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How to Flip Your Classroom: A Step-by-Step Guide

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How to Flip Your Classroom: A Step-by-Step Guide

by Lisa Light

As the Flipped Classroom gains popularity, teachers around the World are making the choice to implement this innovative instructional method. In the Flipped Classroom teachers use technology to move direct instruction into students' individual learning space in order to make the most of their face to face time. Each teacher adds their own style to the Flipped Classroom and has to make choices about technology depending upon their specific situation. In this step-by-step guide learn how to navigate the technology choices that need to be made as well as get advice on how to rethink your class time as you get started with the Flipped Classroom.

Overview

1. Create an online presence with Weebly, Sophia, Edmodo, Mentormob, Schoology & Twitter
2. Choose appropriate content and create guided notes
3. Create & share videos with Camtasia, Sophia , Screenchomp & TouchCast
4. Holding students accountable with Google Forms
5. Communicating with students using Google Voice &Remind 101
6. Planning class time

Create an Online Presence

Before you begin creating content you need to decide how you will be making it available to students. Will you use an open or closed format? In an open format anyone can access your content. This is usually accomplished through the creation of a class website using something like Weebly. This is how I have chosen to run my Flipped Classroom (visit my online classroom at www.mrslight.weebly.com). In a closed format students must login using a username and password. This can be created using Edmodo, Schoology, and others. The advantage to a closed format is that you can gather data on individual students. The disadvantage is the need for usernames and students forgetting their passwords.

In addition to creating an online presence for your class, I recommend creating an online presence for yourself as a professional by joining Twitter. I have connected with great educators who also flip their classroom. They have been great support and we continually help each other. I encourage you to join many of us for the flipclass chat held on Mondays from 8-9pm EST using the hashtag #flipclass. It's a great way to get questions answered as you being your journey into flipping your classroom.

Choose Appropriate Content

Not everything lends itself to being put into video. Some are things are just better done in the classroom where students can collaborate with each other and the teacher can guide students. You will need to decide what content to put on video and what to keep for your face to face time in class. My advice is to keep the content that you share through video very basic. Save the in-depth concepts for the time you have with students. If there is some background knowledge that you feel is important to review in order that students will better understand the new concepts put it in a video. Anything that you find yourself repeating (for example, order of operations, how to write a topic sentence, how to create a timeline, how to log into a school account, etc.) is also good to push to the students' individual learning space through video. Procedural types of instruction or content also lends itself to video. I have also found it beneficial to create a student "workflow" video that explains to students what class is like from their perspective (for example, where to find the videos, what a Google Form looks like, etc).

Here's a recap of the type of content suitable for video:

- Background knowledge
- New concepts at a basic level
- Things you repeat often
- Procedural knowledge
- Student work flow

I have also found it beneficial to create for students guided notes. These go along with the videos and help students focus their attention. For my math classes the guided notes

include the problems that are covered in the video and space for students to write down the work that is done. You can find examples on my class website under the individual units.

Create & Share Videos

There are several ways you can create videos. Which one you choose depends on what technology you already have available to you. Your options include using the following;

- Whiteboard and a camera to record
- Document camera, writing on paper under the document camera, and screen recording software to capture what appears on your computer screen
- Tablet to annotate on your computer screen and screen casting software to capture what appears on your computer screen
- iPad and an app that allows you to draw and record in a virtual whiteboard

There are a number of free and paid options for screen casting or recording your computer screen. I will not attempt to discuss all of them but will focus on my favorites. For a free option for the PC Sophia.org is a great all around resource. Not only can you record your computer screen but you can also host your videos directly on Sophia. If you have some money to spend (US\$179 for PC or US\$79 for Mac) Camtasia software made by TechSmith is definitely worth it. There are no time limits for length and the editing capabilities are amazing. For the iPad TechSmith also makes Screencomp which is free. It's a basic whiteboard that will record your voice along with what you write. You share the recordings with a web link. Another app for the iPad that is new and I think quite revolutionary is TouchCast. This allows you to create interactive videos that look like video but feel like the web. Using Video Apps (or Vapps) users can create videos with websites, polls, etc. embedded directly into the video making them highly interactive. (Here's a [TouchCast example](#), which is best viewed on an iPad.)

Whichever you use to create your videos a few guidelines are helpful. Keep your videos to about 1 minute per grade level. For example, I teach ninth grade math and keep my videos to about 10 minutes. Give your videos a title but don't number them. For example, although I cover slope-intercept form for unit 5 concept 3 or 5-3 I don't number my video. That way, if

I ever choose to re-order concepts I won't have to re-number videos. I learned this one the hard way!

Once your videos are created you will need to share them with your students. If you are using a closed format like Edmodo or Schoology you can upload the videos directly into your online class. YouTube is a free option available to upload your videos. To organize my videos that I upload to YouTube I use MentorMob to put together playlists that include my YouTube videos and Google Forms (more on how I use Google Forms shortly). Sophia is also a free option for uploading and sharing videos if YouTube is blocked at your particular facility.

[Holding Students Accountable](#)

In order to provide for student accountability I recommend using Google Forms. These make it possible to have students submit answers to questions directly after they have watched the videos. You can ask any question you like and use the answers as a formative assessment so you have an understanding of where students are struggling after they've watched the video and before class has even begun. All of the answers are viewed in a spreadsheet which allows you to color code answers to have a visual of students' understanding. I then use this visual to guide our conversations in class.

[Communicating with Students](#)

It's important for students to have a way to let you know if they have any technology issues. I have used Google Voice with great success in both my flipped and traditional classrooms. Once you sign up, Google Voice gives you a phone number that students may use to text or call you without having to give out your actual cell phone number. It's a free service. I require that my students notify me if they ever have a technology issue when I have assigned a video to be watched outside of class.

To remind students when a video is due I use Remind 101. You can either use this free service from their website or as an app on your cell phone or iPad. Once you create your class name in Remind 101 it generates a pdf instruction sheet that directs students and/or parents to text or email a specific code to a phone number or email address. Once they

register they are automatically added to your class roster. You do not have to collect phone numbers or email addresses. All of the responsibility is put on students. I typically have students get out their cell phones and register on the first day of class. When you want to send a mass text/email all you do is choose the class you would like to send the message to, type your message (140 character limit), and either send it immediately or schedule for it to be sent at a later date/time. It's that easy!

Planning Class Time

Now that you're not lecturing during class you need to plan your time with students differently. The extra time you now have in class can be used to do some project-based learning, problem-based learning, investigations, labs, activities, discussions or anything else you've always wanted to do but never had the time to do. There is much information out there on these and a simple internet search will get you started.

Here are some other ideas to consider when planning your class time:

- **WSQ** (originated by [Crystal Kirch](#)). This stands for Watch, Summarize, Question and is used to guide students to in-depth conversations about concepts, as well as guide their work flow.
- **Genius Hour/20 Time**: An idea started by Google that educators have embraced, students pursue projects of their own choosing and design. Roughly 20% of class time is set aside for students to complete their projects.
- **Student Created Content** Rather than having students remain consumers of content they become curators by creating content through blogs, student created videos or tutorials, or self-publishing iBooks.
- **Peer Instruction/Review** The best way to ensure you understand something is to teach it to someone else! Structure class so that students can instruct others, acting as "class experts". They can also determine each other's level of understanding by reviewing other students' work and giving feedback.

- **Small Group Interventions** Using formative assessments (like Google Forms) to identify students who are struggling and work with them in small groups. This also allows for greater differentiation.
- **Rapid Review** I start each of my math classes by putting a few problems on the board, students show their work on small whiteboard and show them to me. This allows me to see who is understanding the concept and who is not. I can then pull together those students who are struggling into a small group and work with them while the other students get started on the practice assignment.

There are numerous considerations and decisions to make when deciding to flip your classroom. It is impossible to cover it all in one place but this should give you a good start. If you are interested in learning more about the flipped classroom I would suggest reading [*Flip Your Classroom: Reach Every Student in Every Class Every Day*](#) by Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams. For more specific information by content you may want to read [*Flipping 2.0: Practical Strategies for Flipping Your Class*](#) compiled by Jason Bretzmann. For tutorials on some of the technology mentioned in this blogpost, check out my website at www.flipping4math.weebly.com and go to the tutorials page.

Hope you like this guidebook. Stay tuned for more such issues.

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