

How to Host a #sschat?

Thanks for agreeing to moderate at #sschat! Having many people active and directing the conversation strengthens and defines our group. In order to support you we have listed a few basic ideas that might help you to organize the chat and keep the focus on the chosen topic. Please ask any questions. We are happy to help you :)

Best of luck with your chat. Thanks for your contribution!

-The #sschat team

[@CHitch94](#) [@42ThinkDeep](#) [@dankrutka](#)

How it works?

#SSChat is a participant driven discussion group for social studies educators. While #SSChat is on a number of social media outlets, the Monday evening chat, which occurs each Monday at 7pm- 8pm EST (with the exception of the last Friday of the month), is our organizational flagship.

#SSChat partners with guest hosts to lead the conversation. These discussions can be centered around a style or movement in education or it can be centered around a historical topic or type of historical event. We are looking for topics are interesting and will engage a large audience.

Advertising the Chat

It is very beneficial to advertise the chat a few days before. You can preset tweets using [buffer](#) or you can manually enter in each tweet. We also like to advertise on our facebook page.

We would love you to design the advertising poster to accompany each tweet and facebook post. [Here](#) is a sample advertising poster if you want to use our template just click "file" and then "make a copy" Please email a copy of the finished poster a 3-5 days before the chat to sschatteacher@gmail.com.

- What should be included on the poster?
 - Topic Name
 - Date
 - Time 7-8 PM EST
 - Host organization/name, logo, and twitter handle
 - #sschat or include the sschat logo



Organization

As the moderator you will direct the conversation to address the chosen topic. Choose an organization suited to the topic. You want to write 6-7 open-ended discussion questions ahead of time.

- Using Q1, Q2, formats allows the chat to be followed more easily and is easier to understand in the archive, especially when people respond using the same. Start with a general topic question and ask additional questions every ten to 15 minutes. Avoid questions that would solicit yes/no responses, keep them broad, questions that will spark conversation.
 - e.g. Q1: How do you use tech in your classroom? #sschat
 - e.g. Q2: What are the pros and cons of using tech? #sschat
- It might be a good idea to tweet a link to the Google Doc with your questions prior to the chat.
- After a welcome and a prompt for participants to introduce themselves, be sure to allow 5-7 minutes for introductions, but post soon thereafter. Don't get too bogged down in the introductions that you keep people waiting for the 1st question.
- For crowdsourcing topics, consider beginning by asking for guiding questions or **learning objectives** for the topic. Think of different questions to keep the content ideas going that could be answered by multiple people from multiple disciplines. .

Content

Make sure you keep the focus of the conversation on topic by retweeting and following up on key comments. Often people will go off on tangents. That is to be expected and is part of the democratic nature of Twitter. However as moderator maintain the focus on the advertised chat topic.

- Retweet excellent contributions and resources.
- Ask for clarification questions if needed

Negativity

This is very rare, but it is important that if negative or inappropriate comments occur they should be dealt with immediately.

Please say something like "@_____ twitter etiquette dictates negative comments and conversations move to a different medium. We welcome differing points of view but want to keep it positive and productive in our forum!

Helpful Tips

- Be careful not to reply to like every contribution, if your tweet count is too high, you might get suspended. But do reply and/or RT as appropriate.
- It's ok to offer links to your resources as appropriate to the chat, but be mindful not to make it an overt commercial. Keep "thought leadership" in mind as a frame.
- Look at our archives on sschat.org, many will give you a good feel of hosting.

Chat Roles

Moderators: Typically there is one Moderator who takes care of the responsibilities listed above. With a fast paced chat it may be helpful to have two people to keep it on track and productive. Take turns asking questions and retweeting great ideas and links.

Welcoming New People/Greeter: One of our strengths is acknowledging and welcoming new participants. We want people to feel good about being in the chat and excited about coming back and joining the Ning.

- The main task is to recognize new participants and say hi. With any luck several people will do this anyway.
- Also, keep track of how many new people there were and follow up with an invitation to the join us again or sign up for the archive site/Ning etc.
- Thank people for their comments or resources and invite them back for next week.

Archiver: Archiving is a fundamentally important role for our group.

- Archiving using Storify is relatively simple and will be completed by one of the chat leaders.
- You will want to link to the Ning/homepage as well. Administrators to the Ning will be required to complete this task.
- No need to do this unless otherwise instructed someone from #sschat will take care of this.

A Final Note:: When moderating it is possible to tweet A LOT! On occasion you can be temporarily blocked from tweeting. Try to go easy on your tweets earlier in the day in order to avoid this. There is a 100 tweets per hour limit. If you pass it your tweets will be throttled and you will be, for lack of a better description, in twitter jail.

Planning Guide for Hosts

Topic Name:

Questions: (try to space questions depending on interest and engagement)

Introduction- welcome, please introduce yourself and what or teach or something creative

Q1:

Q2:

Q3:

Q4:

Q5:

Resources or websites (you want to share to have them ready ahead of time).