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Engaging EFL Learners Online

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ABSTRACT

Online classrooms offer a variety of resources, but they also present some challenges such as students feeling bored and disengaged from learning activities. This research poster seeks to state that we as facilitators can help our students get more engaged in the online classroom by applying four practical tips and three tech tools.

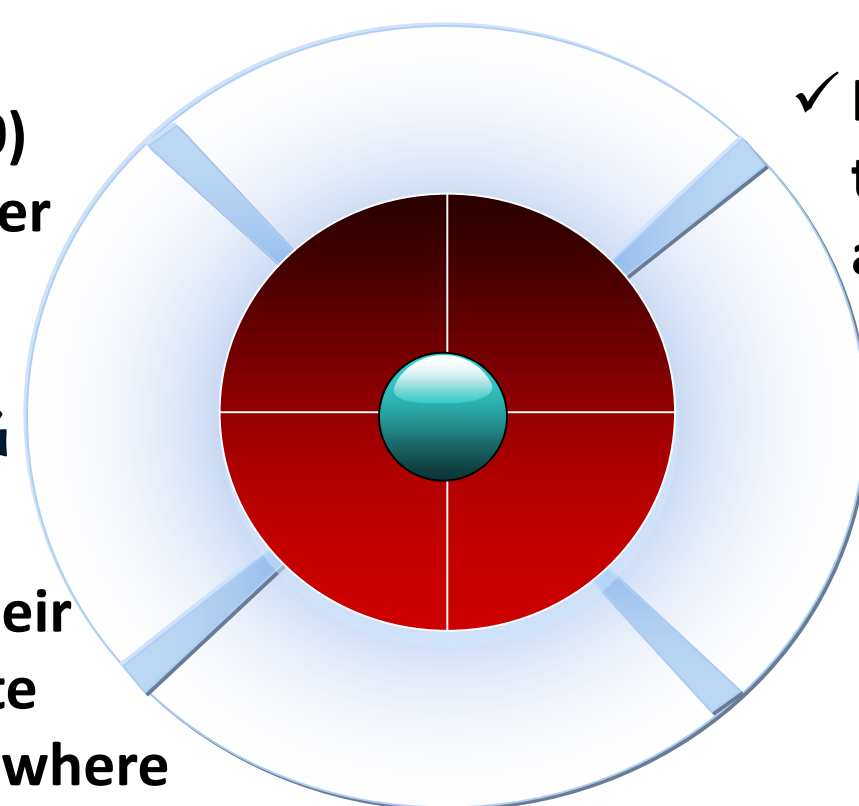
TIPS

CREATE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

- ✓ Supraba, Maisaroh, and Nur'Aini (2020) refers to GBL to combine subject matter with gameplay (Rogers, 2016)

USE GAME-BASED LEARNING

- ✓ "Engage students by letting them use their existing talents and interests to complete assignments" (Shoshana Luria, poll everywhere blog).



- ✓ Kari Adams (2021) "Engagement and commitment in the classroom depend on connections (Corso et al., 2013)"

FOSTER INTERACTION AND COLLABORATION

- ✓ Turn on camera
- ✓ Foster the use of microphone, chat box, breakout rooms.
- ✓ Set a specific time to collaborate in class (padlet, collaborative boards)

PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH FLEXIBILITY

(Brent Muirhead, 2004)

IMPLICATIONS

BASED ON MY EXPERIENCE

- Wheel of questions
 - For large classes, use breakout rooms with small groups.
- Memes
 - Before suggesting memes generators, preview them in order to avoid inappropriate content
- GooseChase
 - Free version = limited number of participants (only 3 teams).

INTRODUCTION

During the Covid-19 pandemic, engagement has been one of the most concerning topics in EFL online classrooms. This is because moving from in person to an online setting has been challenging for educators who were not equipped to face this change in class instruction.

As a result, we have seen learners who were demotivated with lack of interest in the course material not willing to participate or interact in the online class activities.

Why is this topic important to us? Essentially because authentic engagement can lead to higher academic achievement throughout student life (Zyngier, 2008).

So how can we ignite our students' engagement in an online class setting?

TECH RESOURCES

WHEEL OF QUESTIONS/CONVERSATION QUESTIONS

- Add questions and use them to get students' attention and learn about each other
- Allow students to create their own list of questions in small groups
- Introduce a topic
- Review content
- Check understanding

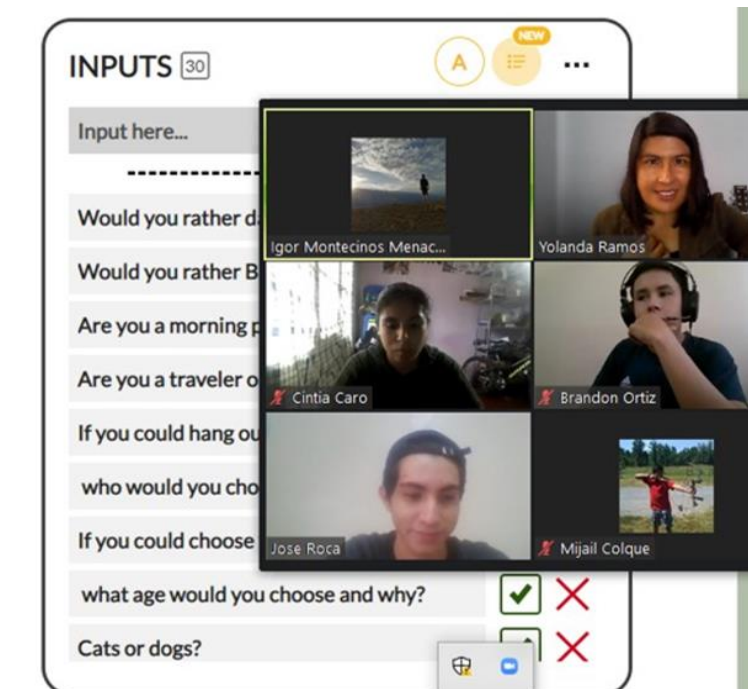


Figure 1 English Club "Tarija" 2021

There are lots of free online spinning tools, just to name a few:

1. <https://pickerwheel.com/>
2. <https://wheeldecide.com/>
3. Wordwall. Conversation wheel using different templates <https://wordwall.net/features>

USING MEMES TO CONNECT WITH STUDENTS

Figure 3 English -Class-C.Garmendi (Group 2)



- Memes can be humorous, emotional and thought-provoking

WAYS OF USING MEMES

- a) Deliver your message
- b) Ice-breaker
- c) Introduce a new topic and spark discussion
- d) students make their own memes (Mrs. Orman's Classroom, 2014)
- e) Receive feedback

Kapwing (<https://www.kapwing.com/>)
<https://imgflip.com/memegenerator>
<https://makeameme.org/>

GOOSECHASE APP

- Adapted from Dr. Gena Rhoades (2020) "Engaging the disengaged" Workshop at TESOL Virtual Convention

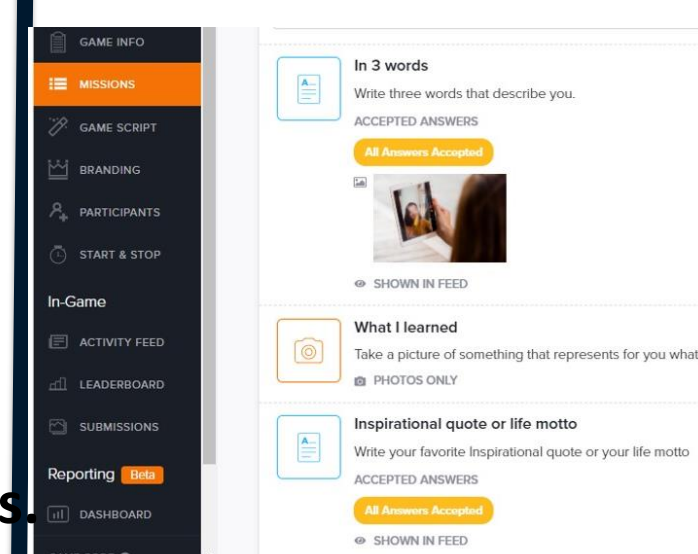


Figure 2 English IV Class (Group 2) 2020
www.goosechase.com

- ✓ GooseChase (digital scavenger hunt) has ready-to-use missions (individually or in teams).
- ✓ Create and customize missions according to lesson content or focus
- ✓ Missions involve video, pictures, and writing assignments.

CONCLUSION

- ✓ Engagement can be nurtured in an online setting by applying these 4 tips and technological resources. Whenever you feel or notice that students are disconnected and demotivated, ask yourself:
- ✓ Am I Working on creating a connection with students to develop a sense a community, Am I promoting interaction and collaboration, Am I flexible allowing creativity to present tasks, and turning activities into learning games?
- ✓ In my personal experience considering these aspects in my online classrooms has allowed my students to use the language in real life situations, apply vocabulary, and grammar, and improving students' engagement in learning activities.

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Figure 1 English Club "Tarija" (2021) / Figure 2 English IV Class Group 2 (2020) / Figure 3 English Class. C.Garmendi (Group 2)

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