

Flipgrid: Creating Video Blogs to Build Fluency

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Introduction

Assigning video blogs as an assignment is a great way to give students a chance to practice language outside the classroom in a meaningful way. Creating these opportunities gives students a chance to improve their fluency and confidence. There are degrees of fluency and all levels of proficiency can have some range of fluency (Brown, 2004). Even learners with a low proficiency respond well to meaning-focused activities compared to more formal structured ones (Duff, 2014). Using Flipgrid to make video blogs is a somewhat familiar tool among the various digital platforms that can be incorporated into a course allowing students to interact with each other and practice their language skills.

Quick Guide

- **Keywords:** Flipgrid, vlog, oral fluency
- **Learner English level:** Intermediate and above
- **Learner maturity:** Higher education
- **Preparation time:** Initially 10-20 minutes
- **Activity time:** 3-5 minutes per students
- **Materials:** Flipgrid app, speaking prompts (Appendix 1), rubric (Appendix 2), survey questions (Appendix 3), sample Flipgrid page (Appendix 4)

What is Flipgrid?

Flipgrid is a free web-based platform which offers a safe environment for educators to assign, create, and submit vlogs for students (<http://flipgrid.com/hc/en-us>). The application is available on the web and also downloadable as an app for mobile devices.

Benefits of Flipgrid

- Can be embedded in any learner management system (LMS) or website
- One teacher account can be used for multiple classes
- Adjustable rubric and video length guidelines available
- Classmates can watch and respond to each other's videos and teachers can observe all activities easily
- Videos can be created either using the built-in recording option on Flipgrid or they can be pre-recorded and uploaded
- Suitable for both online and face-to-face classes and can be extra beneficial for online classes to use as a tool to build rapport among students

Preparation

Step 1: Signup for an educator account and create a group for your class.

Step 2: Add a topic and prompt for the vlog assignment (see Appendix 1).

Step 3: Set up essential requirements such as recording time, rubric (see Appendix 2), comments (either video or text or none), and the due date. The teacher can also set up secondary features such as allowing sticky notes and likes.

Step 4: Create a practice prompt to introduce the assignment. The teacher demonstrates making a video by responding to the prompt.

Step 5: Prepare to share the class and assignment codes and assign the first vlog.

Procedure

Step 1: Setup the prompts and deadlines.

Step 2: Assign the vlog and share the assignment code with the students.

Step 3: Give feedback to students according to the rubric. The response can be either in the form of a video or text comment.

Step 4: Designate class time to work on the areas of improvement.

Step 5: Repeat this assignment with different prompts throughout the school term in order to have students engage in meaningful speaking activities.

Step 6: Add even more speaking and listening opportunities by having students watch and respond to a classmate's video.

How did the students perceive this activity?

At the end of the semester, the students were asked to answer a survey on the vlog assignments (Appendix 3). The following is a summary of their responses.

- **Attempts** - On average, students took two or three attempts and as many as five or more to complete one vlog (question no. 1).
- **Enjoyment** - 63% indicated they enjoyed creating the video (question no. 2).
- **Learned new technical skills** - 55.4% felt they learned new technical skills (question no.3).
- **Enhanced their speaking ability** - Over 80% of the learners felt that the vlogs enhanced their speaking ability (question no. 4).
- **New vocabulary** – 57% said they tried to use new vocabulary in their vlogs (question no. 5)
- **Confidence** -78.4% of the learners indicated the vlogs increased their confidence (questions 6).
- **Watching classmates' vlogs** - 83% of the learners enjoyed watching their classmates' videos (question 9).
- **Making response videos** – 61.5% enjoyed making response videos (question no.10).
- **Motivation** – 64.7% were motivated to improve their vlogs after watching their peers' vlogs (question 11).
- **Receiving peer response** - 60% enjoyed getting a peer response (question no.12).
- **Teacher feedback** – 72.3% appreciated the teacher feedback (question 7).
- **Teacher response** – 90.7% appreciated the teacher's comments regarding the topic (question 8).

Conclusion

Using Flipgrid to assign vlogs is an engaging task to promote speaking and listening opportunities beyond the classroom. The students not only take multiple attempts to make their own vlog but also watch many of their classmates' videos (see Appendix 4). Vlogs are a simple yet meaningful assignment to encourage interactivity and to help build confidence. The vlogs can also be used by the instructor to identify strengths and weaknesses of individual students or the class as a whole. Flipgrid is a flexible tool that can be used for various activities such as presentations, storytelling, IELTS & TOEFL prompts, or role plays.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample Topics/Prompts

Sample Topics/Prompts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell us how you spent your spring break. • Teach us how to do something. For example, show us how to make a dish, draw something or play an instrument. • You can talk about whatever you like. • What are you thankful for and why are you thankful for this? • Choose a piece of art but don't display it yet. Tell us the title, describe it to us, and tell us why you chose it. In the conclusion, show us the piece of art. • Tell us about your favorite summertime memory. • What are your future plans?
Possible IELTS Prompts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe a place in your country that you would really like to visit. You should say: where this place is, how long you would like to spend there, who you would like to go with, and explain why you would really like to visit this place in your country. • Describe an interesting discussion you had as part of your work or studies. You should say what the subject of the discussion was, who you discussed the subject with, what opinions were expressed, and explain why you found the discussion interesting.
Role Play Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a mini movie • News broadcast

Appendix 2: Sample Vlog Rubric










Video Blog Rubric	Points
1. Turned it in on time and at least 1 min. long	1
2. Included a brief introduction of themselves and the topic	1
3. A fair and honest attempt to speak in English for about 1 min	1
4. Followed the prompt and/or used an appropriate topic	1
5. Included a proper conclusion or appropriate ending	1
Response Video Rubric	
1. Turned it in on time	1
2. At least 30 seconds long	2
3. The response was relevant to the video	2
Total points	10

Appendix 3: Survey Questions

Item	1 time (%)	2 times (%)	3 times (%)	4 times (%)	5 times (%)
1. On average, it took me _____ to complete the video.	6.2	30.8	30.8	13.8	10.80%
Items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Not sure (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
2. I enjoyed making the videos.	1.5	10.8	24.6	29.2	33.8
3. I learned some new technical skills from creating my videos.	3.1	15.4	26.2	24.6	30.8
4. I feel that these video assignments improved my speaking ability.	3.1	0	15.4	49.2	32.3
5. I tried to use new vocabulary when making my videos.	1.5	15.4	26.2	26.2	30.8
6. I feel more confident in speaking English now than I did at the beginning of the semester.	1.5	3.1	16.9	33.8	44.6
7. I appreciate receiving teacher feedback regarding my language ability (e.g., pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, intonation)	3.1	7.7	16.9	24.6	47.7
8. I appreciate the responses and comments my teacher gives regarding the topics of my videos (e.g., Teacher shares their thoughts and opinion on the topics or teacher gives me a reference or a link)	0	1.5	7.7	16.9	73.8

9. I enjoy watching my classmates' videos.	1.5	1.5	13.8	29.2	53.8
10. I enjoy making a video response to my classmate's videos.	4.6	7.7	26.2	33.8	27.7
11. I am motivated to improve my videos after watching my classmates' videos	1.5	7.7	26.2	26.2	38.5
12. I enjoy getting video responses from my classmates.	6.2	6.2	27.7	26.2	33.8

Appendix 4: Sample Flipgrid Page

<input type="checkbox"/>		Taiki M 8 views	Apr 26, 2020	-	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕
<input type="checkbox"/>		Haruna O 8 views	Apr 26, 2020	1 Comment	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕
<input type="checkbox"/>		Arisa A 7 views	Apr 26, 2020	-	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕
<input type="checkbox"/>		Mana U 16 views	Apr 26, 2020	1 Comment	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕
<input type="checkbox"/>		Shiyuto A 15 views	Apr 26, 2020	1 Comment	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕
<input type="checkbox"/>		Shiho S 5 views	Apr 26, 2020	-	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕
<input type="checkbox"/>		Akiharu T 21 views	Apr 26, 2020	2 Comments	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕
<input type="checkbox"/>		Natsumi K 22 views	Apr 25, 2020	2 Comments	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕
<input type="checkbox"/>		Haruka A 37 views	Apr 25, 2020	2 Comments	-	Active ▾	Share	Actions ▾	⊕

References

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