Virtual Engagement Strategies for Adult Learners

By Katie Taylor, Lori Curtis, and Emily Bannon

Adapted from *Groups at Work* and *Visible Thinking*

Virtual professional growth opportunities for educators can take place in synchronous environments (where everyone is live and collaborating at the same time) or asynchronous environments (where the learning doesn't require everyone to be online at the same time and occurs more independently).

Below is a snapshot of tools that are best leveraged for each of these styles of collaboration. And, included in this article is a table providing tangible examples of ways to engage adult learners in the Strategies and Routines from Groups at Work: Strategies and Structures for Professional Learning (Lipton & Wellman, 2011) within virtual environments.

	Synchronous (Live, Collaborative Learning)	Asynchronous (Not live, Independent Learning)
Microsoft Edu Environment	Teams Meeting, Teams Chat, Microsoft Teams, OneDrive/SharePoint files	FlipGrid, Teams Chat, OneNote Page, Stream, Microsoft Forms
Google Edu Environment	Hangouts Meet, Hangouts Chat, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Drawing, Forms, Google Classroom & Question, Jamboard, Keep, YouTube Livestream	Sites, YouTube, Forms

Strategy/ Routine*	Description*	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
A-Z listing	Select a topic and create a list A-Z of ideas/things related to that topic that start with each letter of the alphabet.	Share editable Word file from OneDrive Create a template to fill-in, saved in Teams Files or on a page in OneNote Collaboration Space Assign Word file or OneNote page via Class Team Share PowerPoint file with 26 slides (or assign PPT file via Teams)	Pairs share an editable doc housed in Drive Assign the doc or sheet through Google Classroom "Make a Copy for Each student" Create an A-Z slideshow of 26 slides (shared or individual) Create a Keep notecard.

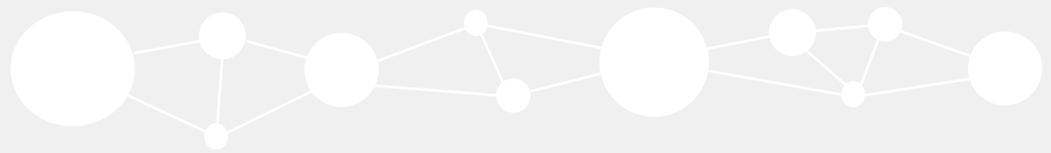| Strategy/ Routine*	Description*	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
		Create a Microsoft Form with a question for each letter.	Create a Google form that includes a question for each letter.
Bumper sticker	Create a short 'bumper sticker' to represent thinking about a topic	Share editable Word file from OneDrive Teams Chat Table in OneNote that could include words or pictures Create a Flipgrid Shorts video or a Grid and connect with others through comments ([Learn more](#)) Create a Sway that integrates photos, text, & other media and share view link or submit as assignment via Teams	Design using Google drawing, Jamboard or slides that integrates photos, text, video Post to Google Classroom question for feedback and discussion. Use a Chrome extension to screencast over it to enhance or provide explanation. Video can be uploaded to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion Learning artifact can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Hangouts chat
Create a recipe	Create a recipe for a topic that mimics what you would see in a recipe for cooking or baking, ie: "Instructional Coaching" 1 c… 1 tea Mix together and add a dash of humor…	Shared Word document Chart in OneNote Response to a prompt in Teams chat Flipgrid response	Design using Google drawing or jamboard that integrates photos, text, video. Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Create a shared slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post their recipe Create a Google Site cookbook to display multiple recipes Learning artifact can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts chat
First word/last word	Similar to an acrostic poem, take a topic and generate related words	Shared Word document Chart in OneNote	Doc or Jamboard

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	that start with each letter of the topic, ie: D: drives our instruction A: assessment results T: takes time to process A: activates questions	Response to a prompt in Teams chat Grid response to Flipgrid topic	Create a shared slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Learning artifact can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts chat
Just Like Me!	Ask members to identify if an experience is true for them	Add checkmark to table in shared file (Word or Excel) Chart in OneNote Forms survey Teams chat – type a response or 'like' the post if it is like you Quick poll in Teams discussion	Jamboard post-its Google Forms survey Respond to a Google Classroom question poll or open response prompt Hangouts chat
Know/Think I know/Want to know	Given a topic, participants fill in what they already know, think they know and want to know	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Grid response to Flipgrid topic Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides Google Forms survey Table in a Google Doc Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Create a Keep notecard.
Since we last met	Ask group to respond to a prompt that begins "since we last met…" and add an ending to the phrase. Ask participants	Shared Word document Chart in OneNote Response to a prompt in Teams chat Grid response to Flipgrid topic	Jamboard collaborative slide Google Forms survey Table in a Google Doc

Strategy/ Routine*	Description*	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
	to respond with pictures, connections, words, etc	Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to

Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt

 Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio

Create a Keep notecard.

Hangouts chat |
| Synectics | Invite participants to make a connection to a visual and discuss/describe how the visual is or isn't like_____. | Shared Word document

Chart in OneNote

Response in Teams chat w/GIF, sticker, emoji, etc.

Grid response to Flipgrid topic | Jamboard collaborative slide

Table in a Google Doc or sheet

Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt

Create a Keep notecard.

Hangouts chat |
| Here's What – So What – Now What | Focuses attention on a specific piece of learning or information by inviting reflection on "here's what" (was important), "so what" (why it matters), and "now what" (will you do with the information/learning). | Table in shared Word document

Chart in OneNote

Response to a prompt in Teams chat

Grid response to Flipgrid topic

Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams | Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides

Google Forms survey

Table in a Google Doc

Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to

Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio

Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt

Create a Keep notecard.

Hangouts chat |
| P+M-I* | For a particular topic/idea/action have | Teams chat (separate each step as a separate prompt) | Google Forms survey |

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	participants consider what is P+ positive, M- a challenge or a negative, and I* interesting	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Grid topics for PMI; respond in Flipgrid to each topic Add slides to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Table in a Google Doc Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts chat
Traffic Light	After learning something new, participants reflect on what they are going to stop doing (red), continue doing (yellow), and start doing (green).	Shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Grid response to Flipgrid topic Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides Google Forms survey Table in a Google Doc Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts chat
First Turn/Last Turn	Participants share thoughts about learning: first participant reads something they highlighted but doesn't say anything about that passage; the rest of the group gets to say something about the passage in turns; finally	Teams meeting Grid response to Flipgrid topic; respond to others in turn	Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Hangouts Meet

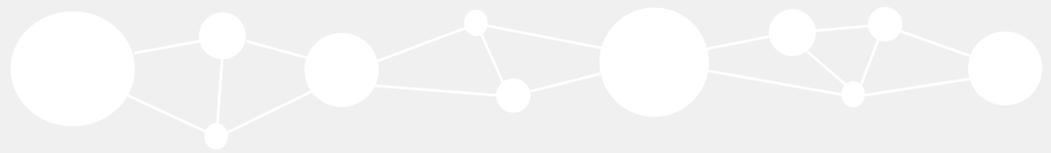| Strategy/ Routine*	Description*	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
	the participant who read the highlighted passage indicates why they chose it. Repeat another round with another participant reading a highlighted passage.		
3-2-1-	3 facts or ideas from the text 2 questions 1 main idea/big idea/takeaway	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative slides Google Forms survey Table in a Google Doc Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts chat
Elevator Speech	Participants deliver a short presentation on a topic	Create PowerPoint presentation; record slide show with audio & video; post to Stream channel; respond to videos with comments Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid; comment on others' videos	Record and post to YouTube (unlisted recommended). Post YouTube URL to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion Create a slidedeck and use a Chrome extension to screencast over it to enhance or provide explanation. Post URL to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Hangouts Meet

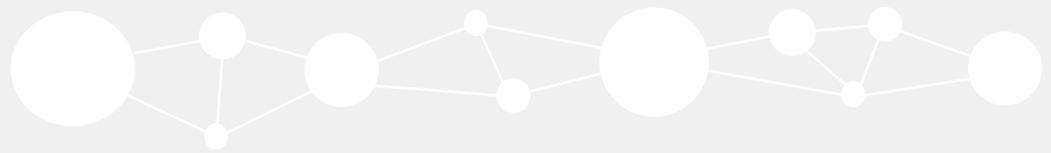| Strategy/ Routine*	Description*	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
Key words	Participants share key words from a reading	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid	Jamboard collaborative slide(s) Design using Google drawing or slides that integrates photos, text, video Post to Google Classroom question for feedback and discussion. Use a Google form to collect words and then use a Chrome extension to create a word cloud Learning artifact can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Hangouts chat
Most Important Point	Participants share one idea from a reading that they feel is the most important point	Teams meeting chat discussion Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative slide Design using Google doc, drawing or slides that integrates photos, text, hyperlink. Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Google form survey Record and post to YouTube (unlisted recommended). Post YouTube URL to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion Create a slidedeck and use a Chrome extension to screencast over it to enhance or provide explanation. Post URL to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion Learning artifact can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Hangouts Meet

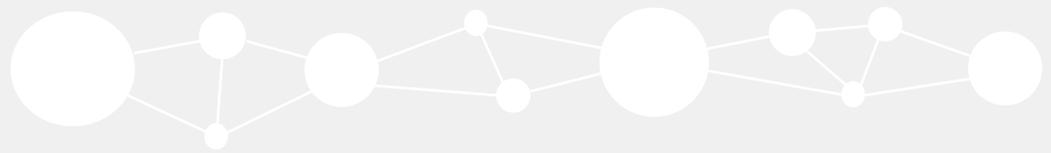| Strategy/ Routine*	Description*	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
			Hangout chat
One-word summary	Participants share one word to summarize their reading – usually with an opportunity to explain why they chose the one word	Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid; then, reply to others' videos Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative slide Design using Google doc, drawing or slides that integrates photos, text, hyperlink. Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Google form survey Record and post to YouTube (unlisted recommended). Post YouTube URL to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion Create a slidedeck and use a Chrome extension to screencast over it to enhance or provide explanation. Post URL to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion Learning artifact can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Hangouts Meet Hangout chat
Tweets	Participants create a # and tweet their learning	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative deck Design using Google doc, drawing or slides that integrates photos, text, hyperlink. Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Create a shared slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post their tweet

Strategy/ Routine*	Description*	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
			Assign the doc or sheet through Google Classroom "Make a Copy for Each student"

Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio

Create a Google form

Create a Keep notecard.

Hangouts chat |
| Say Something | Participants simply "say something" about their reading or learning on a particular topic | Use video/audio to respond during Teams meeting

Create PowerPoint presentation; record slide show with audio & video; post to Stream channel; respond to videos with comments

Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid; comment on others' videos | Record and post to YouTube (unlisted recommended). Post YouTube URL to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion

Create a slidedeck and use a Chrome extension to screencast over it to enhance or provide explanation. Post URL to Google Classroom prompt question for feedback and discussion

Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio

Hangouts Meet |
| Three A's Plus One | Participants take turns responding to each prompt, one round = each participant says something to the first prompt and then after everyone is finished you move to the second prompt:

1: One thing with which you **agree** | Create Flipgrid topic in Grid for each prompt; respond to each topic in Grid; comment on others' videos

Post prompt in Teams chat; respond to chat; reply to others with @ mention; repeat with next prompt

Collaborate in chart/table in shared Word document; type response to each prompt; add comments to others' entries | Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides

Google Forms survey

Table in a Google Doc

Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to

Respond to 3 Google Classroom question prompts |

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	2: One thing with which you might **argue** 3: One thing to which you might **aspire**		Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Hangouts meet Hangouts chat
Words, Phrases, Sentences	In response to a text, participants identify key words, phrases and sentence or two that resonates.	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides Design using Google drawing or slides that integrates photos, text, video Post to Google Classroom question for feedback and discussion. Use a Google form to collect words and then use a Chrome extension to create a word cloud Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts chat

* Strategies adapted and used with permission from Groups at Work: Strategies and Structures for Professional Learning

Strategy/Routine**	Description**	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
Connect-Extend-Challenge	In response to an idea or text, participants identify something with which they **connected**, something that **extended** their thinking and something that **challenged** them.	Table in shared Word document On shared text, add comments inline Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat; respond to other's Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides Google Forms survey Table in a Google Doc Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts meet
See-Think-Wonder	In response to an idea, data, image or text, participants identify something they **saw**, something they **thought** about what they saw, and something that they **wonder**	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides Google Forms survey Table in a Google Doc Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts meet
Think-Puzzle-Explore	In response to an idea, data, image or text, participants share what they **think,** something that **puzzled** them, and	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey	Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides Google Forms survey Table in a Google Doc

Strategy/Routine**	Description**	Microsoft: Ideas for using in virtual learning	Google: Ideas for using in virtual learning
	something that they'd like to **explore** further.	Response to a prompt in Teams chat Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts meet
Circle of View Points	In response to a scenario, brainstorm the key players connected to the scenario. Then each participant is asked to share a response to the following prompts: 1. **I am thinking of** ... the topic... **From the point of view of** ... the viewpoint you've chosen 2. **I think** ... describe the topic from your viewpoint. Be an actor - take on the character of your viewpoint 3. **A question I have from this viewpoint is** ... ask a question from this viewpoint	Table in shared Word document Chart in OneNote Microsoft Forms survey Response to a prompt in Teams chat Record response to Grid topic in Flipgrid Add slide to shared PowerPoint file; individuals, pairs, or by teams	Jamboard collaborative deck of 3 slides Google Forms survey Table in a Google Doc Individual, pair, or team slidedeck where each person or team has a slide to post to Create a meme with Google drawing Learning artifact or typing can be displayed and explained on a Google Site portfolio Respond to a Google Classroom question prompt Create a Keep notecard. Hangouts meet

**Strategies and Descriptions quoted from *Visible Thinking Routines*

The 21st Century is Now

References

Lipton, L., & Wellman, B. M. (2011). *Groups at work: Strategies and structures for professional learning.* Charlotte, VT: Miravia.

Ritchhart, R., Church, M., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Making thinking visible: How to promote engagement, understanding, and independence for all learners.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Visible Thinking. (2020, February 24). Retrieved April 1, 2020, from https://pz.harvard.edu/projects/visible-thinking

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Emily Bannon is an Instructional Facilitator for Tacoma Public Schools where she helps staff and students with technology integration. She is a Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert and MIE Master Trainer. Emily has 20 years of experience as a certificated teacher and trainer with 9 years as an elementary classroom teacher in Washington State and at the American Community School of Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. Emily has an M.A. in Elementary Education (Reading & Literacy) as well as an M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction (Technology).