Title: Using OERs and e-tivities to create a collaborative, mobile friendly, learner-centred course

Creators: Littlemore, K. and Farmer, R.


Version: Presented version

http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/5776/
Using OERs and e-tivities to create a collaborative, mobile friendly, learner-centred course.

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The University of Northampton

ALT-C 2013, Paper ID #372
Study skills for academic success

• The original course
• The aims and objectives of the *Study Skills for Academic Success* course
• Target audience
• Experiences of delivering the face-to-face course
Why create an online course?

- Meeting increasing demand
- Creating a sustainable, scalable course
- Flexible delivery
- Build IT competence/confidence of learners
- Begin to create more autonomous learners
The course re-design process

- The CAIeRO process
- Re-use rather than creation of learning materials
- Focus on task, not content
- Constructive alignment
- Design with openness in mind
- Create e-tivities
Course map

http://popplet.com/app/#/848543
Delivering the new course

- Experience and perceptions of staff delivering the new course:
  - “It was certainly a new challenge delivering a module online but I really enjoyed it and feel more confident about the next module.”
  - “I was worried that I wouldn’t have the same rapport with the students but that wasn’t the case at all and the cohort bonded very well.”
Student perceptions

• **Positives:**
  • “... it helped me learn about how to reference properly, and what I need to do in order to improve on any piece of academic work”.
  • “Very flexible approach which was great. Face to face sessions were very well delivered ...”
  • “I felt well supported, there was always help when needed!”
Student perceptions

• Negatives:
  • “A couple of the exercises were not suitable.”
  • “Topic choices felt a bit random.”
Student feedback

What was your prior experience of online learning?

- I am a regular online learner.
- I have taken one or two online courses before.
- I've taken a few online courses before
- I've never taken an online course before
Student feedback

What do you think about this type of blended course?

- I thought that the mix between online activities and face-to-face sessions was just right.
- I would have preferred fewer online activities and more face-to-face sessions.
- I would have preferred it if the course was entirely online.
Student feedback

If there were no face-to-face sessions, what do you think your experience would have been?

- I did enjoy the face-to-face sessions, but it would have been more convenient for me if the course was all online.
- I would probably have completed the course, but it wouldn't have been as enjoyable.
- The face-to-face sessions kept me going, and I don't think that I would have completed the course without them.
Student feedback

100% of students agreed that:

“Online learning is good because it means that I can fit in my learning around my work and/or family commitments.”

and

“Online learning is bad because I can't easily ask questions when I’m stuck.”
Student feedback

0% of students agreed that:

“Online learning is good because it means that I don't have to attend lectures.”

and

“Online learning is bad because it means that I have to spend too much time sitting in front of a computer.”
Student feedback

How would you rate the SSAS course? (%)

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Disappointing
- Poor
- Dreadful

0 20 40 60
Student feedback

Did you feel that the course was clear and well structured? (%)

- It was always clear
- It was mostly clear
- Some activities were clear
- I got lost quite a bit
- I was lost a lot of the time
- I rarely knew what was happening

Did you feel that the course was clear and well...
Success factors

• Clear focus on the objective from the outset
• Structure provided by CAIeRO process
• Structure provided by e-tivity template
• Focus on task design, not content creation
• Excellent team dynamic
• Realistic allocation of time and resources
• Good level of technical competence and support within the team
Challenges & lessons learned

• **Challenge:** Recreating the experience of the face-to-face sessions, which the students felt was important, in a purely online course.

• **Challenge:** Ensuring students feel that they can access help when they need it.

• **Lesson:** Design for mobile learning needs to be considered from the outset – design one version of the course that looks good on desktops and mobiles.
# Mobile unfriendly e-tivity (desktop)

## E-tivity 2.1

**Introducing critical thinking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To introduce you to the subject of critical thinking.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Before you do anything else, use the link below to access your blog. Then create a new post and answer the following questions:
   a. What do you understand by the term ‘critical thinking’?
   b. What do you understand by the term ‘argument’?
   You should answer both questions in the same post; your responses do not need to be more than 100 words long.
   Please note that although your blog is individual, it can be seen by other members of the group. Feel free to look at what other people have written, and add comments if you like.

2. Now watch the following short videos:

   **Critical Thinking Part 1: A Valuable Argument**
   - Duration: 2 min 1 sec
   - Views: 255
   - Added: 11/12/11
   - YouTube URL: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=925p0y52n3c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=925p0y52n3c)

   **Critical Thinking Part 2: Broken Logic**
   - Duration: 2 min 1 sec
   - Views: 255
   - Added: 11/12/11
   - YouTube URL: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=925p0y52n3c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=925p0y52n3c)
Mobile unfriendly e-tivity (mobile)
Mobile friendly e-tivity (desktop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E-tivity 2.1 (iOS Compatible Version)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>To introduce you to the subject of critical thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Before you do anything else, use the blog link at the bottom of the page to access your blog, then create a new post and answer the following questions: (a) What do you understand by the term ‘critical thinking’? (b) What do you understand by the term ‘argument’? You should answer both questions in the same post, and your responses do not need to be more than 100 words long. Please note that although your blog is individual, it can be seen by other members of the group. Feel free to look at what other people have written, and add comments if you like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Now watch the following short videos:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Video" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking Video - 1 of 6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Part 1: A Valuable Argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop/laptop users - click on the link above to view the video (opens in new window)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton/Blackboard Mobile Learner users - video opens automatically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Video" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking Video - 2 of 6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Part 2: Broken Logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop/laptop users - click on the link above to view the video (opens in new window)</td>
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<td>Northampton/Blackboard Mobile Learner users - video opens automatically</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Mobile friendly e-tivity (mobile)

Task

09:59AM  September 5, 2013

1. Before you do anything else, use the blog link at the bottom of the page to access your blog, then create a new post and answer the following questions: (a) What do you understand by the term 'critical thinking'? (b) What do you understand by the term 'argument'? You should answer both questions in the same post, and your responses do not need to be more than 100 words long. Please note that although your blog is individual, it can be seen by other members of the group. Feel free to look at what other people have written, and add comments if you like.

2. Now watch the following short videos:
Course screenshots
Course screenshots
Course screenshots

E-tivity 3.1

Recognising an argument

Purpose
To recognise an argument and identify examples of critical thinking within a piece of text.

Task
1. Watch this video for an overview on critical reading:
   - Introduction to the Argument Essay
   - Questions (2/2) Video screenshot
   - YouTube link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Jc13YlFt30

2. Now have a look at this document:
   - Distinguishing Facts, Opinions and Arguments
   - Distinguishing Facts from Opinions

3. Read the Daily Mail article below and answer the following questions:
   a. What is the author’s conclusion? What reasons are given to support it?
   b. How could you strengthen or weaken their argument?
Course screenshots
Course screenshots

**E-tivity 6.1**

**Evaluation of resources to enhance academic writing**

**Purpose**
To compare and contrast the benefits of 3 resources designed to help students with their academic writing.

**Task**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>a. Developing good academic practices</td>
<td>A clear, well-structured resource that enables students to identify the key aspects of good academic writing and use these for improvement by picking keywords.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>b. Checklist for improving good academic writing</td>
<td>An easy-to-use tool that students can use to identify areas for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>c. English Composition I</td>
<td>Students can improve their writing skills by following the structured approach presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>d. Key skills for successful study</td>
<td>A comprehensive guide that covers essential skills needed for success at university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>e. The short video clip at the top of this e-tivity</td>
<td>Enhances engagement and provides visual examples.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E-tivity 8.1

E-tivity 8.1: Sustaining an Argument 1

It's wrong and plainly wrong, but can you defend the "Indefensible"?

"It takes a strong will to swim against the current.
Even a dead one can float with it."  - John Crowe

Purpose

To sustain an argument supported by at least 3 pieces of evidence.

Task

1. Choose a topic from our list of "Indefensible" topics (come up with your own, but make sure you check with your tutor (1's)).
2. Then film a video or make a podcast and argue for 30 seconds to a minute making a case for defending the "Indefensible". Arguments should be based on at least 3 items of evidence. Please find instructions on uploading a video below. There is also a useful guide on formulating an argument and example videos in the media gallery.
3. List of topics:
   a. "Hot food should be allowed in all public libraries."
   b. "The X-factor is the best thing to have happened to the music industry."
   c. "Women don't belong in education."
   d. "Football should be banned."
   e. "The arts shouldn't receive any funding."
   f. "Books are a dead technology."
Course screenshots

10. Completing your essay

Assignment
You need to select one of the following essay questions:

1) How important are communication skills when working in the NHS?
2) Who has primary responsibility for the education of the child?
3) Should there be a minimum legal age to drink in the UK?
The word limit is 2,000 words and you need to include a reference list at the end of the essay.

E-Activity 10.1: Marking an Essay

Purpose
To enable you to judge two essays through the lens of a tutor

Task
You will read Essay A and Essay B and mark each essay using Feedback Form Essay A and Feedback Form Essay B.

Reflection and feedback
If you have any thoughts regarding this activity please add them to our discussion list.
Course screenshots
Course screenshots
Course screenshots
Future plans

• Phase 1: Blended course (completed)
• Phase 2: Fully online course (Oct. 2014)
• Phase 3: Internally available SOOC (Jan. 2014)
• Phase 4: Full external SOOC (Sept. 2014)
Useful links & further reading

- Salmon, G., *Foresight and Choices for Learning Futures*: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fPV7UNv5tU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fPV7UNv5tU)
- Salmon, G., *E-Moderating: The Key to Online Teaching and Learning*, Abingdon, Routledge
- University of Northampton, CAiReO – Background and Description: [https://nile.northampton.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/pid-481278-dt-content-rid-151705_1/xid-151705_1](https://nile.northampton.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/pid-481278-dt-content-rid-151705_1/xid-151705_1)
- University of Northampton, CAiReO Planner: [https://nile.northampton.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/pid-481278-dt-content-rid-1284152_1/xid-1284152_1](https://nile.northampton.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/pid-481278-dt-content-rid-1284152_1/xid-1284152_1)
- University of Northampton, The Staff Experience of CAiReO: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvLRHJsjDSc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvLRHJsjDSc)
- University of Northampton, The Student Experience of CAiReO: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fss6OYrhanQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fss6OYrhanQ)