Virtual Groups:
Working Together without Actually Meeting!

Presenter: Neal Phillips, Ed.D.
Valencia College
So why online learning?

* 1. Students can participate while in their comfort zones.

* 2. Students can take longer to reflect on topics.

* 3. There is often even less pressure to work in groups . . .

(But we’re about to put a positive spin on that!)
Online learning **MUST BE:**

1. **Highly engaging** to be successful. (Sherer & Shea, 2002).

2. Include content that relates to students. (Koszalka & Ganesan, 2004).

3. Include **frequent interaction** to keep students engaged and to **retain** them. (Peck, 2012).
Student Expectations of an online course:
(pre-course survey – Spring 2012)
ENC 1101 – Freshman Composition I

**Survey Question #1:**
“I have taken an online course previously.”

(24 respondents)
Survey Question #2:
“In previous online courses, I felt connected to classmates and got to know them.”

(24 respondents)
Survey Question #3:

“Working with groups of students, not individually, is the way I learn best.”

(26 respondents)
ONLINE COLLABORATIVE Activity #1 (simple): Relatable Discussions

OBJECTIVE:
Students will indicate that they can relate and comprehend studied literature.
Students will show evidence of relating to their peers’ levels of comprehension and reflection as well.
Monday Mindset -- Week 1 discussion topic

In order to receive maximum points for your discussion requirement, you must address and complete each of the tasks. This week's tasks deal with pressure.

TASK #1: Post a picture of what you look like "under pressure". (That's right, we need to see your face!)

TASK #2: Respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to this question: How do you deal with pressure?

TASK #3: Respond thoroughly and thoughtfully this question: Are the pressures that Orwell and Hughes faced in their stories still relevant today? Give some examples of this.

TASK #4: Respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.

TOTAL POSTS: 91 PARTICIPANTS: 20 Average amount of posts: 4.6 per participant
**Monday Mindset - Week 1 discussion topic**

In order to receive maximum points for your discussion requirement, you must address and complete each of the tasks. This week’s tasks deal with **pressure**.

### TASK #1:
Post a picture of what you look like "under pressure". (That's right, we need to see your face!)

### TASK #2:
Respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to this question: **How do you deal with pressure?**

### TASK #3:
Respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to this question: Are the pressures that Orwell and Hughes faced in their stories still relevant today? Give some examples of this.

### TASK #4:
Respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.

**DUE DATE:** Sunday, January 13, 2013 by MIDNIGHT
Orwell and Hughes each faced issues that are still very prevalent today. Orwell, being in a position of authority, felt pressured by the people whose respect he needed to keep in order for his word to remain resolute. In current events, our president is feeling pressured to enact some type of gun control due to public feedback from the shootings in Newtown, Connecticut. Many object to this on account of the Second Amendment. Nevertheless, in Orwell's experience, and today, leaders see that they can not please everybody. In Hughes' story, he felt pressured by his family and the members of the church. Kids in schools today are exhibiting the effects of peer pressure constantly. For example, the so-called "pregnancy pact" a few years ago, when a group of teenage girls promised to get pregnant together showed that girls, especially, feel they have to impress each other, no matter the cost. These examples are just a couple of many, but they personify the metaphors from the reading selections.
Replies to sample response #1

wow! I can totally relate. I just had my daughter back in October and I used that situation for this assignment as well. I couldn't think of a time where I was more under pressure than the day I went through Labor. It looks like you had a rougher time though, Hope you had a speedy recovery!

I have had three children, so I know how hard it is to have a baby, however, I didn't have any emergency procedures done, so I can't imagine what that must feel like. I'm so proud of you for not losing control and for doing all you needed to do to get through it for you and your baby. Thankfully, your mother could be there to support you and help you through it. I love it when I can lean on someone in times of need and glad she was there for you. Congratulations on your baby!
The way I deal with pressure is simply by eliminating it. I believe there is no reason to be pressured or feel pressured under any circumstances. Anytime I feel too much pressure from school or work I simply ask for God’s help and knowing that God is always with me I know there is no reason to be stressed. My approach to everything in life is to relax and take it one step at a time. This keeps pressure from ever coming my way. In any case where another person tries to pressure me into doing something, I know I am my own person and I will decide what’s best for me.

The pressures that Orwell and Hughes faced in their stories are certainly relevant today. Peer pressure is seen every day especially among the younger generation. Younger children and teens are all still trying to figure out who they are and can easily succumb to another peers influences or requests. Even in a case like Hughes, we can be pressured to do things for fear we may hurt or disappoint others. Someone may even unintentional pressure us into doing, saying, or believing something we don’t agree with. For example, if your parents are practicing Catholics they are most likely going to raise you into the Catholic faith. Your parents may not mean to pressure you to believe in God; they may just be trying to teach you what they believe to be the truth.

Attachment: Ashley 005.JPG (2.302 MB)
Ashley,
Do you feel that older people face the pressure to fill the mask of old age and wisdom?
Guinevere

Ashley, I love it! I always say "I'm so blessed to be stressed!". It's a process to try to keep that in mind, but it's so true!
ONLINE COLLABORATIVE Activity #2 (simple): Reflection Blog

OBJECTIVE:
Students will choose from a number of deliverables to show their abilities to comprehend, reflect on, and relate to literature and/or current events. Students will show varied degrees of expertise using technology to share with peers online. In addition, students will demonstrate the ability to relate to various blogs in their writing.
Something different this week. This online blog will give you a chance to reflect on writing tasks you’ve completed, literature read as part of the class, and the MLA-themed paper you’re almost finished constructing. This blog will also hopefully allow you to develop a deeper appreciation of your class activities as they relate to you, art, and current events. The blog will be a great way to connect to each other and view literature from diverse and multiple perspectives as classmates read, relate, and comment on your submissions.

To contribute to the blog, you need to select only one of the four options:

1. **Context to Self** (how the writing, literature, or research relates to you)
2. **Context to Art** (how the writing, literature, or research relates to a film, play, music, sculpture, painting, etc.)
3. **Context to Current Event** (how the writing, literature, or research relates to a political, social, or cultural event)
4. **Creative Craving** (how the writing, literature, or research catalyzes your artistic expression)
Context to Self - write at least a four paragraph response (intro., body, body, conclusion) that your class writings, course literature, or your current research to a specific aspect of your life. This must be meaningful and insightful reflection.
Where appropriate, include visual images, such as photos, that relate to your reflection.

Context to Art - write at least a four paragraph response (intro., body, body, conclusion) that your class writings, course literature, or your current research to a specific film, play, musical artist, sculpture, or painting. This must be a meaningful and insightful reflection.
Where appropriate, include visual, audio, or links elements, such as a photo of the art, a link to the film's synopsis, or an audio link to the music.

Context to Current Event - write at least a four paragraph response (intro., body, body, conclusion) that your class writings, course literature, or your current research to a specific current event (political, social, or cultural) in our society. This must be meaningful and insightful reflection.
Where appropriate, include visual or video images, such as a link to a news report.

Creative Craving - create an original artistic interpretation that relates to one of the pieces of literature we have read. This must be a meaningful and insightful artistic expression.
Include the creative expression in your blog with a one to two paragraph explanation.

POSSIBILITIES:
1. Create a short film that retells one story that we have read. (5-8 minutes in length)
2. Make something with your hands that you have never made before that is homage to a story, author, or character that we have read/discussed.
3. Write and perform an original poem or song about one character that we have read and discussed (at least 20 lines / at least 4 stanzas). Include a link to your performance for the class to view.
4. Graphically interpret a specific short story that we have read/discussed (at least 10-12 frames).
5. Create an original story or play that is inspired by a specific reading.
For my research paper I am writing about the American Dream which is described in “The Great Gatsby” by F Scott Fitzgerald. As I read through the book I realized how much the American Dream related to me and my major. I am majoring in event management and am going to be dealing with “bridezillas” who only have the image of lavish over the top weddings in mind.
The book also reveals how much social class means to people. This brought me back to high school where everybody had their own groups. Every high school has the popular people who everybody looks up to and then you have the nerds who everybody makes fun of. When I was in high school I did not belong to any group and hated school because of all the groups. Many girls and guys believe if they are top dog in the school that they will go far after which is not the case and they start at the bottom of the totem pole once they graduate school.

In conclusion I have realized while reading the book that people who strive to only live the American dream destroy themselves and I can relate this to real life since the media made me think I would live a lavish life because everybody on TV did. Even if you do not live the lavish lifestyle and are not the highest social class you can succeed and be happy with life, I know this first hand!
The Marriage that Divides

The Prequel to The Story of An Hour

Brently walked down Main Street, head held high, carrying his newly purchased grip-sack as though it was a trophy. His mind swimming with thoughts on the entire country he could now travel and make his own just by the power of his voice and influence over others. With the new invention of the train, he could travel anywhere and trade with the entire population. With his thoughts on prosperity and money, he walked into the suit shop with the air of authority he had yet to earn.

“Sir,” he impatiently declared to the shop keeper, “I will need a suit of your best material. Make certain it will not wrinkle after sitting, as I want to be presentable for my meetings after a long train ride.”

He watched the small shop keeper hurry around, noticing his intimidated glances towards him. There was noise from the back of the building and a young woman walked into the shop with her arms laden with yards of fabric. The shop keeper rushed over and started furiously whispering and gesturing towards Brently.

Brently had the decency to not stare and concentrated on admiring himself in the mirror. Out of the corner of his eye he noticed the shape of the woman blossoming from her age and innocence showing on her face as the small man admonished her. The shop keeper was obviously upset she had interrupted his sale and did not want her presence in the shop. After the hushed tones had ceased, Brently dedicated his entire gaze to the girl who was looking shamefully in his direction. He started at her wide hips and travelled up to her broad shoulders and delicate, pale, white arms. She would be the perfect comfort to come home to after a long business trip.

He caught her eye and found she had been watching his entire investigation. She gave him a look of disdain that could have stopped a stampede of cattle in their tracks, and turned to return to the back of the shop. The shop keeper returned to fussing over Brently, but Brently could not concentrate beyond his need to tame the fire in the young woman and encourage the original complacent innocence he had seen.

“Who was that girl who had the audacity to interrupt my fitting?” he demanded.

“My apologies, sir,” stammered the shop keeper, “my daughter Louise was unaware you were here. She will not be bothering us again.”

“Why is she here at the shop and not at home with her children, as a wife should be?”
ONLINE COLLABORATIVE Activity #3 (complex): Group Analysis and/or Performance

OBJECTIVES:
Students will analyze literature while collaborating face-to-face via video chat.

Students will perform a scene from a play using face-to-face video chat.

Students will show evidence of exchanging ideas, analysis, and collaborative portrayals using face-to-face video chat.

Students will create material that peers can review asynchronously.
What is a Google Hangout?

A “Hangout” is:

• a free, virtual space that allows up to ten people to collaborate via video chat.
• Documents, participants’ screen views, and other tools can be shared and used together.
Google Hangout example:

Freshman Composition I online students analyzing the essay

What Is Poverty?

by Jo Goodwin Parker

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gTbMCMxxX8
Google Hangouts:
How are students guided?

Your Hangout should last between 30 and 45 minutes and address the following questions:

• What is the thesis of the essay?
• What are some of the themes prevalent? What in the text exemplifies the themes?
• The essay is for what type of audience?
• What imagery does the author use to keep the essay interesting?
• What techniques does the author use to help a general reader/audience relate to the essay?
• What kind of descriptive language stands out?
• What's the most vivid image one might take away from the essay?
• Why was the essay included in the 75 Readings text?
Additional Hangout examples:

Analysis of Why Leaves Turn Color in The Fall by Diane Ackerman

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2GkkPoWZnE

Analysis of The Truth About Lying by Judith Viorst

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssJpoZWiAJY&feature=g-user-u

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pmGhmBtcTU&feature=plcp
Google Hangout examples:

Hamlet – Act 1 analysis
http://www.youtube.com/embed/FiU2pIlukSo

Hamlet – Act 2 analysis
https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=-bw923CAyic#

Hamlet – Act 4 analysis
https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=AVDgWG1lKO4#!
For your fourth and final Hamlet group assignment, you are to revisit your Google Hangout – in dramatic fashion!
Your assignment is to hangout again – in costume while performing the part of one of the characters in your group's act! Now, you don't have to do the entire act (unless your group wants to!) but you do need to choose a scene in your act that features at least three speaking characters.
AND that's not all! If your group wishes, you can perform it in any style/costuming that you desire. Maybe change Act 3 into a Western! How about having everyone like a "valley girl" in Act 5? Maybe you take on a Star Trek them for Act 2! Your group can decide! You can certainly perform it in Elizabethan style as well. Talk about it with group members for a bit, choose a theme, and go for it!
When your performance-hangout is finished, upload it to You Tube and invite me to see it (heck, I'd be happy to play a part if you need an extra hand!)
ONLINE COLLABORATIVE Activity #4 (complex): Group Song Recording

OBJECTIVE:
Students will indicate that they can write and perform a song that helps to explain a grammatical concept. Students will show evidence of exchanging ideas and audio files relating to the concept and for editing and formatting purposes. Students will be able to complete all activities asynchronously.
What is AUDACITY?

Audacity is a free audio recording software; all your students need is a computer-based microphone.

http://audacity.sourceforge.net/
How can the instructor relay the process to online students?

View below for how to download an MP3 karaoke file from Amazon.com:
https://tegr.it/y/dx47

View below for a how-to on uploading your MP3 karaoke to Audacity and mixing it with your voice!
https://tegr.it/y/dx53

View here for how to upload your .WAV file to Dropbox so that all your group members can use it!
https://tegr.it/y/dx77
Group audio recording:
even more **FREE software** for converting files to Mp3’s

To learn how to transform your Audacity recordings to MP3 files, enjoy the video below:

https://tegr.it/y/dxs4

Good luck! Let me know if you have any questions. You are on your way!!

Dr. P
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<td>Rules for using Quotation and Hyphen.</td>
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<td>Thursday, February 23, 2012</td>
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So . . . were student expectations met?

“In the current online course, I feel connected to other students and have gotten to know them.”

(24 respondents)

(18 respondents)
“Working with groups of students, not individually, is the way I learn best.”

(26 respondents) vs (18 responses)
Final Survey Question . . .

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tr>
<td>the Monday Mindset discussions</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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<td>the readings</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
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<td>the review question templates</td>
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<td>the grammar exercises/review tests</td>
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<td>the Beauty and Inner Beauty essay</td>
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<td>the group wiki page</td>
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<tr>
<td>the group Facebook page or PowerPoint</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>the group songwriting activity</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please list any additional information here: 1

GOLD FEATURE: Text Analysis allows you to view frequently used words and phrases, categorize responses and turn open-ended text into data you can really use. To use Text Analysis, upgrade to a GOLD or PLATINUM plan.

I'm not going to lie. It was fun
Sometimes . . . It goes REALLY WELL!

Haha yea it was virtually. I was trying to line the voices up but it wasn't working out so well. So I had Katheryn sing it first and then had her send it to Daniella who sang over it, and then that was sent to me and I sang over it. So instead of us all singing it and then combining we were basically all singing over the same recording so that we could follow along with the person singing.
Thank you again! The extra time was much needed! :)
Ashley

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 1, 2013, at 9:46 AM, Neal Phillips <nphillips@valenciacollege.edu> wrote:

> It is exactly what was wanted! Nice job you three!
> >
> > Now tell me, you three didn't PHYSICALLY get together to record this, right? You did it virtually, correct? Be honest! I'm so impressed that you are all three singing as a chorus and in time with each other!!
> >
> > Thanks, Ashley. :) 
> >
> > Prof. of English / Communications Dept.
> > 407-582-1134 / 3-241 / nphillips@valenciacollege.edu
> >
> > "It's not how hard you hit; it's how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward."
> > -Mickey, Rocky Balboa's trainer
SONG based on Why Leaves Turn Color In The Fall by Diane Ackerman

A Beautiful Secret (My Favorite Things – Julie Andrews)

The Season is changing and fall is here
The green leaves of camouflage disappear
Traveling Eastward, to the Scene,
We’re guaranteed the best views we’ve seen!
Orange leaves and red ones and yellow ones too,
All pop out and give a breathtaking view.
Their beautiful secret behind a chlorophyll mask
The tree must take its nutrients back
Children love to play in the pile of leaves,
Their parents have raked up from the massive trees
Feeling so cozy upon something they can relate
The leaves offer us a dazzling fate
When the leaves fall
The season’s ending
When the trees look sad,
I’ll simply remember the beautiful leaves,
And wait for Fall again!
Hamlet – Act 1 example

Hamlet’s sad, Hamlet’s mad, He doesn’t know what to do
See his mom; watch his uncle, marrying each other
One dark night, there was ghost
He came out of nowhere and was a host
Why would his uncle marry his mother?
Leaving Hamlet like no other
His mother was wrong for that
When Horatio heard of the ghost
He then took Hamlet to go steak out
They want to investigate
They were told by the ghost
He was the king, strong and free, as I remember him
He was the king, can you see him in the gleam
He does not speak, to anyone but me, he is commanding his wish
See the king, he wants revenge, he is still my king.

His reasoning holds my heart
“Break him down to save us all”
Stealing life from another surely will not do
To lead and command
Then we remember again

That he was the king, strong and free, as I remember him
He was the king, can you see him in the gleam
He does not speak, to anyone but me, he is commanding his wish
See the king, he wants revenge, he is still my king..
Hamlet – Act 5, Scene 1
“Okay, so how do I do/teach these wonderful online projects?!”

FIRST, let’s talk about Google Hangouts:

https://tegr.it/y/124fz
KEY ITEMS for the Hangout to be successful:

• Group members should create a Google “g-mail” account; it can always be deleted after the project.

• Make sure whomever starts the hangout chooses to BROADCAST it.

• Make sure that same person has a YouTube account. The hangout can then be automatically saved to YouTube.
“Alright – the Hangouts are easy enough. But this recording thing? C’mon! Too hard!”

FIRST STEP:
Download Audacity for free at: http://audacity.sourceforge.net/

SECOND STEP:
Make sure you have a microphone so that you can record.
STEP THREE:
Convert your file to an Mp3 …

https://tegr.it/y/dxs4

STEP FOUR:
Upload to DROPBOX

https://tegr.it/y/dx77

USERNAME:
nphillips@valenciacollege.edu
PASSWORD:
musicproject2013
Once you have uploaded to DROPBOX, let your group mates know!

STEP FIVE:
Share your work! Send an e-mail telling your mates how to access your song file.

STEP SIX:
When finished, download some special software, the “Lame Mp3 Encoder,” to make your audio tracks into an Mp3:
http://manual.audacityteam.org/o/man/faq_installation_and_plug_ins.html
YOU and your partners/group mates have just completed a group recording without actually squeezing into a recording booth together!

IN MANY CASES, you and your partners/group mates have also created a literary guide via analysis or dramatic interpretation for other students online!

YOU HAVE POSITIVELY IMPACTED STUDENTS EVERYWHERE.


CONTACT INFORMATION:
Neal R. Phillips, Ed.D.
Professor of English
Communications Division
Valencia College – West campus
1800 S. Kirkman Rd., Bldg. 3-241
Orlando, FL 32811-2302
nphillips@valenciacollege.edu
407-582-1134