

eFuture lesson plan

Web 2.0 and/or Mobile learning

Title

Teaching comprehension with Twitter
Class: English, Irish

Author

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Description

Using the media and restrictions of Twitter o help pupils demonstrate comprehension in literature.

Teaching comprehension with Twitter

The aim of this lesson is to use the Web 2.0 social website, Twitter, to demonstrate

- Comprehension
- Ability to précis
- Communication skills
- IT Skills

Resources required

Twitter Account

Before the lesson the Tutor must set up a Twitter account that can be used for all answers to be directed to and/or decide upon a hash tag to identify replies.

To set up a Twitter account go to <http://www.twitter.com>
Fill in "Name", "Email address" and "password"
You will need an email address that has not previously been registered – Twitter will send an email to confirm validity.

It is recommended that you choose a memorable Twitter username that relates to your teaching/class – you will be able to utilise this in other lessons.

Your Twitter username can be used to communicate with you via Twitter – it will be in the form of @username

Hashtag

Hashtags (#) are used in Twitter to signify keywords. You can search Twitter for hashtags – groupings of Tweets with the same label

In your class you will need to attribute a hashtag to your lesson so that all student comments can be grouped together. Use something unique and unusual, not an everyday word otherwise you stand the chance of getting comments from outside your class. E.g. #classb11monday would be a good one.

Tweetwall

A tweetwall is an online software that gathers all the Tweets posted with the same hashtag and displays them on screen for you – this can be displayed so that all the class can see them. There are many

free tweetwalls, try <http://www.twitterwall.me> – simply enter your chosen hashtag in the appropriate box and press enter.

Student account(s)

Students will need some way of posting their comments (Tweeting) to Twitter. You can have them set up individual accounts or you can create a class account. If you create a class account you will not be able to tell which student posted which comment (unless you ask them to add their name). Individual accounts are recommended – you may have to suggest appropriate names or signifiers attached to usernames e.g. @colinclass11b.

If students have internet enabled mobiles they may be able to Tweet from these.

Lesson 1: introduction

Aim: to introduce the tools and the session.

What is Twitter?

Explanation of what Twitter is, how many people use it, what it's mainly used for and why it's considered a useful tool.

It's worth making reference to Personal Learning Networks – but perhaps introduce this with the idea of joining a football fan group or some-such.

Also worth pointing out some of the “celebrity” users of Twitter – especially if they are related to the subject you are teaching. Some easy ones are

@britneyspears

@ryansheckler

@guykawasaki

@oprah

@lancearmstrong

Explain how Twitter works – the 140 character rule, @usernames, hashtags, linking (and url shrinking).

Also worth re-covering general internet safety, cyber-bullying and e-etiquette.

Task 1: individual task

Each student must login to Twitter and send a 140 character sentence that tells the tutor how they travelled to class today and that they are ready to continue. They must hashtag their message with the chosen class tag (which will use some of their assigned characters) and the sentence must be grammatically correct.

This will introduce the notion of how tricky it is to précis information down into 140 characters – especially if you are to remain grammatically correct.

Have the Twitterwall on display on your screen in front of the class so that they can see what other students are saying.

As tutor you can Twitter back to each of them individually if you wish to show them how replies and threaded conversations work.

Task 2: individual activity

Aim: to relate the tool being used and the constraints it places on text to previous/ongoing lessons in comprehension.

The class should refer to some previous reading. In the example below we use Hamlet's soliloquy.

Students should reread Hamlet's monologue and then send a Tweet to the tutor to explain the overall meaning of what Hamlet is expressing – in 140 characters (including hashtag).

Hide the Tweetwall until all answers are in, then reveal them and hold a class discussion on the answers – who came closest to the mark – who was furthest and why etc.

Task 3: group activity

Split the class into groups of 3 or 4. Give each 3 or 4 lines of the monologue and ask them to discuss the meaning and, as a group, put this into a Tweet for the tutor.

Have the Tweetwall open so that each group can see what others are saying.

Hold a discussion around the results – does it make the soliloquy easier to understand if you break it up?

Task 4: group activity

Assign one group the role of Hamlet. The other groups may pick any other character from the play. As groups they should each send through one question, in character, that they would like Hamlet to answer. The group playing Hamlet must answer each query.

Homework

Each student should choose a movie or book and summarise the plot in 140 characters (including hashtag). These should be Tweeted to the tutor – these can be discussed in next class to see who has clearly summarised.

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