

Best Practices: Videoconferencing



What is videoconferencing?

It is the use of two-way audio and video equipment allowing people at different locations to interact in real-time.

Why do we use videoconferencing?

- **Engage Students:** Students are either directly interacting or presenting during the VC, or they are receiving content from experts with greater resources than most classroom teachers have available.
- **Variety of Opportunities:** Programs are available for all content areas and grade levels from a variety of providers. Collaborations between schools are only limited by our imaginations; if you can think it, you can share it through videoconferencing.
- **Encourage Higher Level Thinking:** Many VC opportunities require students to analyze or synthesize information, and are a wonderful opportunity to showcase student creativity and presentation skills.
- **Global Citizens:** Videoconferencing introduces students to ideas and people they may not usually encounter during their lives. They are able to experience similar activities from a different view point.

Lessons Learned

- Communicate with your technology department to arrange a test call prior to your event.
- Is there a fee? Make payment arrangements prior to scheduling your videoconference.
- Before you begin your conference show a map of the sites involved and perform a “roll call” allowing each site to introduce themselves
- Practice your presentation – fluent, clear speaking voices
- Communicate your expectations to the far site before and during the conference
- Provide opportunities for interaction during your presentation
- Use motion with caution – limit hand gestures and movement
- Use document cameras or PCs for visual aides whenever possible
- Be mindful of camera and microphone placement
- Recommendations for visual aides:
 - Zoom in on physical object
 - Use 24-36 point simple fonts
 - Use contrasting colors – such as black background, white font
 - Use animation and video with caution
 - Maximum of 4 lines per slide in Power Points
 - Avoid red, orange, and pink – these colors “bleed” on video
 - Position paper “landscape” instead of “portrait”
 - Leave a border around your slides or documents (the edges are cut off)
- Don’t leave the audience looking at a document camera or PC too long
- Don’t carry on side conversations or interrupt the speaker
- Mute your mic when there are noise distractions, or if your site is not speaking at the time

Resources & More Articles About Blogging

[Technology Turns Students into Educators in Distance Learning Program](#)

More Information

[Poster Tips pdf](#)

[Collaborative Videoconference Presentation Tips](#)

“This was right on with what students were learning in Science-Habitats. I feel as though my students have a better understanding of Habitats due to this project. THANKS!”

From a teacher evaluation of Habitat Hunt

“It was something different to get the kids out of a textbook,” says a Kyle ES teacher, “and I think it was really effective.”