

DRAFT: Distance Learning Jump Start Guide

Step 1 (essential) - Choose your Platform. Choose a Learning Management System (LMS). Google Classroom is great, but it also has many limitations when it comes to distance learning. Selecting a more robust LMS such as [Canvas](#) (free for teachers) allows you to more easily track student's learning, group students, schedule conferences/office hours, broadcast real-time videos, create quizzes, upload and embed resources, take attendance, etc. [SeeSaw](#) is great for elementary students as it is designed for students who do not yet have the literacy skills and they can take photos, videos, and voice record their responses and reflections. Teachers can also add videos, photos, and voice instructions.

Wakelet Collection: [LMS](#) to check out different types of LMS

Step 2 (essential) - Design a structure with modules or lessons to chunk learning. [Absorb, Do, Connect](#) is a popular model for eLearning. Keep the structure consistent and simple. Use the same design for all your units in order to reduce confusion. This might mean paring down units and lessons and only teaching the absolute essentials. Remember, it might take some time for Ss to get used to this structure and so you will need to spend some time, in the beginning, teaching them how to be online students. Many LMSs make it super easy to build modules, create assignments, and track learning and logins.

A basic online module or Week structure might look something like this:

- A Welcome that introduces goals, learning targets, proficiencies, expectations, due dates, and structure of the module.
- Community building activity/Ice breaker
- Lesson (absorb)
- Activity(ies) (do)
- Discussion, Peer review (connect)
- assessment(s)
- Reflection activity
- Wrap up - go over what they just learned and where they are heading
- Also include:
 - Daily emails
 - Office hours
 - Frequent and on-going feedback

Step 3 (essential) - Select Digital Resources. Much of what you do already is digital, such as readings, videos, etc, but there are a ton of FREE online resources to foster distance learning as well as several tools to make your own resources.

Check out the Wakelet Collection for [Digital Educational Resources](#)

Wakelet Collection: [Content Creation tools](#)



Step 4 (essential) - Set Norms and Participation Expectations, and practice these with your students. Be as explicit as you can regarding norms and participation guidelines, such as how often are they required to participate in a discussion, read emails, when certain things are due, how to properly behave/interact with each other online, etc.

Step 5 (essential) - Building/Maintaining Community and fostering collaboration. Community is just as important online as it is face-to-face. Use ice breakers and team-building activities that can be adapted for online, as well as tools to foster collaboration to do group projects, peer reviews, and discussions.

Wakelet Collection: Online Ice Breakers and Team Building Activities [coming soon]

Wakelet Collection: [Collaboration & Discussion Tools](#)

Step 6 (essential) - Communication is KEY. It is important to communicate regularly with your students either through email, video, phone, text, etc. Email your students regularly with the daily expectations, checking in with individual students, as well as providing timely and regular feedback. Offer office hours online through Hangouts, Skype, Zoom etc for students to get more support if needed or to do small group interventions.

For synchronous classes, i.e. everyone “meets” at the same time, you need to choose a platform to stream your classes such as Google Meets, Skype, WebEx, Zoom (Zoom has listed the 40minute limit on free accounts)

Wakelet Collection : [Communication Tools](#)

Step 7 (essential) - Assessment and Feedback - Determine how you are going to assess and track student learning and provide ongoing feedback. Much of this is already built into an LMS like Canvas, but there are tons of other tools that offer more interactive and engaging options.

Wakelet Collection: [Assessment, Feedback and Reflection](#)

Step 8 (would be nice) - Make learning interactive and engaging! Using tools like EdPuzzle to make videos interactive allow students to be active vs passive learners.

Step 9 (would be nice) - Use multimedia - Use video & screencasts to explain your online class structure, what the goals are, how to use a new tool, to provide feedback, etc.

Wakelet Collection: [Video Creation Tools](#)

Other Distance Learning Resources

- Canvas created a thorough [course evaluation checklist](#) using the Universal Design for Learning Principles
- Check out [this collection of resources](#) for educators and schools affected by the coronavirus or planning for when the virus hits their area
- [Tips for Enabling Distance Learning Through G-Suite](#)
- [Explore distance learning resources for schools affected by COVID-19](#) by Google
- [Hangouts Meets Advance Features available to existing G-Suite Customers until July 1, 2020](#)
- [Tips for Enabling Distance Learning through G Suite & Chrome PDF](#)

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