SHARING STUDENT WORK in remote/online settings
IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

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This material has been created to provide teachers at all levels with a resource to inform the design of aspects of their remote/ online teaching that call for having students share their work. While some of the insights and considerations included in this document are specific to remote/ online settings, most are more general and applicable to face-to-face learning contexts as well.

Please note that the considerations and options identified here are not intended to be comprehensive, but rather are offered as a starting point. Therefore, we invite you to "personalize" the analysis provided here by adding your own insights as well as eliminating options less relevant to you and substituting them with new ones you have identified as more valuable for your context. You can capture these changes by downloading and editing this Word file – as this is an open source document you are allowed to use and modify, provided you cite its original source.

The best way to get better at this practice, though, is to reflect on the decisions you make when implementing it and their implications. To help you keep track of and reflect on your instructional decisions when "Sharing Student Work", on our webpage you can find a template to structure a Reflective Journal specific to this practice.

Introduction

A key tenet of social constructivist learning theories is that students can learn a lot from each other. This calls for providing students with opportunities to share and discuss their work – which may be even more important when students do not see each other's in class, as it will help them stay connected with each other and their teacher. Yet, you will need to make some important decisions about *how* to share your students' work. These decisions include what kind of student work is most worth sharing, whether or not to make their work public, and what online tools to use for the sharing.

Potential benefits of *Sharing Student Work* we want to maximize

- It can enhance individual students' learning, as students can benefit from becoming aware of different strategies they could have used (as employed by other students in the class); realizing that there may be different ways to approach the same task, along with the advantages and limitations of each solution; having their own thinking validated (when shared by someone else)
- Sharing student work, in whichever form it happens, helps make a lesson much more interactive and dynamic
- Knowing that their work will be publicly displayed will give students an additional reason to produce good work

Potential challenges (and how they may be reduced)

- Looking at each other's work will take significant time (at the expense of some other learning activity):
  - *Only share student work when really worthwhile*
  - *Be explicit about what you want students to get from the sharing*
- Students may be reluctant to share their work, because of the fear of looking "stupid" if they made a mistake or showing ignorance – especially in competitive environments:
  - *Develop a learning community and classroom norms conducive to sharing*
  - *Show the value of all students' contributions*
  - *Give students sufficient time and opportunities to have a quality product to share*
- Students' work may include some misconceptions and errors:
  - *Explicitly use errors and misconceptions as learning opportunities for the whole class*

Other things to consider

- There must be an authentic value in looking at other students' work; If all students' products are exactly the same, the sharing is not likely to be very interesting or worthwhile:
  - *Only share student work for open-ended tasks that allow for multiple perspectives, solutions and/or strategies*
- How you structure the sharing, and the role it plays in a learning activity, will also affect its value

Key instructional decisions to be made – *along with possible options and their pros & cons*

WHICH WORK to share: *This decision will depend on your context and learning goals – but keep in mind that you should only choose to share student work when you clearly see that it will add value to the learning activity*

Type of ARTIFACT to be shared:

Option:	*Advantages*	*Limitations*
Oral	• Easier to share for young children • Most immediate	• Difficult to share asynchronously (unless recorded) • Cannot be "edited"
Typed text	• Can be easily posted in a discussion board • Can be easily commented on and edited	• More challenging for young children • Challenging for content requiring representations other than words to communicate meaning
Drawing/ handwritten text	• Necessary for some tasks (like solving a math problem, creating a diagram)	• More difficult to share (although a digital photo could be taken and uploaded)
Video	• Can be posted in most discussion board platforms • Easier way to share for young children • Allows for explaining solutions/ products	• Cannot be easily "edited"
Object	• Necessary for some tasks (like art/ tech projects)	• More difficult to share (although a digital photo or video could be taken and uploaded)

Level of PRIVACY:

Option:	*Advantages*	*Limitations*
Shared with whole class	• Students will benefit from each other's ideas • Because of the authentic audience, students may take the task more seriously • Teacher can facilitate and leverage the sharing	• Some students may not feel "safe" • When done synchronously, not everyone may have time to share
Shared in a small group	• Students will benefit from each other's ideas • Some students may be more inclined to share • Everyone will be able to share	• Teacher cannot facilitate and leverage the sharing • Teacher may not know what is shared
Shared anonymously	• Students will still benefit from each other's ideas • Students will feel safe to share • Teacher can still leverage the sharing	• No accountability on the part of individual students • Much more limited student interaction

INTERACTION expected:

Option:	*Advantages*	*Limitations*
None beyond review	• It takes the least amount of time • Still sufficient to allow students to learn from seeing different solutions and approaches	• Difficult to know if students did it • Students may not know what to "look for"
Spontaneous comments/ contributions	• Most natural/ genuine • Still sufficient to allow students to learn from seeing different solutions and approaches	• Not many students may feel like commenting • Value may be missed by some students (unless explicitly called out by the teacher)
Structured feedback	• It ensures every student will look at other students' work • It helps students know what to "look for"	• It may feel a bit contrived • It will take more time
Collaboration on final product	• It will create a genuine reason to review and provide feedback on other students' work	• Appropriate only for certain tasks

Useful online tools

- **Learning Management Systems (LMS)**: Any Learning Management Systems (such as Schoology, Google Classrooms, Canvas, Blackboard) has built-in functions such as discussion boards that allow students to post their work, so that it is accessible to the rest of the class, with the option for other students as well as the instructor to leave comments. Most LMSs also allow students to post different kinds of artifacts – including written text, digital photos, voice recording, or videos they may have created.

- **"Sharing" apps :** Even if your institution has not invested in a Learning Management System, there are stand-alone apps (such as *Padlet* and *Flipgrid*) that allow students to post their work so that it is accessible to everyone else in the class, and other people can comment on it. Several of these apps allow students to post not just written text, but also videos, digital photos, and even voice recordings.

- **Platforms allowing for synchronous sessions:** Platforms like *Zoom* or *Google Meet* allow students to share their work through oral presentations and demonstration – as well as more informal sharing of ideas in brainstorming and working sessions. Whenever the platform allows for break-out rooms, the sharing could also occur within a smaller group.

- **"Editable" text software:** Whenever student work involves written text, using software that allows for sharing, editing, and adding comments, opens up new possibilities for the kinds of interactions students will be able to have on their shared work.

Software allowing multiple people to contribute to the same text – like Google docs – may be provide unique opportunities for collaboration on shared texts.

- **Voice-recording tools:** Today's there are a number of digital voice recording tools (such as *VoiceThred)* that can be used to record oral explanations or arguments. These recordings can then be easily shared with other students by posting them in compatible "sharing" apps or LMSs.

- **Video-recording tools:** Today taking a video has become both much easier and more accessible, as it can be done even from a personal smart phone! There also easy-to-use video-editing tools like Camtasia that allows students to make their videos more effective.

- **Digital cameras:** Taking and sharing digital photos is now a common practice among people of all ages, as smart phones can not only take pictures, but also make it easy to both store and share those pictures through a number of apps and social media. Therefore, students of all ages can easily take pictures to share artifacts of their work such as drawings and objects they may have created in response to an assignment.

Options worth considering
*(S=synchronous session or F2F; A=asynchronous online or regular homework)***:**

Option:	Considerations	A	S	Useful online tools
A. *Sharing findings/ solutions in an online synchronous session*	• Teacher can facilitate and leverage students' results and strategies • Not every students is likely to be able to share or give comments • Creating records that can be revisited later is more challenging, and must be purposefully planned		X	• Zoom; Google Meet • Digital camera
B. *"Think-Pair-Share"* *(i.e., students work on a task independently, then share with another student/small group, then share publicly with the whole class)*	• Allows students to share and refine their initial ideas/results in a smaller/safer context, before they share publicly with the rest of the class • Every student is actively engaged in sharing and responding to others • Gives the teacher the opportunity to facilitate and leverage the final sharing • It requires a "breakout room" capability for synch sessions • It may be more challenging to share drawings virtually (although possible using cameras built in phone/tablet/laptop used for the synch session)		X	• Breakout room feature • Digital camera

C. *Having students just post selected findings and other work online*	• Gives every student the opportunity to share • Provides the opportunity to look at what other students have done (and compare with one's results), while choosing how to do so • Creates public records that can be easily revisited as needed • If there is no purpose or task associated, it is difficult to know if students have looked at their classmates' work • Unless the original task allows for different solutions and approaches, there would not be much reason for students to look at what has been posted	X		• Discussion board feature or Padlet/ social media • Digital camera • Voice recording
D. *Assigning specific tasks related to posted student work*	• Requires every student to engage with other students' work • Teacher can help direct students' attention to specific aspects of other students' work • Will take more time on the part of the students- so it is critical that the assigned task is meaningful and engaging, and can contribute to the goals of the lesson/unit	X	*	• Discussion board feature or Padlet/ social media
E. *Creating (and posting) a recorded presentation to share findings from a project*	• Allows every student to plan and refine what they want to share orally – and thus have a better product to share with their classmates • Allows to capture the key elements of a complex work, and to share about process as well as product • Allows every student to share and look at other students' work, while saving significant class/synch time • Requires more preparation time on the part of each student	X		• Video-recording tools • Discussion board feature or Padlet/ social media *(for posting)*

Key tips

1. Make sure you develop a learning community and classroom norms conducive to sharing
2. Reviewing each other's work takes time – so do it only when it is really worthwhile
3. Open-ended tasks that allow for multiple solutions and/or strategies are most conducive to valuable sharing of student work
4. Pay attention to how you structure the sharing, and most importantly what you ask students to do with other people's work
5. Explicitly use errors and misconceptions as learning opportunities for the whole class