

Chapter 8

Growing Through Change: Blendspace as a Digital Tool for Teaching and Learning Post Pandemic

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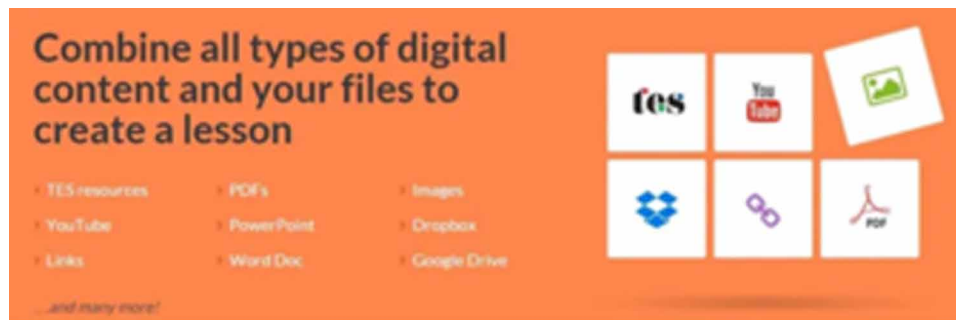
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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores Blendspace as a digital teaching and learning tool, its benefits and setbacks, ways to use it, and provides a guide on how to use it. Blendspace.com (now known as TES Teach) is the online educational curriculum tool of TES.com. Blendspace is a web-based learning tool developed and used to gather and package information for teaching and learning purposes. This digital platform is open to non-technical teachers and students from all levels, grades, and subject areas. Blendspace enables teachers to enter the classroom in a seamless, or what can be considered a “hybrid,” manner efficiently and effectively. Correspondingly, Blendspace allows students to create interactive content to showcase their work related to the subject matter. As a content curation platform, students can build interactive content such as storyboards, scrapbooks, and vlogs, among others. Additionally, due to its affordances, teachers can access a range of tools and create immersive lessons by blending digital content with in-class experiences. Blendspace is an alternative digital platform that offers many possibilities for the creation of digital content in one place, the design of fun and interactive lessons, and the monitoring and assessment of student learning through the use of quizzes and discussions. The chapter ends with a sample hands-on activity using Blendspace.

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Figure 1. Digital content and files that Blendspace affords for collation



INTRODUCTION

During the pandemic, the use of online learning merely supplemented instructors' regular teaching approaches. However, as the globe approaches endemicity, teachers and students alike have seen that blended-learning models that optimise online learning materials allow greater freedom in terms of the time, location, direction, and speed of their learning (Cobo-Rendón et al., 2022). Furthermore, efficient utilisation of online platforms and applications allows for more rich learning experiences while building more personal ties between instructors and students (Arnett, 2021). To that purpose, this chapter investigates the impact of Blendspace as an educational instrument for post-pandemic teaching and learning enhanced by the use of blended-learning methodologies. During the pandemic, the use of online learning merely supplemented instructors' regular teaching approaches. However, as the globe approaches endemicity, teachers and students alike have seen that blended-learning models that optimise online learning materials allow greater freedom in terms of the time, location, direction, and speed of their learning (Cobo-Rendón et al., 2022). Furthermore, efficient utilisation of online platforms and applications allows for more rich learning experiences while building more personal ties between instructors and students (Arnett, 2021). To that purpose, this chapter investigates the impact of Blendspace as an educational instrument for post-pandemic teaching and learning enhanced by the use of blended-learning methodologies.

Blendspace can effectively be used as a teaching and learning platform meant to engage students in an active learning process to acquire and retain important information in their long-term memory. The main goal of Blendspace is to enable teachers to use or combine multimedia learning materials in the classroom effectively and systematically by facilitating the creation of interactive lessons via the collation of various materials from several digital platforms such as YouTube, educational websites, Google Search, or other online sources and their computers or cloud storage (Agrawal, 2019). Figure 1 presents some of the files and platforms supported in Blendspace.

Teachers and students can sign up for an account with Blendspace, accessible via the website <https://www.blendspace.com/lessons>, Chrome, or iPad applications. There are two ways to use this application: either by downloading it onto a mobile phone or streaming it on their website. Blendspace is compatible with any web browser, such as Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, and Microsoft Edge. It is simple enough for anyone to use and engage in, and it allows assessments to be done on one single platform, which makes it possible to create digital lessons within minutes (Figure 2).

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