

Jammin' Right Along: Using Google Jamboard to Engage Students Online
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Transcript

Introduction

(Kayla Gourlay speaks):

Hello and welcome to our Innovations in Teaching & Learning On-Demand presentation, titled *Jammin' Right Along: Using Google Jamboard to Engage Students Online*.

My name is Kayla Gourlay and I'm a Teaching & Learning Specialist for the George Mason University Libraries' Teaching & Learning Team. I also teach in the UNIV Courses & Programs department.

(David Lemmons speaks):

Hi, I'm David Lemmons, the Instruction Coordinator for the University Libraries' Teaching & Learning Team and I also teach in the Honors College.

We're here today to tell you about our experience with Google Jamboard, a collaborative, online whiteboard which presents an alternative to both the Zoom and Blackboard Collaborate whiteboard tools.

(Kayla Gourlay speaks):

We will be showing you how we've used Jamboards, particularly during the pandemic when we've been teaching online, as well as some different activities and strategies for engaging students. This includes concept mapping, brainstorming sessions, reflections, and emotional check-ins. We will provide our whiteboard templates and links for these activities, in our associated presentation materials, along with our captioning. We hope that you can use these materials in your own meetings, presentations, and hopefully classes.

Concept Mapping (Kayla Gourlay speaks)

The first Jamboard activity we're going to talk about is concept mapping. A concept map is a tool that helps students brainstorm what they know about a topic, what they don't know, any questions they have, what keywords they might use, and more. This helps them to organize their ideas and create new connections, which in turn helps students navigate the research process more seamlessly. Unsurprisingly, we're big fans of concept mapping in the Libraries.

You can use a variety of tools to help students create their concept maps, including PowerPoint. Another great option is to use a digital whiteboard tool, such as a Jamboard. Let's see how this works. (Jamboard shown on the screen):

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/13TCL4YYDPd0pHdRFW-FcniBx5Frp32Me5fs3x2po6cw/edit?usp=sharing>

Here's an example of a concept map in Jamboard. In the middle bubble, we have our topic: the role of social media in organizing political movements. Then we have a bunch of different bubbles filled with ideas and questions that students came up with as areas they'd like to explore. Your students can use "stickies" (found on the left-hand menu) to add their ideas, thoughts, and questions to the map. They can also add a circle and then add a text box to fill the circle in with their ideas. You can do this concept map brainstorming as a big group during class, or you can separate students into smaller breakout groups and give them different topics on which to create a map. Here we have an example of a Jamboard where each group gets its own slide, where they can create their concept map collaboratively. So for example, here we have group 1 and they can put their topic in this middle circle or bubble and go ahead and get started. And so on and so forth, you can create a separate Jamboard tab or slide for each group to fill in their content.

An additional option which works well when students have their own research topics or questions, is to create individual Jamboard tabs or slides for each student, where they can make their own concept maps. So, for example, we have a slide or tab here where student number 1 can claim this slide. They can go ahead and populate it with their name and they can continue to fill out the Jamboard with their topic and create a concept map from there, in whatever way feels best to them. And we have student two on the next tab and so on and so forth.

This is a great option that we don't get with the whiteboards on Zoom or BlackBoard Collaborate, because those only allow you to share one whiteboard screen at a time where students cannot work individually or in groups. This is also a great option if you're interested in having your students do peer-review or if you want to keep a record of their individual maps for assessment purposes later on.

Brainstorming (David Lemmons speaks)

So now that we've talked about concept mapping, let's talk about brainstorming. Jamboards are a great tool for facilitating brainstorming sessions with your students. By giving your students a little bit of time during a live session, you can allow them to take some ownership and engage with the material you want to present.

So, when we talk about brainstorming sessions, we're talking about asking students an open-ended question. For example, you could add a broad research question to a Jamboard and ask students to brainstorm ways that a researcher might narrow that question. Because Jamboards

are anonymous, this helps to lower barriers to entry for students who might be less willing to speak up during the class itself.

Let's take a look at how this works on Jamboard.

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1pQ6rmCMJqA7w8VLMShWzIzPy1Fc0nlpMroRfM5ILBaA/edit?usp=sharing>

So as you can see, in this first example, we're asking an open-ended question at the top of the screen and asking students to add their thoughts underneath. As students add their thoughts, I'd recommend you start moving the stickies around: you can either group them thematically or scatter them around like so, or you could group them together like these two that are both about politics.

So here in the second example, we've added the question to the middle of the screen. I also used the shape tool to add a square around the text to stop students from putting their post-its over the text.

Finally, in the third example I wanted to show a way to have students be more organized in where they add their thoughts: as you can see, this is the same prompt as the second question, but I added stickies with the word "Idea" in them. Then you could ask students to edit these stickies: in this case, you may want to do something like give the stickies numbers and ask students to claim them or group them by color.

Reflections (David Lemmons speaks)

Similarly to brainstorming, reflections are another great way to use Jamboards in your class. This is particularly where the anonymous nature of Jamboards comes in handy.

In a reflection, you once again would want to ask students to answer an open-ended question. However, this time the questions might be about a student's thoughts or experiences. For example, "What's one thing you learned today that you're going to take with you?" or "How does research make you feel?" Giving students a bit of time to answer these questions anonymously can also build community in your virtual classroom, as we often find that students will have similar answers to each other.

Let's see what this can look like on Jamboard.

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1sPdl-2eiq1zzQYzv7S1fPych97tYmQFWoUP6W5udoFU/edit?usp=sharing>

So, this is an example of a two-column reflection. On Jamboard, you can easily draw a straight line using the pen tool by clicking on the pen tool, then holding down the shift key, and then drawing your line. That's what I used here to divide this into these two columns, one talking about "what's one thing you learned today that you're going to take with you" and the other, "what's one thing you still have a question about." For the record, the two things I wrote under "what's one thing you still have a question about" will be answered at the end of this presentation. (Note: the two stickies read "how can we contact you?" and "will these templates be available for us to use?")

This next one is a three-column check-in that asks students how they feel about research, which was designed to be used after a library instruction class. For this one, instead of drawing the lines directly in Jamboard, I used Canva to design a background and uploaded it as an image. And you can see here that students chose to use the pen to mark where they feel.

Check-Ins (Kayla Gourlay speaks)

The last activity we'll talk about is check-ins. Jamboards present an excellent opportunity for checking in with your students or participants about what they might be feeling, thinking, and experiencing. This is something we've found especially important during the pandemic, as students have lots of thoughts and feelings that may affect the way they engage and interact with others in the classroom.

You can use check-ins in a few different ways. One way is to gauge how students are feeling emotionally or psychologically by asking how their weeks are going, or what's going on at school or at home. This is a great activity to do at the beginning or end of class. Here's an example. (Jamboard shown on the screen): <https://jamboard.google.com/d/15oF59VR5X8zTZa-HMlhV0rHOVA9Tilg0LX2MS-590Kg/edit?usp=sharing>

On this Jamboard, we have a prompting question asking students how they are doing. They can pick a sticky note, put it in the column that represents how they're doing, and then add a comment expanding on their answer. This can also be done as a poll in Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate, but neither of these platforms allow students to add anonymous comments. They can only vote. This Jamboard allows them to elaborate on how they're feeling, while maintaining their anonymity. If you want to have a more open-ended prompt, you could ask your students to fill the screen with one word that describes how they're feeling that day.

Check-ins can also be used to achieve consensus as a class, like we see in this example. You can ask your students whether or not they agree with something. Or maybe you have a tentative topic or assignment on your syllabus for the week, and you want to know whether or not they actually want to cover it then, or come back to it later in the course. The check-in seen on this

screen is a great way to get a quick, cumulative “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” for a particular question or idea.

Check-ins can also be used to gauge how well students understand a particular topic, or how comfortable they are with certain course material. For example, you might introduce a topic or issue, discuss it as a class, and then check-in with your students for a quick, formative assessment to see how comfortable they are with that material. On this Jamboard, we have columns where students can indicate their understanding using a scale. One finger up means they don't understand or they're completely lost. Two fingers mean they sort of understand but they still have lots of questions and they may need to go over everything again. Three fingers indicates proficiency, but students might still have questions or need to learn more, and so on and so forth. Students can use stick notes to indicate where they fall on the scale, or as seen in this example, they can draw stars, or check marks or even smiley faces under a given column to let you know how well they understand the material you've gone over that day in class.

Conclusion

(Kayla Gourlay speaks):

While we demonstrated a few different activities in this presentation, there's really no limit to what you can do on Jamboard. You could allow students to sketch their understanding of concepts or annotate sources with different colored pens or sticky notes. You could also have collaborative boards for your students to ask questions or solve problems. There are so many different options and ways to play around with this tool. And because it's not as static as Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate whiteboards (where you can only share one whiteboard and one screen at a time), students have the opportunity for more independent and continued work with Google Jamboard.

(David Lemmons speaks):

And we hope this presentation has been helpful to you! Our templates are linked at go.gmu.edu/jammin - feel free to use them in your own work. And thanks so much for watching! Our emails are on the screen now – dlemmons@gmu.edu and kmorrow7@gmu.edu. We would love to hear from you!