

Back up material and handouts from Gilly Salmon

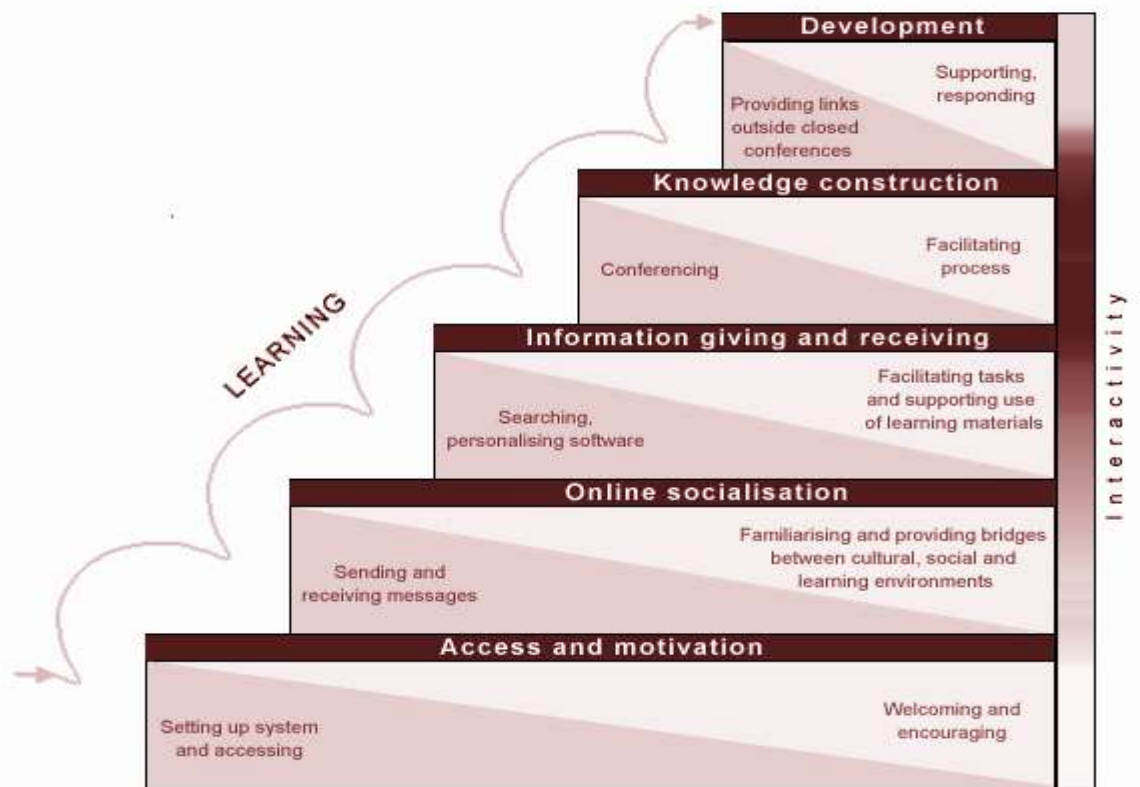
Online bricklaying

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5-Step Model of Teaching and Learning Online

Individual access and the ability of participants to use online interactive conferencing are essential prerequisites for conference participation (stage one, at the base of the flights of steps). Stage two involves individual participants establishing their online identities and then finding others with whom to interact. At stage three, participants give information relevant to the course to each other. Up to and including stage three, a form of co-operation occurs, i.e. support for each person's goals. At stage four, course-related group discussions occur and the interaction becomes more collaborative. The communication depends on the establishment of common understandings. At stage five, participants look for more benefits from the system to help them achieve personal goals, explore how to integrate CMC into other forms of learning and reflect on the learning processes.



- E-Moderating
- Technical support

Introducing E-tivities

E-tivities is the word I give to frameworks for active and interactive online learning

E-tivities are:

- Motivating, engaging and purposeful
- Based on interaction between learners/students/students mainly through written message contributions
- Designed and led by an e-moderator
- Asynchronous (i.e. take place over time)
- Cheap and easy to run- usually through text based bulletin boards

Key features of e-tivities

- A small piece of information, stimulus or challenge (the 'spark')
- Online activity which includes individual students posting a contribution
- An interactive or participative element- such as responding to the postings of others
- Summary, feedback or critique from an e-moderator (the 'plenary')
- All the instructions to take part are available in one online message.

Designing e-tivities

Now is your opportunity to get some practice in their design.

Designing anything is a creative task, and might take a little more time than you think. Check it out with a novice users before posting...

Here is a way to begin:

Start with the End in Mind: What do you want to achieve by this online activity? How will it add to participants' learning? How will you assess/evaluate the activity?

First Thing First: How will you introduce and start the activity off? How much notice will participants need? Can you design clear instructions?

Think win win: Why will participants want to take part? Will it add obvious and clear value to their learning?

Sharpen the Saw: How will you prepare yourself to make this activity a success? What preparation or resources will participants need to take part?

Be proactive: Plan your role and actions. How often will you need to intervene? What will you do about non-participants?

Seek to Understand: What happens if the activity doesn't go as you planned? How can you get information to change it for next time?

E-moderate: Plan what skills you need to use while the e-tivity is running.

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Building e-tivities- key principles

1. Decide in advance of the students logging on what you expect them to *do* and what the e-moderators will *do*.
2. Ensure the students are clear about your intended objectives for an e-tivity. Start with the end in mind.
3. Ensure that your planned evaluation or assessment meets the purpose(s) of the e-tivity. If assessment is involved, look for alignment with *tasks*. Attempts to forcefully create participation through direct assessment are rarely successful.
4. Build in motivation as part of the process of undertaking the e-tivity itself and not as something separate from it. Motivation occurs because of the learning activities. Avoid trying to motivate people to simply log-on, and 'discuss', instead provide an e-tivity that makes taking part worthwhile.
5. Create an experience that is complete and worthwhile in itself. This includes setting short-term goals but ensuring there is a satisfying process and 'flow' of actions. In practice, e-moderators need to exercise judgement about when to go with the flow and when to guide students towards expected outcomes.
6. Be highly sensitive to timing and pacing. Divide the e-tivity up into bite sized chunks – no more than 2 or 3 weeks' work for a complete e-tivity, less if you can.
7. If you offer more than one e-tivity at a time, build them together in a coherent way to create a 'programme'. Use the 5-stage model.
8. Ensure that the e-tivities are in some way focussed on sharing, shaping, elaborating or deepening understanding.
9. Ensure that students need to work together in some way to achieve the learning outcomes. If you cannot see the way to make working together worthwhile, maybe using e-tivities is not the best approach?
10. Be generous in allocating e-moderator time, especially if the e-tivity is geared towards stages 1-3.
11. Be ready, be prepared, and don't be surprised at serendipitous events.
12. Aim to provide just one instructional message, which contains everything needed to take part.
Each instructional message e-tivity should include:
 1. The purpose of the e-tivity (why the students are doing it). If the e-tivities is assessed, indicate what might indicate success and how they can achieve it.
 2. What students should do and how they can go about doing it.
 3. How long it should or could take. An idea of when the e-tivity starts and when it should finish.
 4. How the students should work together.

Planning an e-tivity of your own to try

<p>Name of e-tivity (choose an enticing one)</p>	
<p>Purpose Really sell this to your participants. Check that you can use it too to evaluate for quality and outcome</p>	
<p>How many participants? Suggest 6-15 maximum first time</p>	
<p>Structure? Design.3 days on this, 4 days on that, 4 days for summary & feedback etc.</p>	
<p>E-lapsed time needed I.e. Calendar time, usually at least a week!</p>	
<p>E-moderators time Estimate your time (Then double...)</p>	
<p>E-moderator actions What you'll do and when...most important part is keeping participants going and providing summary & feedback</p>	
<p>Student time Asynchronous working needs plenty of time to work</p>	
<p>Student actions What will they DO, (don't forget to include responses to others)</p>	

How Evaluated?	
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Against what criteria will you judge success, and how will you get that information?

Action notes:

Building Motivation into Your E-tivities

1. What is the extrinsic reward of taking part? Make this clear throughout each and every e-tivity
2. Are the intentions of the e-tivity clear? Do students know exactly what's expected of them and why?
3. Who will find this e-tivity easy- how can you stretch them?
4. Who will find this e-tivity hard. How can you support them?
5. Is the e-tivity at the right level for the whole group – will everyone see it as worthwhile?
6. Who will the students want to please by taking part? Can you build this into their e-tivity?
7. Does the e-tivity need chunking up into small pieces to be more motivating? Can they cope with it all in one go?
8. Are there cultural aspects that might alienate, confuse and hence de-motivate some students? How can you turn these into positive benefits?
9. Is the layout of the e-tivity clear. Have you proof read it before posting it?
10. What will students lose by *not* taking part. Or by merely lurking?

Notes:

- At stage 1-3 don't expect intrinsic motivation to help.
- At stage 4 and 5- try and offer intrinsic motivators
- Avoid 'punishment' and threats for non-participation- they do not motivate.
- Fabulous technology and comfort with the system will only ever be a hygiene factor, not a motivator in itself.

Successful E-moderators:

1. Visualise success for individuals and their online groups, and engage with them in achieving the vision
2. Turn apparent threats into challenges to be tackled as worthwhile tasks in themselves
3. Create focus for the group by offering short term goals and give a lot of constructive feedback
4. Give very close attention to group processes, but avoid constant interventions and redirections
5. From stage 4 onwards, promote the experience of 'going with the flow'. Most people have some sense of what this might mean.
6. Encourage participants to articulate feelings of engagement with the online opportunities to take part (e-tivities)

The key e-moderating skill:

Weaving, archiving and summarising are key tasks for e-moderators and add much value to online discussions. Students can also usefully acquire and contribute these skills. Or the role of summariser can usefully be taken by 2 or 3 people working collaboratively (however this takes up more time). Whoever undertakes the summary should always invite comment on the sufficiency and interpretation by the original contributors.

Summarising

The purpose of **Summarising** is:

- To weave and acknowledge the variety of ideas and contributions
- To refocus discussion and activity when postings are too numerous. Summarise after each 20 messages, at a pre-agreed time or at regular intervals, e.g. every 3 days. In a large or busy e-tivity, this can be done daily.
- To refocus discussion and activity when postings have strayed from the topic.
- To refocus discussion and promote activity when e-tivities are going well
- To refocus discussion and revive activity when postings are flagging.
- To signal closure of the e-tivity.
- To take the outcomes of an e-tivity to present or work on offline
- To provide fresh starting points for broadening and deepening discussion.
- To remind students of the journey they have travelled
- To reinforce and 'imprint' new information and knowledge
- To provide a 'spark' for a new e-tivity
- To provide a 'footprint' as a spark for a new group

How to summarise:

1. Collect all the relevant messages up into one document.
2. Thank and praise the participants who contributed
3. Look for 3-4 key themes from the contributions and precis them in a sentence or three (maximum)
4. If you wish, highlight individual participant's contributions that add fresh ideas or look at the topic in an interesting way
5. Add your teaching comments or critique, point out omissions, other perspectives or applications, make reference to further literature or ideas
6. add a short further example of your own if necessary
7. shorten the sentences, delete all unnecessary material.
end with congratulations, praise or a positive note of some kind
8. Add a question or reflection for further consideration, if appropriate
9. Add further reading or follow up if appropriate (preferably electronic)
10. Post message on the message forum with a really good, short title.

Time Balances

- The better structured the interaction is, the more time the e-moderator will have for giving feedback and offering summaries.
- Do not respond to each message yourself. Let students know you will read them and give feedback and when.
- Estimate a minute to read simple messages, twice as long for longer ones.
- Doing an effective summary from 30 or more messages takes an hour.

Time Estimates

E-moderators.

- 1.1.1 Think out the e-tivity, explore it with others and plan it well in advance. Estimate: 3 hours for the 1st time, 1 hour 2nd and subsequent times.
- 1.1.2 If you plan to issue resources that are copyrighted, leave time to get permission. Avoid needing time on this if you can.
- 1.1.3 Write, quality check and put instructional messages in place online. Estimate: 2 hours 1st time, 1 hour 2nd and subsequent times. Pilot by asking others to read instructions and respond 1 hour.
- 1.1.4 Set up the bulletin board and resources, 1 hour 1st time, half an hour after that
- 1.1.5 Respond to any e mails and questions from participants or groups. .5 hour.
- 1.1.6 Brief any team leaders if necessary. .5 hour
- 1.1.7 E-moderate the e-tivity- 2-3 hours per week
- 1.1.8 Summarise & plenarise, extra 1-2 hours to close off
- 1.1.9 Evaluation & feed forward to next time – 1 hour

Technical Support –

- 1.1.10 Depends on platform and E-moderators' experience but may need 1-2 hours per e-tivity especially at 1.1.3 and 1.1.4 and for the first time
- 1.1.11 Provide technical support and help to participants as necessary, 2 hours if participants are inexperienced, much less at stages 3-5.

Very discursive e-tivities such as those sometimes used in social sciences or humanities courses may need longer for e-moderators and e-tivities. Slow bulletin boards and forums may add to operational times.

Responding & Promoting Participation

Type	Behaviours	E-moderator response
The Wolf	Visits once a week, lots of activity then disappears again until next week, over the week after !	Nudge Wolf by e mail to encourage to visit again and see responses that s/he has sparked off
The Elephant	Steady- visits most days for a short time	Congratulate. Ask Elephant to encourage and support others – especially Mouse & Squirrel.
The Squirrel	Always catching up -completes - two weeks in once session then disappears again for some time.	Nudge Squirrel by e mail to suggest life is easier with more regular access. Check on other commitments. Provide regular summaries and archiving to enable Squirrel to catch up easily and contribute
The Mouse	Visits once a week, reads & contributes little.	Check that Mouse can access all messages. Check language difficulties. May need boost of confidence. Give specific role
The Mole	Inclined to post disembodied comments in a random way	Try to include relevant comments from Mole in summaries and invite responses. Needs support and e-stroking.
The Rabbit	Lives online, prolific message writer, responds very rapidly	Rabbit may need counselling to hold back and let others shine through. Give structured roles e.g. summarising after a plenary.
The Stag	Tendency to dominate discussion at certain times	Invite Stag back frequently. Offer a structured and specific role
The Magpie	Steals ideas without acknowledging	Foster a spirit of acknowledgement and reinforcement of individual ideas. Warn Magpie directly if necessary
The Dolphin	Intelligent, good communicator and playful online	Ensure Dolphin acknowledges and works well with others. May annoy participants who think it's all very serious.

Spark Ideas for E-tivities

Stage 1

At stage 1 offer easy e-tivities that are quickly achieved whilst giving practice in the use of the technology. Expect to offer one-to-one help and acknowledgement to ensure positive attitudes towards the start of the experience.

Icebreakers :Each of these will take around 2-3 weeks online. They are easy to set up and run and will enable your students to get to know each other, to contribute rather than 'lurk' and to become more familiar with the platform in use in a fairly safe and fun way. Students can be encouraged to find others with similar interests to share ideas with online, as well as to find learning partners who have different kinds of ideas and support to offer. With sharing and support, more serious topics and discussions go well.

Quiz: Ask each student to put up a maximum of one-screenful, which reveals a little about themselves. Offer them a possible structure, such as the choice of 3 or 4 from, for instance, job, home location, personal interests, family, what they hope to get out of the course, what they hope to put in, something they're good at and something they need to get better at. If they know their preferred When every student has contributed, set up a little quiz, based on the group, with a prize, e.g. Who has twin girls? Who has a spaniel dog? Who lives in XXX area? Who works in company Y as a product manager? Publicise the quiz and offer a prize (piece of software?) for the most accurate response or the fastest, or both.

Images: Ask each student to post a url into the conference that tells the group something about themselves. Put one up about yourself. Triggers might be a hobby, a personal web site, an organisational or corporate web site, a picture of a favourite beach, a favourite rock band, a favourite country, a favourite book, and so on. Ask each person to post a message saying why they have chosen to share their particular url with other students. Run this e-tivity for a week or so only, and then archive it.

My brand: Ask each student to mention a brand of something that they always use and what it says about them. Start a discussion on these brands.

Hall of Mirrors: Explain how Web sites of organisations often present a more up-to-date image of them, compared to their annual reports, brochures or other print based publications. Post five Web sites and call it "The Hall of Mirrors". Ask students to take a wander round them and post a message saying:

- (i) What are the similarities between the Web sites?
- (ii) Which one would encourage them to buy online and why?
- (iii) Which one would put them off buying the product or service and why?
- (iv) Which one made them feel confident and which one made them feel nervous?

Think of further questions. Allow students, say, one week to respond, and then run a discussion on the similarities and differences in responses.

Talents: "Give" each student a fantasy \$200/1000/100,000 to 'spend' online. Allow them one week to wander around the Web and say in a message what they would buy with this sum (and why). If you want to make it course related, they can investigate areas relevant to your topic, e.g. online courses for educators, images for art students and so on. Start a discussion on the different choices. Has anyone

chosen to make money with their \$200 rather than spend it? Who's spent it on themselves and who on others? Who's bought goods and who purchased a service?

Wanderlust: post a url showing a great location in your Singapore (for holidays or business). Ask each student to find and post a url showing another great location. Get each person to say what they would do or purchase on a visit to this country. Start a discussion on country specialities and global brands.

Our Contract : post a message making clear what you can offer as their e-moderator. Include number of times a week that you log on and how long you can stay online each time. Let them know any time you will be away from your computer. Indicate what your main role is. What they can expect you to do. Indicate what you would like from them. Ask students to offer a similar message about their own commitments.

Here are some more:

- Explore the nature of success on the course.
- Each student offers a contribution to the 'netiquette' of the group. Build a commonly agreed list of the contributions.
- Ask students to look out of a window and relate a topic - say, critical path analysis, or leadership styles, or decision making - to natural objects such as trees or manmade objects such as traffic furniture. Go with the flow. This works!
- Offer a learning styles or team roles inventory (watch you don't infringe anyone's copyright). Ask students to discuss their styles and how they think their styles will manifest itself in the online environment.
- Ask students what single thing would improve the quality of their online communication. Who could help to achieve this?
- Set up a 'skills and knowledge' market. Each student states some help that he or she would like from one other student. In return, they agree to help one other person.
- Set up a 'discovery' area for students to publish their own tips and tricks on the technology. But edit it so it does not become a 'whinge' area"!
- Offer key ideas (we call them 'footprints') developed by previous students in the course. Ask new arrivals to explore the ideas.
- Ask each student to acknowledge, congratulate or celebrate the contribution of one other student.
- Ask students to offer tips for 'surviving online learning'.
- Ask students to say would they be doing now if they weren't working online?
- Ask pairs to interview each other by e-mail and intro each other publicly
- Ask each person to name a famous person from their locality (town, country) and tell us one significant piece of information about this person.
- Ask students to mention when they first received a computer on their desk, or in their home and the circumstances. When did they first hear the term 'Superhighway' or 'World Wide Web' and from whom?

Stage 2: Socialization

E-tivities at this stage are about getting to know each other, establishing a group to work with and understanding the approach that the group or community will take.

- Introduce yourself using 6 descriptive words.

- What are the most popular given names in Singapore? Ask each person to explain the origin of his/her name, the reason it was chosen and any special cultural significance. Ask each person to explain the origin of his/her name, the reason it was chosen and any special cultural significance.
- If you were an animal, what would you be? Can we make up a farmyard, zoo, circus or jungle?
- What musical instruments do you play? Can we form a band or orchestra with our skills and experience?
- Do you have any domestic pets? Why did you choose this kind of animal? What would happen if our pets met each other? How did you choose their names?
- If we were setting up a business, what could you contribute? What products would you like to make or what processes would you like to set in train?
- Give one url that illustrates your favourite hobby.
- If you were leaving to go on holiday or business trip what three essential items would you put in your suitcase? What kind of packer are you? Do you throw everything in and sit on the case. Do you have one or two specially selected items, carefully folded...or what? Compare the similarities and differences.
- What's your favourite smell? Can you describe it online? Why is it important to you?
- What's the most important lesson life/being an e-moderator/ working in this company/ living in this place has taught you up until now?
- How do you relax?
- Offer a cartoon or humorous picture. Ask for reactions.
- In what circumstances do you behave 'safely' and when might you take 'risks'? Can we find common categories?
- What's your favourite town. Take us on a virtual tour of it. Each student comments on whether they have visited for real or virtually
- What's your favourite journey? Take us along it. Start a discussion based on some feature you see along the way
- In XXX words, what's the plot of your favourite novel? Compare and contrast
- What items would you put in your virtual shopping basket and why? Are there similarities and differences in the group?
- What's your favourite word/expression, and why? Can we build them into a story?
- If we were to have a fancy dress party, what theme would you choose for this group. What would you come as? What periods of history/literature/continents of the world do we represent?
- Who's your favourite actor and why? Have we all chosen different people?
- Who's the person you'd most like to meet from your discipline and why? What would s/he say about working online?
- Who's the historical figure you most identify with and why? Would they like the Internet? How would they use it?
- If you were offered a soapbox, what would you talk about? Could you condense the points into 50 words?
- What's your favourite gadget and why? Will it help you communicate on this course?
- What would you like to see invented and why?
- What was your proudest moment? (Most embarrassing could be hilarious... but risky!)
- If I ruled the world...

Senses: Try to tap into issues that explore similarities and differences across cultures, learning and upbringing. Try also to include at least one e-tivity that taps into senses other than those involved in typing and reading. We have found especially powerful to be:

- My favourite music. Explore sources and roots of different kinds. Offer web sites so students can listen and exchange ideas

- My favourite food. If you could live on one dish only what would it be? What key food do you remember from your childhood. What special dishes are made in your home town?
- Online wine tasting. Each student has a glass by his or her keyboard. They describe and discuss the taste, and the origin of the wine.
- What's the best excuse you've heard for the late submission of a piece of work that is to be assessed?
- If we were designing a physical classroom for our group, what features would be important? Where would it be located in the world and why?

Stage 3: Information Exchange

At this stage e-tivities that gradually encourage students to take more personal responsibility for their active learning and interacting are helpful and those that model strategies for handling online learning. Most students will still need help to handle masses of messages and Web resources and to find and personalise who and what they wish to work with. The-moderator role shifts fast from the 'host' to the archive, summarising and feedback role.

Great thinkers: Using the great thinkers from your disciplines can be great sparks for e-tivities. Here are some examples that we have tried:

- Offer great speeches. Students condense them into 12 words and discuss the meanings.
- Use key concepts from great speeches to write your own speech.
- Send a postcard e-mail from one of the 'Greats' from your discipline, e.g. individual explorers or inventors. How would you respond?
- Considering the history of your discipline, are there more men or women mentioned in textbooks? Consider the implications and discuss them.
- Ask each student to undertake a piece of research on a well-known figure. Ask students to think of questions that they would like to ask and then to role-play interviewing each other as these figures, try this by e mail or through text chat. Post the results of the interviews for everyone to see.

Skills: Stage 3 is a good time and place for skills-development. Try these:

- Find and try out Keyboard Tutors. See which increase typing speeds. Share the results of your research and see who can improve their typing speed.
- Practise summarising information, e.g. the theory of relativity in 12 words.
- Practise summarising sets of messages from stages 2 and 3.
- Undertake 'compare and contrast' research. Develop a set of criteria for good or bad sites for your course, or more or less relevant, or more or less useful. Then using the criteria each student indicating a web site and indicates how they would evaluate it. Encourage discussion and challenge.
- Ask each student or small group to undertake research on a topic and report back to the group. Lead a plenary discussion on the results.

Compare: Investigating and comparing and contrasting electronic resources works really well at stage 3:

- Investigate the best way for teams to work online, share ideas and evaluate them.

- If you were advising a well-known writer from your topic, what would you say about the layout and content of his/her book? What's missing? What's out of date?
- Are there any scenarios about the future for your discipline? What are they called? Who thinks they offer a likely or an unlikely view of the future?
- Ask one student to identify three Web sites of use to the group and post an evaluation of each one. Another student then visits each of the three sites and comments on the sufficiency of the evaluation, and adds their views and so on.

The e-moderator summarises

Evaluation: Evaluation processes are usually good value for e-tivities:

- Try 'reversal'. What would happen if we did the opposite of what's advised by some authority?
- What are the 'seminal' books or paper for your areas of expertise. Why do you think they became so important?

Techniques: Holding structured 'meetings to reach decisions are also worth trying, such as

- political debates
- mock board meetings
- lobby groups
- voting on issues
- discussion, buzz or focus groups
- simulations or role plays

Take stances on key issues, e.g. present a contentious issue – try 'introducing e-learning! Divide students into 4 groups, e.g. student sceptics, teacher sceptics, wild enthusiasts (students), serious enthusiasts (teachers), pragmatists (its going to happen, so how will we do it?). Run a plenary taking the key issues from each, and solutions.

Creative techniques:

- Brainstorming
- Delphi techniques
- Nominal group techniques
- Reversal
- Metaphors

Creativity: promote 'out of the box' thinking.

- Imagine that better treatment for human bones and joints means that walking (Zimmer) frames are no longer needed. What could we do with all the Zimmer frames in the world?
- Try cybernetics (comparisons between man-made and biological objects). Offer a topic then each student types examples of 5 items from his or her desk. Try and 'force-fit' connections and see if they offer new insights into the topic
- Start a 'Round Robin' story. Start by offering two sentences relevant to your course. Each student adds a sentence.

Questions: Try posting intriguing questions from any relevant topic of your choice. Or try and choose something that is simply one word or phrase. It works best if there are many different interpretations and perhaps a movie or Internet sites to explore. You will need very good summaries when the questions are answered and a plenary to explore the meaning and usefulness of the information

Visitors: From stage 3 onwards, you may want to introduce selective use of an 'outsider' such as topic expert to the group to stimulate discussion. To maximise the use of their time, build them into e-tivity processes and be specific about what you want them to do and when! Ask students to practice their summarising skills.

Stage 4: Knowledge Construction

Your students should be working well together by this point.

Structured teams: You can start to run 'accumulator' e-tivities with smaller groups merging into bigger ones. You can explore structures of effective work teams and specific roles such as chair, resource finder, recorder, summariser, reviewer, critic, time keeper. Try some action learning sets for e-tivities with student-led e-moderating and team leading

Concepts: At this stage in a course or process, it's important to introduce conceptual models, ideas, and theories for examination, exploration and application. In e-tivity processes, make it clear that the e-moderator is not necessarily looking for consensus or closure, but wide exploration of issues.

- Take a key diagram, model or concept from your course or discipline. Ask each student to apply it, or find examples. Compare and contrast between the examples offered.
- Take a key concept and apply it in a new way
- Take a key concept and demonstrate the extent to which it does or does not to a particular case example

Positions: Students can very usefully adopt a variety of 'positions' online to cover multiple perspectives. Here are some ideas:

- Take a key concept or model and explore how different professions, such as that of physician, lawyer, politician or teacher, would apply it.

Cases: Case studies and problem based learning work well at this point.

- Introduce staged case study information with questions.
- Introduce challenging problems with a variety of solutions.
- Ask students to produce plans for action based on limited amounts of information, e.g. a marketing plan, a business plan, a product launch.
- Use scenarios for the future. Offer two or three different cameos of how your discipline will look in the future, e.g. different types of schools, new technologies for medicine, virtual performing arts. Prompt discussion on the adequacy and implications of these scenarios.

Summarising: Encourage all forms of reviewing and summarising

- Ask individual students teams or groups to undertake investigation of one topic or area to contribute to a whole piece of work or report
- Ask individual students, teams or groups to undertake summarising, critiquing and combining information
- Offer e-tivities that rework ideas or discussions using techniques such as concept mapping

Stage 5: Development

At this stage, try to allow the maximum amount of choice. Ensure that all the summaries and archives are available for students to use as resources. Accountability and responsibility are more important at this stage than 'content'. However, the usual approach to pacing and timescales should continue.

At this stage, I've suggested sparks that focus on self reflection and evaluation of the learning. However many of these approaches can be used for teacher or peer led assessment also. Almost all of them can form part of a written report or essay which can be used for assessment. In this way the maximum amount of 'alignment' between learning and assessment can be achieved.

Footprints: Offer essays or reports from previous students on the course (with permission or disguised of course) and run an e-tivity on how students would have marked, assessed and graded them

Review: Offer e-tivities to consider the evaluation of both the learning that has occurred and the knowledge that has been generated.

- Try 360 degree evaluation or assessment - each student asks another three students specific questions about their experience of working together. Encourage students to explore how they judge their success.
- Go back to expectation at the beginning for the course. Would students change them if starting again? To what extent have their expectations been met and why?
- Would the group have worked differently if they had also physically met. If so, in what way.

Technology: Exploring of the technology in use:

- If the group was designing an online environment what would they need?
- What one new feature in the technology would have helped with learning?
- How did they succeed in spite of a barrier created by the technology?

Reflections: Encouraging reflection on the overall experience:

- Ask students to review one of their own messages and rework it how they would like it to appear now
- Try asking for examples of various concepts to be picked out, or summaries or further conclusions to be drawn from earlier e-tivities.
- Ask for action plans, offer some structure and feedback
- Ask for personal development plans, offer some structure and feedback
- Give masses of feedback and constructive criticism. Encourage students to offer this to each other too.
- Ask individuals and groups to offer a 'footprint' (a piece of knowledge, new idea, special insight) to be offered to others starting the course afresh. Ask groups to agree the footprint statement between them.
- Ask students to review all posted messages and to comment on what helped to move the discussion along and what did not.
- Ask students to comment on the roles they each adopted
- Ask students to articulate the emotions they felt at various points in the course, and why

Handout 6

Time

Time Estimates

By far the commonest, and maybe the most important question, anyone ever asks me is, "How much time will preparing and running e-tivities take?". Here are my estimates.

2. *Staff Time*

2.1 E-moderators.

- 2.1.1 Think out the e-tivity, explore it with others and plan it well in advance. Estimate: 3 hours for the 1st time, 1 hour 2nd and subsequent times.
- 2.1.2 If you plan to issue resources that are copyrighted, leave time to get permission. Avoid needing time on this if you can.
- 2.1.3 Write, quality check and put instructional messages in place online. Estimate: 2 hours 1st time, 1 hour 2nd and subsequent times. Pilot by asking others to read instructions and respond 1 hour.
- 2.1.4 Set up the bulletin board and resources, 1 hour 1st time, half an hour after that
- 2.1.5 Respond to any e mails and questions from students or groups. .5 hour.
- 2.1.6 Brief any team leaders if necessary. .5 hour
- 2.1.7 E-moderate the e-tivity- 2-3 hours per week
- 2.1.8 Summarise & plenarise, extra 1-2 hours to close off
- 2.1.9 Evaluation & feed forward to next time – 1 hour

2.2 Technical Support –

- 2.2.1 depends on platform and E-moderators' experience but may need 1-2 hours per e-tivity especially at 1.1.3 and 1.1.4 and for the first time
- 2.2.2 provide technical support and help to students as necessary, 2 hours if students are inexperienced, much less at stages 3-5.

3. *Student Time*

- 3.1 Read instructional message, discuss online with other students or e-moderator if necessary, .75 of an hour
- 3.2 Take part, 2-3 hours per week, more if fully collaborative
- 3.3 Explore, reflect, apply ideas, knowledge & understanding, 2 hours per week
- 3.4 Read and use summary 1–2 hours

Very discursive e-tivities such as those sometimes used in social sciences or humanities courses may need longer for e-moderators and e-tivities. Slow bulletin boards and forums may add to operational times.

Running E-tivity plenaries

Weaving, archiving and summarising are key tasks for e-moderators and add much value to e-tivities. Students can also usefully acquire and contribute these skills. Or the role of summariser can usefully be taken by 2 or 3 people working collaboratively (however this takes up more time). Whoever undertakes the summary should always invite comment on the sufficiency and interpretation by the original contributors.

Weaving

Here is an example of clever 'weaving' of contributions, using quotes from six different messages during an online discussion about the e-moderator's role and dominant and lurking students. The summariser and weaver is JS and his contributions are in italics.

D said "we need to be in the conference regularly as a lot of damage can be done if you weren't there at the 'bud-nipping' stage"

I'd go along with that one but bearing in mind A's point that

"There do have to be parameters otherwise those who can only spend minimum time feel disadvantaged by others who become addicts!"

and a moderator should not need to become an addict to do the job well.

"So, I think I'll be more assertive this time round" (*A's message*)

Yes, be assertive (when appropriate !) even if

"the flaming has broken out, not between the combatants, but against the poor old e-moderator when he or she has intervened to break it up!" (*H's message*)

not looking forward to that one coming my way. Hopefully, however, we will generally be in a position to

"let students get on with discussions if these seem productive" (*P's message*)

and as C says:

"it actually sounds fun"

Summarising

The purpose of **Summarising** is:

- To weave and acknowledge the variety of ideas and contributions
- To refocus discussion and activity when postings are too numerous. Summarise after each 20 messages, at a pre-agreed time or at regular intervals, e.g. every 3 days. In a large or busy e-tivity, this can be done daily.
To refocus discussion and activity when postings have strayed from the topic.

- To refocus discussion and promote activity when e-tivities are going well
- To refocus discussion and revive activity when postings are flagging.
 - To signal closure of the e-tivity.
 - To take the outcomes of an e-tivity to present or work on offline
 - To provide fresh starting points for broadening and deepening discussion.
- To remind students of the journey they have travelled
- To reinforce and 'imprint' new information and knowledge
- To provide a 'spark' for a new e-tivity
- To provide a 'footprint' as a spark for a new group
-

Archiving

Archiving means removing messages to a different place in the online platform, preferably still easily retrievable by students. Archives help enormously to prevent e-tivity message boards and conferences becoming overwhelming, particularly for newcomers and at Stages 1 and 2. The e-moderator should indicate to students how to find and look at the archived discussions, if they wish to.

Archiving is excellent as a way of filing away sets of discussions for later use or as reference or research material, for others who want to revisit the discussions. When you archive, it's ethical to make it clear how messages may later be used, and seek permission of the contributors.

Archive:

- To facilitate storage and retrieval.
- When postings are too numerous to effectively handle
- If there are many students coming in, or some coming in late
- When the discussion activity is concluded and students have a satisfactory summary
 - To facilitate comparison between discussion themes.

