

What I Have Learned Facilitating Learning Online, Part 3: Five Best Practices for Recorded Sessions

By Gina Fugnitto | Categories: Technology & Remote Learning

In a millisecond, you transitioned to using a virtual platform to engage students in remote learning. Some of you, once you learned more, realized the remote learning was not to be provided on a live virtual platform. Rather, you were to record videos to share with students via a virtual platform.

In Part 1 of this blog series, I shared some of the best practices I have developed over the past few years for facilitating learning via Zoom. In Part 2, I focused on community building and navigating your virtual platform.

Based on a Collaborative Classroom Facebook Community poll, I thought it would be important to continue the conversation by focusing on some of the best practices I have developed when recording learning sessions via Zoom. (I will confess that recorded videos never feel as natural.)

Here are my five best practices for effective recorded sessions:

Best Practice #1

I consider what is reasonable for the learner and the content. Consider the duration of the recording, the purpose of the recording, and the expected outcome of the recording. The most effective recording is planned with intention.

Here are some important questions to ask yourself when lesson planning: *Does the content lend itself to a recording? What recording length would meet the needs of the learner and content? Where in the recording might I pause for students to engage in the work or reflect on the learning?*

Tip: The shorter the recording the better!

Best Practice #2

I am prepared and ready before pushing record. Preparedness is essential for allowing you to be clear and concise. Beforehand, I plan the purpose of the lesson and create notes to guide me during the recording. When I press, record, I have my materials by my side and any necessary items already open on my computer.

Ask yourself: *How can I prepare enough so that I am clear during the recording? What notes might I need to ensure that I adhere to my purpose during the recording? How might I reduce teacher talk so that the recording is as concise as possible?*

If you are navigating to different materials or websites on your computer during the recording, ask yourself: *Is what I am displaying on*

my computer necessary for learning to occur? Is what I am displaying on my computer visible/readable/understandable to the learner? Am I demonstrating or navigating at a pace that is understandable to the learner?(This pace is much slower than you think!)

Best Practice #3

I practice my diction and intonation. The recording needs to be as clear as possible so that the learner can understand what is being shared. You will need to practice! The more you practice your diction and intonation, the clearer you'll be. For me, practice ensured that I did not "eat my words."

Ask yourself: Am I speaking in a way that is understandable? Am I speaking at a pace that is digestible to the learner? Am I slowing down my pace from my normal speaking pace? Am I pausing appropriately (for punctuation)?

Best Practice #4

I consider my demeanor. Having a friendly and caring disposition is important for engaging the students in the learning. I strive to look at the camera, use facial expressions, speak naturally, and smile in order to connect with the learner as I might in person.

You will want to see what you look like! Record a snippet, review, and adjust. Ask yourself: Am I looking at the camera? Do I look friendly? Am I using facial expressions to connect with the learner? Am I speaking naturally (considering intonation and diction)?

Best Practice #5

Most book publishers have relaxed their audio/video copyright rules during this extraordinary time, but they do ask the following: when recording and sharing a story do so privately or in a closed system (e.g., YouTube channel set to private); include the book title, author, and publisher at the beginning of your reading; delete or block access to the video or audio recordings of their books by the end of the current school year or no later than June 30, 2020; and send the publisher a notification (with your school name and book information) that the recording has occurred. To make this last item easier, we've created a short form you can fill out: Read Aloud Reporting. We will collect the data and share it with the relevant publishers. Both the publisher and Collaborative Classroom would love to see the recording you made if it's not too much trouble to share it with us!

Don't forget you are doing this with the best of intentions for your students. Don't forget to keep it simple. Don't forget that recording may never feel completely natural. Most important, don't forget to give yourself grace!