# Some Lessons Learned in Online Teaching

**English Now!, Now Online**
**March 24, 2020**

# The goals: content delivery + good interactions

An article in Homonym, by Dr. Tannis Morgan (found via MCAEL) summarizes very simply the main goals of online learning:

- **Student – content:** How will you get content to students in the easiest and most accessible way? How will students engage with that content?
- **Instructor-student interaction:** How will you as an instructor feasibly communicate with your students? And how will they communicate with you?
- **Student-student interaction:** How will students communicate with each other and work together?

"… maintain the flow you already have established. You will need to remind students what that flow is: readings by Friday, summaries by Monday, etc. For example, if you teach on Tuesdays, start your week with a communication email on Tuesdays. Tell students where the content for that week is, what needs to be accomplished, and how you will do that as a class."

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# Some things will be different, but many things will remain the same

**Continue to:**

- Start your class in a friendly way with some general conversation (Linda L. used to call this "catch up conversation". This is the time to share about the TV shows you watched the night before or the spring cleaning that you accomplished over the weekend.)
- Tell students what your expectations are so that they come to class prepared. What should they bring to class? What do you expect in terms of their participation?
- Aim for equal participation in class conversations. Invite participation as you normally would.
- Begin wrapping up group classes 10-15 minutes before class is scheduled to end - summarize key points and assign homework.
- **For great advice on teaching online, watch Anna's informative video!**

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# Flipped Classroom: key to success online!

In a flipped classroom, students "preview content home and then practice at school" (For more information, see this from Teachthought)

**Why is this called "flipped"?**

- Students need to get used to the idea that class time is intended to process information that they will spend time learning outside of class
- Homework should help students to prepare for classroom discussions
- Provide specific questions to think about for discussion next time: email students after class or write in the chat box or on the Zoom white board at the end of class
- For grammar practice at home, you may want students to get a self-paced book, such as Murphy's *English Grammar in Use*

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# Ideas for the Flipped Classroom

**Longer reading assignments that carry over week to week:**
Choose a  level-appropriate book to read as a class and assign a chapter to read each week.
(If necessary, preview vocabulary together. )

**Example:** Jennifer's class is reading and discussing *Better*, by Atul Gawande.
You can also have them read an article from Washington Post, listen to/read an
NPR story or a TED Talk.

**Students must come to class prepared to:**
- share new vocabulary words that <u>they</u> want to practice
- share responses to discussion questions given to them in advance

**For morning classes using standard textbooks**, try assigning large readings
for homework and discussing them in class. You can also have them prepare talks based on
the writing section assignments.

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# Recommendations for starting well

**General settings**

- Favorites or bookmarks in your browser so you will be ready to share material
- Do not disturb setting to prevent popups
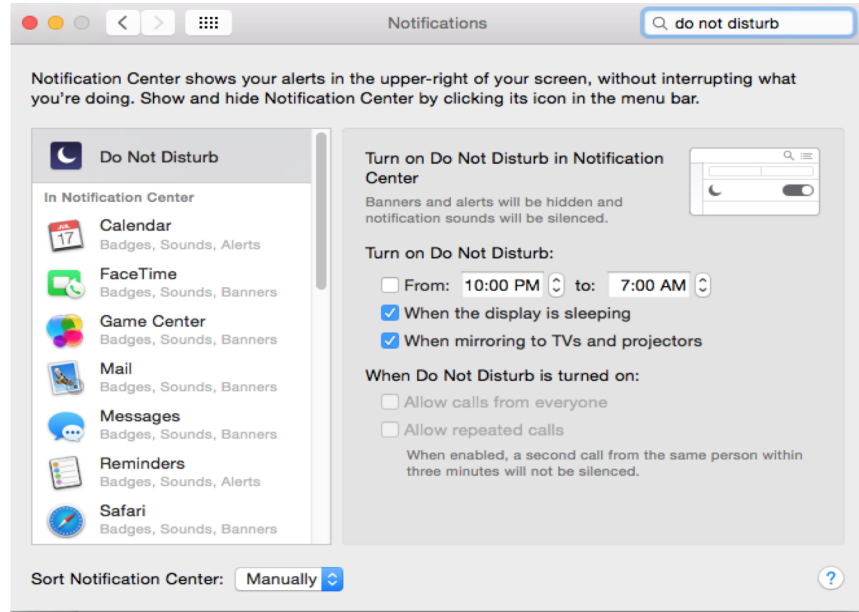


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# Recommendations for starting well

**Useful Zoom tools to introduce to your students before class**

- **Speaker view** - gallery works well for conversations per Nancy W

- **chat** - share vocabulary words, cut and paste web links so students can view them individually during the lesson

- **mute button** - You can control  muting as the host and each participant can control their own mute button. Muting "allows people to rustle papers, clear their throats, and tap on the table without disturbing others...It's important to always use people's names when asking questions on video conference because open ended questions on video often will not get answered because of the fear of unmuting, FOUM." - Erin Argyle Barnes

- **Virtual backgrounds** - add a fun scene so that people aren't distracted by whatever is in the room

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# Recommendations - Content

**Some of the web sites that teachers are recommending:**

- https://breakingnewsenglish.com/ Current events stories - includes mini-lessons with answers and audio available in 5 speeds
- Englishpage.com Grammar review and exercises on many topics - great for students to reference independently or use in class
- Readworks.org Free resource for K-12 educators with readings searchable by grade/Lexile level/topic
- https://learningenglish.voanews.com/ - many short new stories with slowed-down listening
- NPR.org  - many stories have transcripts that students can view while listening together
- ted.com - TED talks have transcripts that students can view while listening

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# Recommendations - Content

**Standard textbooks - discovering what works best for online learning. You may find that some books transition better than others to this new format.**

- **American Headway** - has audio and video that can be downloaded and played during class.  Bryce recommends downloading American Headway audio to itunes
- **Keynote** - Linda Chang is using Keynote online resources
- **Grammar Explorer -** Nancy W. is using Grammar Explorer 3 to go through exercises as she did in class. Online resources are available, but not easily accessed with an ipad.
- **World Explorer**- Peggy P. is using World Explorer
- **Top Notch** - Beth has been using the book and online resources

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# Keeping it simple - Teacher tips

"If everyone can hear and see each other, and everyone knows how to express their opinions at the right time, you'll be 90% of the way to a great video meeting." - Erin Barnes, Medium.com

The technology may not always work the way you want it to - be creative with workarounds. Example - Beth had difficulty playing audio through her ipad, so she used her phone alongside her ipad (like a CD player in the classroom!)

Tip from Michelle: I asked everyone to mute their screen/ turn off video when we went on break.  Meanwhile, I shared a screen that had a timer on it so we'd come back at the same time and the meeting could continue to run.  Super easy to use: http://ipadstopwatch.com/timer-fullscreen.html

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