture and recording software for over 180 countries. Besides Jing, TechSmith makes many of other desktop products like Snagit, Camtasia and Morae.

Jing can be easily and quickly downloaded onto a computer (Mac or Windows) from the website. A linked icon of the sun is displayed on the desktop for easy access. Using the icon, users can capture screenshots and annotate them with voice or text. Users can also record short videos (screencasts) <http://www.techsmith.com/jing.html> Screen captures and screencasts can be shared via Instant Messaging (IM), flickr, twitter, facebook and email. The screencasts or screenshots can also be uploaded to screencast.com (Jing's companion site). A URL is then uploaded to the clipboard of the user's computer. This can then be pasted into an email or shared on a learning management system. HTML can be provided by screen cast.com so the user can embed the screencast into the online course. The screen captures and screencasts can be saved as .png files and as .swf Flash video files also. Short, easy to follow tutorials are available at the Jing help center.

Educational Uses

Jing is being used in face-to-face and online classrooms around the world. Teachers and Instructors describe many ways Jing can be integrated into online learning as part of authentic, student-centered assessment:

- A screenshot could be made of a writing assignment and the instructor could record explanations of corrections. Student could make corrections and record an explanation.

- Instructors could create tutorials with explanations of assignments and how they will be evaluated.
- Students could create videos either alone or in a group which would be evaluated for certain knowledge or skills. (e.g. speaking, listening, vocabulary,)
- Instructors could use Jing to respond to email or comment in a blog.
- Instructors could create a screencast of a grading rubric. Students would be able to look at the rubric while listening to a recorded explanation of the assignment.

There are many sites online describing how to use Jing in a classroom or online course. One written for the University of Colorado's online instructor handbook (Bianco, M.) includes comments about the use of Jing in assessment made by students. Students state that they have benefited from the more personal feedback and hearing the instructor's voice.

Teacher Training Videos (R. Stannard) has useful suggestions on how to use Jing in the classroom for creating video feedback. English Language Learners can benefit from seeing and hearing their written work being corrected on a video. They can replay the video and practice speaking the language correctly.

Another instructor, Professor Griffiths from the Center for Teaching and Learning at Brigham Young University, used Jing to create short video tutorials for software for a student assignment. He describes making three short instructional tutorials to teach students how to create a virtual tour in Google Earth. It took him an hour to create the videos but the students were able to watch them online and create their tours with no extra support.

Learning Objective

This learning objective is for an Intermediate English Language class (ELL). Students will display the ability to speak in the present tense in a video created using Jing with 90% accuracy according to a rubric supplied.

Activity: Students will use Jing to create and narrate presentation describing their home city. They will download 3 photographs from their home country and talk about them in English using the present tense. They will also draw stars and arrows to indicate their special places.

Benefits of Choosing Jing for Education

Jing is easy to use by both teachers and students of all ages. There is a free trial subscription and reasonably priced school subscriptions and upgrades. Jing is easy to download and provides an easy to access icon for the desktop. There are many purchase options for education and excellent security. Jing (TechSmith) provided good tech support and user-friendly tutorials.

Weaknesses and Challenges

One weakness of basic Jing is that the videos are only 5 minutes in length. (Teachers who would like longer videos and have funds can upgrade to Jing pro.) Another weakness is that not all devices support Jing. This may limit access for students who do not have certain devices

available to them. Access may also be limited in certain poverty areas (lack of internet access or equipment) or rural areas .

According to an article in the Center for Teaching and Learning, (Bradly, P.) the bandwidth is limited on the free version of Jing. If a lot of people are viewing on different devices the bandwidth limit could be reached. However, more storage could be purchased.

Summary

Jing is simple. This simplicity expands the use of Jing to students (and instructors) with special needs, to students who are not studying in their first or most competent language, to students who are not skilled with technology. Jing is fun. This expands its use to students of all ages who need and want to be engaged. Jing is free. Why not Jing!

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Introduction

Edublogs is a large WordPress site that has provided almost 3 million blogs for teachers, students, schools and universities. Edublogs was developed to support blogging educators with educational tools, professional development, analytics, and security. It allows teachers to create and manage student and teacher blogs in ways suited to virtual and face-to-face classrooms. At its heart, it is a communication tool and it is easy to communicate and collaborate between groups and individuals with different roles: other students, teachers, administrators, parents, and outside experts.

Bloggers use Edublogs to create and manage individual or group blogs, customize designs, add media, like videos, photos, and podcasts, and gather statistics on use. In addition to standard blogging tools, Edublogs includes wikis, e-portfolios, control over students posts, and access to an army of other educators and professional support.

Like WordPress, Edublogs offers upgrades for additional storage and features. CampusPress is an institutional version of Edublogs that manages all of the school or university blogs in one site with substantial backend help, and the new CampusCourse plug-in helps teachers create and manage online courses with most of the features we have come to expect in online courses — forums, quizzes, gradebooks, and password protection.

Benefits and Uses

Group blogging encourages communication, collective and collaborative learning, and a platform to share ideas, information and projects. Personal blogs encourage reflection, personal storytelling, and sharing.

Connections with Others: Through class blogs, students connect with other classes locally or worldwide to find pen-pals, work on joint projects, teach/learn about themselves and their community, and gain access to experts. A class blog might include content presented by the instructor who asks students to comment. If it is to be done before class, it can be used as a part of a discussion forum. Individual or group of students might use a blog to share research, opinions, or establish repositories for information.

Reflection and Personal Growth: An individual blog can be used as an online journal for reflection, to provide commentary, review of class, develop research or projects. Individual blogs encourage self-reflection and develop students' voices, writing and critical thinking, and fosters ownership of ideas. Reflective blogs can help students know what they have learned

and to analyze and synthesize course activities and materials. Individual blogs could be gathered into one central space to allow sharing and comments.

Teachers' Blogs: Teachers use their own blogs in much the same way as students. Teachers can direct, interact with and comment on their students' blogs, archive and share information, work with other teachers on lessons and units, and connect with other classes, students, teachers, and experts.

Expand the Conversation: Blogging extends the classroom and invites more students into a conversation. Students who might not participate, can, and blogging can be done anytime outside class.

Resources: Edublogs has established communities of students and educators to provide support, ideas, and contacts all over the world. Edublogs provides many professional development resources for educators and access to other school and university blogging sites through the Edublogs Directory of Technology Education and the WordPress Education Showcase. Teachers can find help and ideas through support forums, users guides, how-to videos, and Teacher Reboot Camp.

More features and uses: With free Edublogs accounts, teachers have access to a Wikispaces wiki and e-portfolios. The platform also allows connection to Instagram and Flickr. Blogs can take many forms, student newspaper and magazine, group e-portfolios, learning circles, class research, a virtual writers workshop, and virtual clubs.

Safety: Many schools block blogging services, but Edublogs are safe and secure for younger students and are not blocked by schools.

No Ads: Unlike, WordPress, there are no ads in the free version as of July 2011 (older blogs will still have ads).

Edublogs has developed products specifically to benefit universities. CampusPress has been developed for universities and allows for branding, control over privacy, class and student management tools, analytics, connections with campus email and Google, networking connections, and training videos and guides.

CoursePress is a new Edublog plug-in which gives teachers the ability to create and manage online courses. CoursePress has many features of learning management systems.

- Create courses, units, and lessons
- Control access to courses and content
- Create assessments and quizzes
- Automatically grade quizzes or provide feedback
- Add videos, files, and media to courses
- Include discussion forums and collaboration

- Schedule content to be published with course calendar
- Student management and reporting tools
- Student progress tracking

Application in an Online Class

Blogs should be used to further learning or meet an instructional need. Their use will be directed by instructional goals and learning objectives, supported by prepared activities and related assessments.

Teachers can gain insight into students' thinking through reflective blogs used as a formative assessment tool to check thinking and progress. Teachers provide feedback by commenting in the blog and encouraging critical thinking.

Blog writing can be assessed for integration of concepts from other assignments reflecting critical thinking and analysis; concise, clear writing without spelling or grammatical errors; and the use of reasoned, substantiated arguments.

Weaknesses and Challenges

Many weaknesses of Edublogs are shared by all blogs. Teachers will need to educate students about the problems which are particular to working with blogs.

Plagiarism: Students will need to understand what constitutes plagiarism, when copyright restrictions apply and the proper use of citations. Students will need to be educated in copyright limitations, particularly as related to images. Awareness of sharing through Creative Commons licenses open is important part of the discussion.

Language: Students will need to be cognizant of appropriate language and appropriate to share on class blogs and public blogs. It is easy to forget that blogs will be read by others.

Inaccuracies and Errors: Teachers will need to be aware of inaccuracies, poor grammar, wiring errors and inconsistencies and address this with students.

Difficult to Use: WordPress and Edublogs are a little harder to work with than other blogging platforms. There are more features available including fairly extensive site statistics. The platform used terms which may not be familiar to everyone, such as widgets, to create a blog that is unique. With practice it becomes easier.

Commitment: Blogging is a commitment of time and effort. A blog needs to be maintained and carefully planned for. Like any assessment tool, blogs should be built into an instructional plan and grounded by learning objectives, activities and assessments.

Self-Promotion: Many blogs are self-promoting (as well as informational), and this can be a distraction from what might be good information. I find myself checking self-promoting blogs very carefully for accuracy; that takes away from their credibility for me. It is possible to

monetize a blog, but some common sense in reducing the hype in favor of useful timely information should be considered. I have not seen guidelines for educators who are promoting their work or companies or using ads and I think they are due.

Outdated Blogs: Much of the excitement about Edublogs has to do with the vast number of blogs listed on the website. Many of the blogs haven't been updated in two or more years. Some of the information may still be valid, but one benefit of blogs is that they are regularly updated. This is common in the blogging world generally. At what point should blogs become de-activated?

Learning Objectives

Students will demonstrate their ability to evaluate and analyze online information by reviewing blogs and posting responses to their own blogs with at least 90% accuracy according to the rubric provided.

Students will display the ability to reflect on their learning in weekly posts to a personal blog with at least 90% accuracy according to the rubric provided.

References

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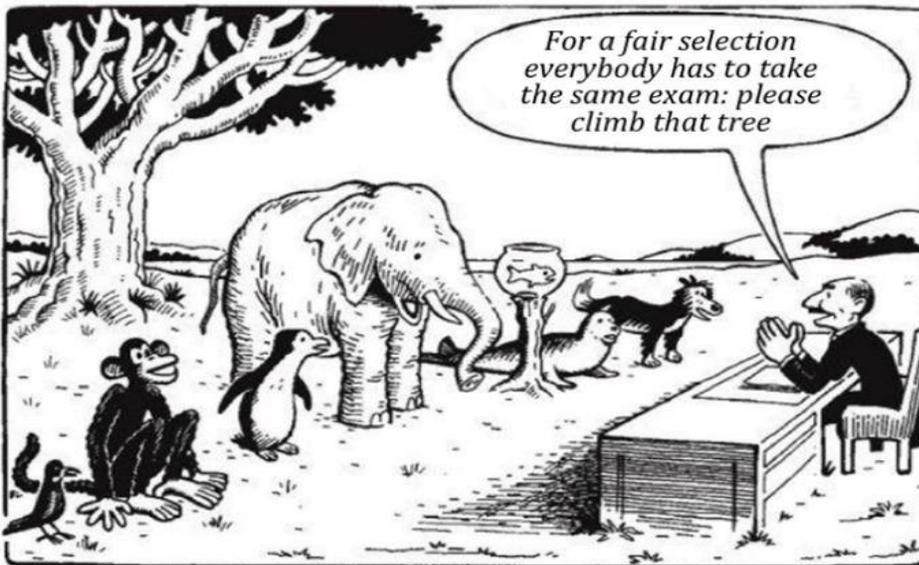
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Conclusion

These three tools that we evaluated can help in any classroom or distance learning setting. The reviews that have been written are in no way meant to be a comprehensive look into these particular tools, but rather a sampling that hopefully will spark an interest into further exploration.

Learning no longer takes place in fixed location, but rather is mobile, and the tools that are available now are in a constant state of change and advancement. Trying something new is usually challenging in the beginning, but it is vital as educators that we stretch our comfort level in order to be better equipped to reach those in our classrooms. Every student has a different learning style, and it important to find a way to best evaluate and measure what they have learned.



Our Education System

"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

- Albert Einstein