Flipped Teaching: Creating Screencasts with ScreenFlow

AWhat is flipped teaching?

Flipped teaching takes the traditional in-class lecture and homework and flips them so that the lecture is watched at home, and concept practice occurs in the classroom with the teacher present. This allows teachers to have more time with each individual student to help them with difficult concepts, and provides more time in class for deeper learning.

One high school student at the EdSurge Tech Summit in 2013 said,

Since they’ve been teaching for so long they kind of teach in the old fashioned way…technology is growing at a very fast pace. Kids are kind of getting bored in class because they’re able to learn a lot more through advances in technology…What I seem to notice is that a lot of things that my teacher teaches me, I can learn just as easily through a lot of resources online.

It’s time for teachers to modify their structure to best suit the needs of 21st century learners. Let them get the facts at home, and do the deeper learning with you, the expert, by their side.

AHow can screencasting be used in the flipped classroom?

Screencasting can be used to:

* Record lectures to assign as homework
* Create an answer key where you explain how to do each problem
* Show how to install/start/work in a digital program
* Create videos for students to watch in class when you have a substitute teacher

AQualities of a Great Screencast

Excellent screencasts about academic content start with a great presentation, but there are a few more things to be aware of when you post you videos online.

1. Images

A. Avoid overwhelming text on images. Build in the text as an animation instead. This will make it easier for students to follow along and know what you are talking about.

B. Use opaque shapes to highlight regions of images that you are specifically pointing out for clarity.

2. Text

A. No smaller than 36-point font.

a. It won’t translate well to video if it’s too small

B. One main idea per slide.

a. Slides are free! Use as many as you like for your presentations. Animate your points to maintain clarity.

C. Less is more.

a. You don’t need 20 bullet points on a slide! Avoid the overwhelming nature of clutter by breaking up points across multiple slides. Use a title to connect the main idea.

3. Preparing to Record

A. Sound

a. Microphone distance: check the best distance for sound. Avoid going into the red with your sound checks.

b. Quiet space: find a quiet spot, or if you aren’t showing your face, put a blanket over you and the computer for a quick sound proof room.

c. Practice: practice makes perfect! Rehearse what you want to say or even write a script. Remember to keep an animated voice to avoid sounding bored by your own video.

B. You

a. Will you be seen? Look presentable!

b. Lighting: check that you aren’t in the shadows. Don’t have a window behind you.

c. Avoid distracting behaviors: don’t say, “um” or “like” or make distracting sounds or motions. They are habits worth breaking. At least edit them out if it is excessive.

4. Copyright

A. Is it your image?

a. Do what you want with it!

B. Do you have permission?

a. You can post it online if you have permission, if not then you shouldn’t post it anywhere but a closed system that is just for your students to access.

C. Are you posting this online?

a. Make sure you give credit where it is due (creative commons requires attribution in all cases)

D. Where can you find public domain and creative commons images?

a. Public Domain Image Databases

<http://pixabay.com>

<http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Graphics.shtml> (double check public domain status)

<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_page>

<http://www.photos-public-domain.com/>

a. Creative Commons Image Databases (check license requirements)

<http://search.creativecommons.org/>

This site will search Flickr, Google, Pixabay, Wikipedia and more for creative commons images. Don’t for get to attribute the photos!