

Hypothesis: An Emerging Perfect Match for Peralta

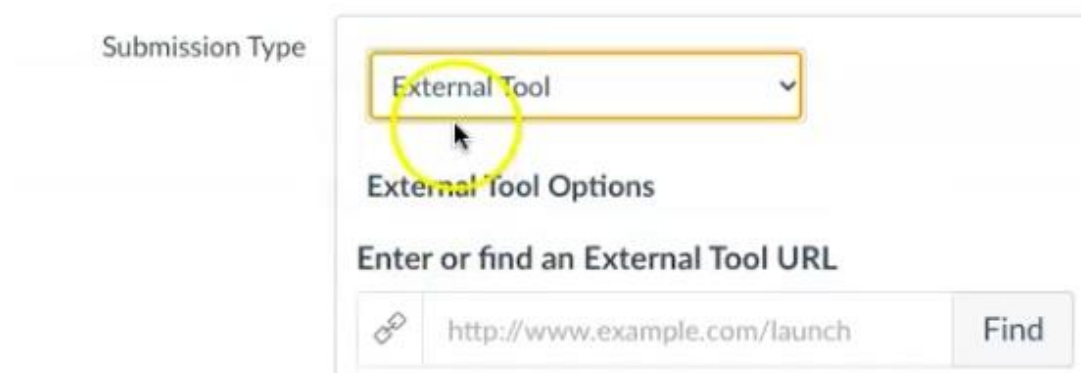
Social platforms are highly normalized in today's society. It seems that almost everything can be done “with friends”. Since many students are so immersed in this practice, it is natural that adding a social element to learning will likely increase engagement. Hypothesis is an emerging tool that adds social connection and sharing capabilities to reading tasks. In the Peralta District, a community college district in Oakland, CA, the technology team has invested in a site license for the application that allows a seamless integration into Canvas. However, after three years of purchasing the license, the District has garnered very little faculty interest in actually using the program. The few professors using the tool are on a campaign to convince us colleagues to begin using the tool so that our district will not retire the app. My colleague in the ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) department has recruited me to join the ranks. I hope to recruit more faculty in the English department after learning the tool. This paper marks my first foray into using Hypothesis and this project, documenting my initial use of the program. Below, I will detail what I have discovered thus far.

Learning Potential: Features and Characteristics

Hypothesis is a social annotation tool that essentially allows students to read together. It works great for asynchronous learning environments because it provides a way for instructors to determine if students are reading the required texts. It is also a way to ensure that students are reading in the world that makes all types of summaries available to them when it's time to write essays. A few of the features in Hypothesis include the public annotation tool that allows students to make an annotation that is visible to the class. Hypothesis also includes a tagging feature that allows users to make their annotation categorizable. This feature is helpful for teachers desiring to grade student annotations by category such as "questions" or "insights".

How to Operate Hypothesis

When designing a new assignment in the LMS version of Hypothesis, begin with the rubric design first. Without this step, the rubric will not be able to be populated later. Create a new assignment. Name the assignment first before editing and adding instructions. Then, add the rubric already created beforehand. Select “Submission Type”, then “External Tool: Hypothesis”.




The screenshot shows a form titled "Submission Type". A dropdown menu is open, displaying "External Tool" with a downward arrow. Below the dropdown, the text "External Tool Options" is visible. Underneath that, the instruction "Enter or find an External Tool URL" is present. At the bottom, there is a text input field containing the URL "http://www.example.com/launch" and a "Find" button to its right. A yellow circle highlights the "External Tool" dropdown menu.

Select "PDF from Google Drive". A note here about selecting a PDF from Google Drive is to upload your accessible PDF to Google Drive first, which is the easiest way to add documents into Canvas. Also, ensure your PDF is accessible before uploading it to Google drive. Adobe has an accessibility checker available for this purpose. Once you have selected your document in Google Drive, then click “Continue” and “Hypothesis” again. Be sure to select the “Load in New Window” option to create a smoother user experience for students.

External Tool Options

Enter or find an External Tool URL



☒ Load This Tool In A New Tab

After you have integrated Hypothesis into your assignment click "Save". It is important to create a Page with clear instructions detailing your expectations for the annotations. Also provide students with tips on how to effectively use the App. Below is an example of how to provide student navigation tips:

- Click “Annotate” for class or “Highlight” to add a personal note.
- Add your comment.
- When it’s time to respond to someone else’s comment, you may hover over a selected annotation to see the corresponding passage that aligns with the annotation.
- Find an annotation that does not yet have a reply to add your own response.

How Hypothesis Can Be Used in Instruction

Comprehensive reading skills is an important foundation for exemplary writing skills. Since reading is assigned each week in our literature courses, using a social annotation tool is a good way to assess whether or not students are completing the weekly reading. Faculty may assign a Hypothesis annotation once per week or bi-weekly. The frequency is not as important as the consistency in practice. Let students know how often they will use the app so that they can learn the flow of the course. If it is used periodically throughout the course, it may prove to be a great tool to supplement quizzes or to offer instead of quizzes. An annotation assignment may

also be a great first step to each essay assignment, having students annotate model essays in perfect MLA format in comparison to essays with errors. Additionally, an Hypothesis assignment may be used to teach students how to conduct peer review. You may have students work in pairs to annotate each other's drafts.

Tips for grading an Hypothesis assignment

Grade this submission similar to the way you would grade a Discussion Forum assignment. Reply to students with feedback using the "Comments" box. If you have more than 20 students, alternate responding to at least eight directly onto the annotated draft, if a weekly assignment. For the rest of your students, post comments in the Speed Grader comments box, and forgo posting a reply to their annotation. The key is to make sure that each student feels "seen" in the annotation process. For those whose annotations to which you reply, add more substantive feedback about how their annotation adds to the classwide conversation. This practice lets students know that you are in the social experience of reading with them, too. For students to which you're responding via Speed Grader, use the copy/paste function within Hypothesis to copy a portion of their annotation that you would like to celebrate. Here, you can add a short note such as "Great addition to the conversation" after the pasted excerpt of their annotation.

Rationale and Strategy: Pairing Hypothesis and Literature

Among the academic disciplines, courses within the Humanities offer the most ready applications to annotating reading for greater understanding. It is probably the most apparent use of the technology. However, it could also be used in other disciplines such as the STEM disciplines, especially in courses requiring laboratory reports or research from academic journal articles. I chose to match Hypothesis with a reading for my literature course because I wanted to

ensure that students were reading. They will use the notes from their readings to begin working on a literary analysis essay due in two weeks. Using this tool will enable students to get a headstart on their analysis and on gathering quotes to summarize and paraphrase within their analysis.

References

In progress

[Link to presentation](#)