

eTools: Using eduCanon in the Classroom

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Introduction

With institutions and administrators encouraging instructors to use technology in the classroom, there seems to be a growing sense of anxiety among instructors regarding how to create and share content that ensures students are engaged. This is where eduCanon emerges as a solution for creating, sharing, and ensuring student engagement with videos, lectures, or presentations.

What is eduCanon?

eduCanon is a web-based platform that allows instructors to create, personalize, share, and assess video content. Instructors can use their own self-created videos or access public videos from sites such as YouTube, TeacherTube, or Vimeo. eduCanon features time-linking activities or assessments to engage students as they view the video content. Multiple-choice questions, "check all that apply" questions, and even reflective pauses can be embedded within a video to gauge students' understanding of the content as well as monitor their viewing progress in real-time.

The goal of eduCanon is to offer instructors a tool that brings video to life. In doing so, the creators of eduCanon developed a product that allows instructors to take their own recordings (or other published recordings) and personalize them by embedding interactive questions that prompt student engagement, thus replicating how

instruction occurs in a traditional face-to-face classroom.

How can I get eduCanon for use in the classroom?

Access to eduCanon is simple. Go to <http://www.educanon.com>, click on the “sign-up” tab, and create a free account. With the free account option, you can design unlimited lessons, manage up to eight classes, monitor an unlimited amount of students within those classes, and share your videos with colleagues. eduCanon also has two yearly premium versions: “Premium Teacher,” which provides options for worksheet creation, auto-graded responses, advanced video editing, and a downloading grade option for \$99 a year or a “Blended School” option, which provides administrator views, on-going trainings, and LTI integration for \$990 a year.

How can I use eduCanon in the classroom?

This tool is appropriate for the traditional, hybrid, flipped, and online classroom. eduCanon provides instructors and students with immediate feedback regarding whether the students watched the uploaded video(s) and understood its content. Because of the functions eduCanon provides, there are a variety of options for its use.

More specifically, eduCanon can be used as:

1. *an assessment tool.* As your students view a video lecture or lesson, different question types can be embedded within the video. You can use these questions to either assess whether students are watching the video and grasping the content or check for misunderstandings. In doing so, instructors can verify whether the task was

actually completed. In an online only communication course, you can post your lectures and have students engage as you discuss the content. This will help you realize if your students are watching the lectures.

2. *a class conversation starter.* During pivotal points within a video, you can post a reflective pause that encourages students to reflect, question, and conduct further research on the topic discussed in the video. For example, in an interpersonal communication course that centers on conflict and relationships, you can have students watch a video of John Gottman discussing the "Four Horseman of the Apocalypse." During the video, you can embed several reflective pauses where students would need to write and reflect on their feelings as if they were in the situation. At the end of the video (and possibly based on the textbook content), you can ask students to identify the strategies they might use to maintain healthy communication during a conflict. Students would then bring their responses to these pauses to the next class session, which could serve as a conversation starter for the session.

3. *a lesson planner.* Based on your students' responses to the questions inserted within the interactive video, you can determine the points on which you should focus either within a specific class session or in a follow-up video. This will help make time in a face-to-face, hybrid, or flipped class productive and specific to your students' needs and further understanding of the course content. For example, in a nonverbal communication course, you can show a video of two relational partners demonstrating

various nonverbal functions in a conversation. At certain points in the video, students can be prompted to identify which function the partners are using. If you notice that your students are not correctly identifying the functions used by the partners, this lack of correct identification would act as an indicator for the content that may need to be reviewed in class.

4. *an in-class video guide.* Instead of printing worksheets or directing students to take notes during the video, have your students answer the questions or pause for discussion during the video. In a basic communication course, for instance, you could show students an example of an introduction for an informative speech. As students watch the video, you can embed questions or reflective pauses to inquire whether students are able to notice content examples such as an effective attention-getting device, the inclusion of an appropriate thesis statement or preview of points statement, or the ways in which the speaker establishes credibility.

5. *a training resource for GTA/new faculty.* Administrators, basic course directors, and graduate deans can all use this tool as a way to welcome or train graduate students or faculty. This acts as a way to introduce new material and decrease the time spent in a professional development or orientation meeting. For example, before a graduate student orientation, you could send a “welcome video” introducing students to the university and providing them with several “need to know or accomplish” topics that should be completed before arriving on campus.

Conclusion

eduCanon is an interactive video tool for both faculty and students. Even though the free version limits some of the video editing and question options that may be used by instructors, the available options still allow for student interaction with the content. Using an eTool such as eduCanon provides instructors with an opportunity to bring videos to life and increase student engagement in the classroom.