Introduction

Going digital means you can share your learning with a wider audience. It enables people to work collaboratively without having to be in the same location. This is great for student collaborative projects between different cities, countries or even homeschoolers wanting to connect with other learners. Creating multimedia projects also enables educators to embed these on their Online Learning Management Systems and even allows for student digital projects to be used as education resources for future students.

Tangaroa Blue and the Australian Marine Debris Initiative has been part of cross-collaborative projects such as Australian schools connecting with schools in Alaska and China where students share ideas about marine debris in real-time and co-create online learning projects. The tools outlined in this booklet are ones that Tangaroa Blue has used with educators and students for numerous marine debris education projects and they are our top digital tools picks.

We begin with the Digital Framework and then outline some of the best digital tools you may want to use with your students and provide some examples.

The Digital Framework has been adopted from Julie Lindsay author of the Global Educator - Leveraging technology for collaborative learning and teaching, published by ISTE 2016. Julie is also the Open Pathways Design Leader at Charles Sturt University responsible for creating open educational resources and online courses. Before you embark on your digital journey, you or your students may want to do the free online course:

https://www.openlearning.com/csu/courses/become-a-digital-online-learner?showLanding=true
Connect
A digital online learner knows how to:

- Create your Personal Learning Environment in order to leverage social media, mobile devices and apps, and other tools to find information and other learners
- Manage both synchronous and asynchronous online learning modes to foster meaningful connections
- Build your Personal Learning Network and join Professional Learning Communities to benefit from online discussions and support your learning goals

Communicate
A digital online learner knows how to:

- Develop appropriate communication strategies and protocols with online networks and communities
- Use a range of technologies such as online meeting tools, virtual presentations, and discussion forums in order to participate and contribute
- Share ideas and reflect on practice through online spaces such as a blog, wiki or other Web 2.0 tool
Citizenship
A digital online learner knows how to:
- Track and manage a digital footprint and personal data online
- Create a safe and healthy working environment and leverage different media and platforms in an ethical and legal capacity
- Apply positive attitudes and adaptive habits for learning independently and with others

Collaborate
A digital online learner knows how to:
- Contribute ideas and interact visibly and openly with others virtually
- Implement the norms of online collaboration to support enhanced collaborative outcomes
- Use a range of digital tools and apps to support collaborative learning
Create
A digital online learner knows how to:

- Construct an online identity as a professional learner
- Design and co-create digital products in creative and innovative ways
- Use a variety of digital tools for multimedia production
- Create and share images, audio and video artifacts in online spaces.

Choice
A digital online learner knows how to:

- Select and manage appropriate tools for organization, workflow, and productivity including cloud computing and mobile technologies
- Practice academic integrity and use online tools for research, digital curation, and open resources
- Choose from a variety of strategies to connect, communicate and collaborate to create new meaning and build understanding independently and with others.
Learning as a multi-modal online experience

With increased access to digital and online technologies, the classroom learning environment has changed. Learning ‘spaces’ are now supported by technologies that engage you in virtual communication and collaboration. These spaces or ‘online learning modes’ allow you to engage in learning both ‘with’ and ‘from’ others from anywhere and anytime in the world.

Online learning modes - Synchronous and Asynchronous

As an online learner you can learn in different ways:

- Accessing online resources, teachers, and other students
- Engaging through meaningful interaction with online content and online activities
- Reading, watching, listening, responding, and creating.

You can be assessed in different ways, for example:

- Participation in discussions
- Independent or collaborative activities
- Quizzes, blog posts or other artifacts

Let’s explore the two modes of online learning (synchronous and asynchronous) and the main characteristics of each one.

Synchronous

- Activities take place in real time, usually in conjunction with others.
- You are present and listening, responding, interacting as the event or activity unfolds.

Example: A virtual meeting using Skype or another online meeting tool

Asynchronous

- Activities take place independently of others and not in real time.
- You are able to respond, contribute and interact in your own time.

Example: A subject discussion forum where students and teachers can contribute and respond to others in their own time. Although difficult to read the example to the right shows discussion around an image from a student in Myanmar.
Digital literacy means having the skills you need to live, learn, and work in a society where communication and access to information are increasingly through digital technologies like internet platforms, social media, and mobile devices.

Put more simply...

*Digital literacy means having the right digital skills to achieve your goals.*

Digital literacy

As a digital online learner (or educator) digital literacy is an important skill to have. It’ll also be important in the future in your work and professional life.

In your workplace you’ll be required to:

- Interact with people in digital environments
- Use information in appropriate ways
- Create new ideas and digital products collaboratively.

Above all, you’ll need to maintain your digital identity and wellbeing as the digital landscape continues to change at a fast pace.

*A digital footprint is the information about a person that exists on the Internet as a result of their online activity*

Online communication strategies

Communication is one of the most challenging aspects of online learning! You need to make your message clear and easily understood. You need to not direct emotions such as annoyance or anger at others.

When learning online communication can take place via discussion forums, or by using social media tools. It can be text-based or include other media such as video.

Think about your ability to communicate and consider the following:

- How confident do you feel about communicating with other people online?
- Would you be confident commenting on other people's opinions?
- Do you understand the importance of observing online etiquette (netiquette)?
- Are you able to write for different audiences and online spaces, e.g. a web page or blog?
Treat others as you would want them to treat you!

Make sure your communication:

- Is appropriate to the context, is clear and relevant to the point, and courteous
- Has sensitivity and you acknowledge the other person’s point of view, even if this is different to your own
- Adopts the appropriate tone for the person, for example, a friend, colleague or an official in an organization
- Includes your emotions – this can help other people understand your perspective without seeing your body language. Many online environments have smileys or emoticons you can use to show how you are feeling, which might be appropriate to use in informal communications
- Shows you are aware of cultural differences, particularly when communicating with people from other countries
- Is not written in capitals, as this comes across as shouting.

Tips for communicating in a discussion forum

As an online learner, you likely have discussion forums to contribute ideas to. Strategies for best practice include:

- Try to keep your comments brief and to the point
- Use no more than two short paragraphs.
- Read your comments and replies all the way through before you post them. If you post in a hurry you may regret it later – you usually cannot delete but you can often edit your comments
- Constructively criticise the idea, not the person – and be polite when you do
- Don’t write a reply that you wouldn’t say face-to-face
- Remember that learners vary in culture, age, and experience
- Not all learners have English as their first language, so always try to write clearly
- Explain any acronyms, abbreviations, and colloquialisms.

Netiquette is a code of good behaviour on the Internet
Collaboration Starts with Contribution

When you go online you are invisible to others - unless you make a contribution. You must become an astute online learner who understands different modes of contribution and is comfortable interacting with others. It may be that you want to be invisible - BUT consider the following:

- You are often required to contribute to discussions or participate in group activities
- These discussions and group activities are often assessed in some way
- Connect from home, at work and anywhere on the go
- Connect with people not based in the same physical location.

What is the point of having online modes of connecting if you do not contribute, create, share and enhance in order to amplify your own learning?

The Norms of Online Collaboration

It is more difficult to collaborate online unless all members of the group or team are aware of and practice certain ‘norms’ of behaviour. The eight norms of online collaboration share behaviours or strategies that are vital for online contribution that leads to productive collaboration.

Challenges with online group work

When working online group work is usually a lot more challenging than when face-to-face. It can take a lot longer to get responses from a virtual team member. Flexibility is needed - and solutions as to how you will work.

Social loafing, sometimes called free riding, is when a member of the team appears to gain from the efforts and success of the team without putting in an effort of their own.

Is it possible that your team member is:

- Unaware of the level of input required by the team
- Unaware that the team is actually doing work
- Too casual with deadlines and schedules
- Concentrating on something else as you appear to have the job in hand
- Not confident enough to come forward with their ideas
- Not on top of the knowledge and/or technology required for the task
- Not used to working in teams.
- Truly social loafing and looking to gain from others efforts?
Our top digital tools and what they can be used for

On the following pages there is a list of some of the best digital tools that Tangaroa Blue has used with educators and students. You may want to pick from these to create a learning resource for students or for students to create and share their own multimedia project about marine debris. Please note that digital tools are always rapidly changing on the internet and by the time you read this, there will probably be even more digital tools out there to choose from.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Function</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Commentsfäh</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video creation</td>
<td><a href="https://animoto.com/">https://animoto.com/</a></td>
<td>Allows you to create slideshow videos.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="https://app.biteable.com/login">https://app.biteable.com/login</a></td>
<td>Make a video online with the free Biteable video maker. Crank up the wow factor with animations, footage, and effects.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="https://spark.adobe.com/">https://spark.adobe.com/</a></td>
<td>Adobe Spark is a free online and mobile graphic design app. Easily create beautiful images, videos, and web pages that make you stand out on social.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.wevideo.com/">https://www.wevideo.com/</a></td>
<td>Make and share videos using WeVideo’s cloud-based online video editing software. Available for Android, iPhone, iPad, Mac, PC, and Chromebook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animated videos</td>
<td><a href="https://www.vyond.com/">https://www.vyond.com/</a></td>
<td>Vyond lets you create videos easily with their library of templates, sounds, props, and so much more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.powtoon.com/">https://www.powtoon.com/</a></td>
<td>Powtoon creates videos and animations - without you doing all of the hard work! The tools are all online, you choose the design and animations and provide the text...and PowToon puts it all together, like magic!</td>
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# Digital tools in the classroom

## Learning Function

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<tr>
<td><strong>Brainstorming &amp; storyboarding tools</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.realtimeboard.com">www.realtimeboard.com</a></td>
<td>Realtimeboard lets you create online collaborative mind maps, charts, storyboards and more. They have a lot of templates to choose from to save you time.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.padlet.com">www.padlet.com</a></td>
<td>Padlet is a collaborative online space where you can upload pictures, post links, brainstorm, research and create an online scrapbook.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.mindomo.com/">https://www.mindomo.com/</a></td>
<td>Easy-to-create and share mind maps, concept maps, task maps, and outlines.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.symbaloo.com/">https://www.symbaloo.com/</a></td>
<td>Built for educators, Symbaloo makes it easy to engage students by delivering the right content in one place. This is a great tool for collaborative research and even linking to multimedia projects that students create.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creating interactive online content</strong></td>
<td><a href="https://h5p.org/">https://h5p.org/</a></td>
<td>H5P makes it easy to create, share and reuse HTML5 content and applications. H5P empowers everyone to create rich and interactive web experiences more efficiently. H5P content is responsive and mobile friendly, which means that users will experience the same rich, interactive content on computers, smartphones and tablets alike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creating interactive online content</strong></td>
<td><a href="https://www.thinglink.com/">https://www.thinglink.com/</a></td>
<td>Creates interactive videos, pictures and 360 content very easily and share across platforms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.voicethread.com">www.voicethread.com</a></td>
<td>Design interactive presentations, pictures, videos, assessment, and discussion. Very visual and easy to use.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sourcing free pictures online</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://pixabay.com/">http://pixabay.com/</a></td>
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<td><a href="https://unsplash.com/">https://unsplash.com/</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://photopin.com/">http://photopin.com/</a></td>
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<td><a href="https://www.photosforclass.com/">https://www.photosforclass.com/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Animated pictures</td>
<td><a href="https://giphy.com/">https://giphy.com/</a></td>
<td>This is a fun tool to play with! Giphy creates ‘animated gif’ files. You often see these attached to social media. There can be a serious side to Giphy creations as well - see if you can find it!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online presentations</td>
<td><a href="https://www.slideshare.net/">https://www.slideshare.net/</a></td>
<td>Slideshare.net is known as the ‘YouTube for Slideshows’ It is a reliable platform to upload your PowerPoint or Keynote presentations. The advantage of Slideshare is that it will connect with your LinkedIn account (if you chose to use that for your ‘brand of me’ portfolio) and add your slides to your online profile.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://sway.com/">https://sway.com/</a></td>
<td>Microsoft Sway is a tool used for newsletters, presentations and other communications. It is more than a slideshow tool - it helps to tell a story visually. You can start from scratch or import a PowerPoint, Word or PDF file.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Google Slides</td>
<td>Google Slides is an online presentations app that allows you to show off your work in a visual way. Edit a presentation with friends and share it with others effortlessly.</td>
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