



Case Study Series

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Supporting Collaborative
Work and Student
Advocacy using the
FFL Toolkit

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Supporting Collaborative Work and Student Advocacy using the FFL Toolkit

This academic year saw me teaching large cohorts of students. I wanted to encourage interactivity, as I believe it plays a vital part in the session delivery. I was conscious that with large groups, this can sometimes be problematic. Therefore, I needed a way in order to try and get all students engaging during sessions.

Approach

During consultation with the DLD Team, we discussed various tools and settled on a Padlet wall. Using a QR code, students were able to use their Apple iPads to access the wall. There was an expectation that most of the groups would be able to use a QR code to get access to online content.

The Padlet wall was used to promote interactive discussions between myself and the students. The wall quickly progressed to being both a method of promoting discussion as well as disseminating information. It soon became an integral part of the module delivery. The wall was shared both in the lecture theatre and seminar rooms, as well as being embedded into the relevant Blackboard module.

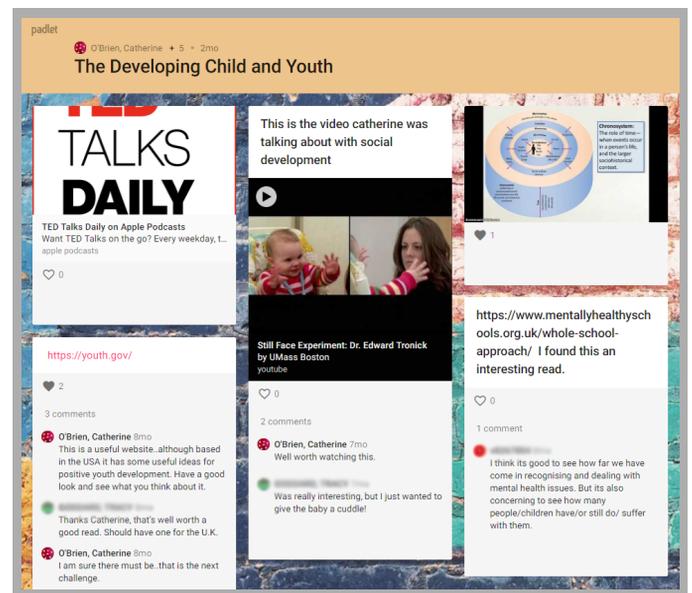
Outcome

As stated above, there was an assumption that most students would be capable of using the technology. It turned out that this was not the case. However, another assumption was that those who did know would help the others – this proved to be the case. From this, there was an unexpected benefit that through peer support, a team spirit emerged from the sessions and they bonded quickly.

Whilst the vast majority responded well to using Padlet, not everyone agreed. However, after some discussions, those students who didn't engage said they might have benefitted from some guidance or formal training session with using Padlet.

It quickly became one of the major drivers in disseminating information to the students. I had to ensure content was updated on a regular basis in order to keep engagement up, and this time spent is something to factor in when thinking about using something like Padlet. There are also implications with monitoring the Padlet wall. Despite this vigilance, there were no issues with students posting in appropriate content.

Overall, the experience was a very positive one. Using Padlet as a platform to not only share content, but promote discussion is something I could see being used in any module. Padlet gives me plenty of flexibility and allows me things like giving students the freedom to post to a wall anonymously. It will be interesting to see how much further I can push the use of Padlet.



Padlet wall for the Developing and Child Youth module

Lessons Learnt

Assumptions about skill levels should not be taken lightly and there could be a body of work surrounding student training to ensure all students can use the tools quickly and consistently.

One of the most valuable lessons is that the toolkit can provide motivation and give students a voice. With a large cohort, this is all the more valuable. The fact that Padlet also supports real time, synchronous discussion is incredibly powerful.