Videoconference Project Templates

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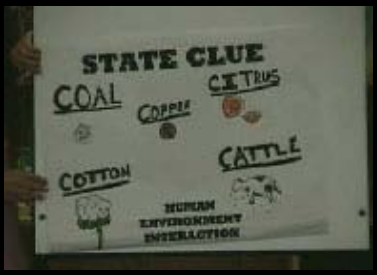

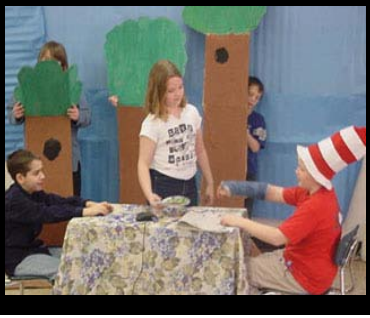

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4th Edition (2009)

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Introduction

What is a Videoconference Project?
A collaborative project gives you and your students an opportunity to learn and interact with another school or classroom around the world.

Point-to-Point
Point-to-point videoconferences involve two classrooms connecting to each other and sharing information.

Multipoint
Multi-point videoconferences require a bridge or multi-point videoconference system to connect three or more classrooms to each other and sharing information.

Student Projects
Project videoconferences are centrally managed and coordinated. Information about how to participate is provided; dates and times are set; teacher training may or may not be required. *(Definition by VCRox.com)*

Collaborations
A videoconference collaboration begins with a teacher's idea. The teacher with the idea should have some idea of what the partner class should do. *(Definition by VCRox.com)*

CITW (Marzano's Instructional Strategies)
You'll note this acronym for Classroom Instruction That Works throughout the booklet. Use these tips to improve your instructional practice in collaborations and projects.

Project Templates
Use the templates in this booklet as idea starters. Plug in your content, find a partner, and connect to another class!

Interaction is Key
Videoconference technology allows for real-time interaction. So capitalize on that feature and make sure your collaborations are designed to include interaction. Which types of interaction do you currently use? Which interaction types do you want to try next?

- **Question and Answer.** The basic exchange is the simplest template with the interaction consisting of questions and answers at the end of the presentations.
- **Participate in each other's presentations.** Have the other class participate in your presentation. This could include the snow ball fight idea, doing the actions along with the presenting class, etc.
- **Share created objects**. This type of interaction is modeled in the descriptive writing exchange, sharing worm farms, growing gardens, and in design projects.
- **Interact with the other class' content**. Game shows, quiz shows, any academic challenges. Data collection projects. Role playing, mock trials, etc. Each of these formats requires you to interact with the content presented by the other class.
- **Use the other class' information** to solve a problem or a mystery. MysteryQuest, Texas History Mystery, etc. are good examples of this type of interaction.
- **Create something together.** Students are drawing, designing or creating based on the directions given by the partner class. Hands-on interaction!
- **Dialogue, discussion, debate.** These are true spontaneous conversations. Usually on hot topics: GNG's discussions of hot topics, and MAGPI's issue discussions.

Exchange Projects

Topic Ideas: Scientific demonstrations, explanation of math concepts, social studies topics, communities, reading or cultures. Students could present a poem or essay, share a reader's theater, sing a song, or present research.

Time frame: Plan for a few class periods prior to the connection to prepare and a 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Decide how to present the topic (lecture, discussion, hands on activity). Then decide how to involve the other class in your presentation. Plan for visuals. Assign tasks and involve as many students as possible. Prepare your presentation.

Agenda: 50 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

Visuals: Share a few pictures of local interest.

30 min. *Presentations.* Each class shares a 15 minute demonstration and/or presentation on the assigned topic. Teachers should negotiate who will cover what to prevent duplication.

Visuals: Can be a live scientific experiment demonstration, iMovie of the experiment, or PowerPoint with digital pictures of the experiment/concept, posters with large letters.

15 min. *Question and answer.* Share 3 things you learned from the other class. Then take two minutes of silence to brainstorm questions about the content and about each other.

Examples: See Read Around the Planet at www.twice.cc.

CITW Setting Objectives: Create a collaborative KWL together before the videoconference using an online collaboration tool: http://www.ncs-tech.org/?p=1663

Read more on CITW & VC: http://vcoutonalim.org/marzano/

Exchange: Increasing Interaction

While a traditional exchange consists of a 15 minute presentation by each class followed by a question and answer period, there are ways to increase the interaction between the two classes. These work best when you've discussed the session with your partner teacher ahead of time.

Snowball fight. Northern classes matched up for Read Around the Planet with classes in the south enjoy explaining snow. A paper snowball fight is always exciting.
Interactive readers' theatre. Create a PowerPoint slideshow with the words to a readers' theater and have your audience read some of the lines.
Trade off presenting. Instead of presenting for the full 15 minutes, trade off small sections, i.e. when sharing poetry, each class shares one poem at a time.
Response drawing. Have each class draw something in response to what they learned from the other class.
Response movements. Have the other class do a simple momevent (stand up, two claps) as you quiz them. Make the movements represent the knowledge if possible.

K-2 Repetition Exchange

To adapt an exchange format for short attention spans, start by making the interaction 15-25 minutes instead of 45 minutes.

- ***Book exchange.*** One class reads a book; the other class reads the book; then read it together.
- ***Repetitious pattern learning exchange.*** Take a similar learning pattern such as Zoo phonics, and share with each other. Both classes do the actions or routine.

Descriptive Writing Exchange

Topic: Any descriptive writing used to practice following directions or identify something based on the description (monster, teddy bear, elf, snowman, turkey, animal and its habitat, etc.).

Time frame: Several class periods prior to the connection to prepare the writing, send it to the other class, create a response, and the 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Each class prepares the original descriptive writing and sends it to the partner class. Classes prepare their response (i.e. making something based on the writing).

Agenda: 50 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

20 min. *Revealing Answers.* Classes take turns sharing their response and seeing the original object/plan or guessing their pen pal.

10 min. *Similarities & Differences.* Take turns asking the students to identify what is the same and different between the monsters. Compliment the other class specifically. Describe what could have been described more accurately.

5-15 m. *Question and answer*. Students may enjoy asking each other questions about their locations.

Examples:

Monster Match: http://www.monstermatchproject.com/

Pen Pal Descriptions: http://kusdevcopps.blogspot.com/2006/11/descriptive-writing-put-to-test-via.html

Exchange Plus Artifacts & Objects

Exchange projects can be extended by including artifacts or objects. Here are some examples:

Showing Things

- ***Growing seeds***. Plant seeds at the same time and under the same conditions and compare the growth between classes at different latitudes.
- ***Worm farm***. Any classroom experiment such as a worm farm can be shared with another class.
- ***Show 'n' Tell***. Have students bring in a favorite object to show and share with the partner class. This helps break the ice for students nervous about videoconferencing and gives them something to talk about. Classroom pets are popular too.

Sending Things

- ***Care packages***. Some classes send chocolate, samples of leaves, souvenirs and other special objects to their exchange partner classes.
- ***Mystery box***. Send a box of clues about your location and/or clues to solve some other type of curriculum related mystery.

Examples:
Worm Farms: http://bit.ly/10o75R

Show 'n' Tell: http://showntell.notlong.com

Growing Gardens: http://gardens.notlong.com

Mystery Box: http://mysterybox.notlong.com

Clue Box: http://collaborativevcs.pbwiki.com/GS+Project+2

Language Exchange

A common scenario for students to practice a language is to speak to native speakers who are learning English. In this scenario, both groups of students need to practice the language, and are often very nervous. Use these suggestions for your first videoconference, and then if you continue to meet regularly, try some of the other templates such as game shows, etc. to practice the language.

Time frame: You will need at least a couple class periods prior to the connection to prepare, and then the 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Teachers should exchange vocabulary lists that are the current focus of study. Students should prepare questions in the target language. It is best if at first students read the questions from a card, as their nervousness is accentuated by the videoconference. As they become more comfortable, they will not need this help. In addition, prepare some statements (with visuals if possible) in the target language about your community and area. Then during the videoconference, post a list of the vocabulary the other class is learning and use the words often.

Agenda: 45 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school in the target language.

20 min. *Short presentations.* Classes take turns sharing information about their community and life in the target language.

20 min. *Question and answer.* Students ask each other questions using the target language, and answer in their native language.

Analytic Hot Issue Exchange

Topic: Pick a hot topic such as carbon emissions, dwindling food supply, melting ice, use of water bottles, the plastic island, Guantanamo Bay, home mortgages, etc.

Time frame: At least a couple class periods prior to the connection to prepare, and then the 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Classes should investigate an issue and prepare a presentation answering the following questions. In addition, they should send a one page note-taking guide to the partner class.

- What are the errors in reasoning in this information?
- How is this information misleading?
- What is an argument that would support the following claim?
- Why would someone consider this to be good (or bad or neutral)?
- What is the reasoning behind his or her perspective?
- What is an alternative perspective, and what is the reasoning behind it? (Marzano, 2001, CITW, p. 116)

Agenda: 45 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

40 min. *Short presentations.* Classes take turns presenting. The students in the audience class take notes and jot down questions (CITW: Note Taking). After each presentation, the audience students share at least three things they learned and ask questions.

10 min. *Question and answer*. If time and interest allows, students may enjoy asking each other questions about their respective locations.

Read more on CITW & VC: http://vcoutonalim.org/marzano/

Advance Organizer Exchange

Topic: Pick a topic that's meaty in content that both classes can contribute knowledge to an advance organizer. (CITW: Advance Organizers.)

Time frame: You will need at least two class periods prior to the connection to prepare, and then the 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Choose an online collaborative drawing or brainstorming tool: http://www.ncs-tech.org/?p=1663. As a class (with an interactive white board if possible), add knowledge to the advance organizer. Email your partner school to add more to it. Share back and forth a few times. Decide what knowledge needs to be investigated to add, and decide which class will research each part. Each class prepares a presentation about their part of the new knowledge.

Agenda: 45 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

40 min. *Short presentations.* Classes take turns presenting. The students in the audience class take notes and jot down questions (CITW: Note-taking). After each presentation, the audience students share at least three things they learned and ask questions about the presentation.

10 min. *Question and answer*. If time and interest allows, students may enjoy asking each other questions about their respective locations.

After the videoconference, each class again adds additional information to the online advance organizer. Brainstorm other uses for this new knowledge.

Read more on CITW & VC: http://vcoutonalim.org/marzano/

1-to-1 Laptop Exchange

Topic: This format is for 1-to-1 laptop schools with students and teachers working on learning to take notes and create summary frames on different types of knowledge. (CITW: Summarizing and Note-Taking.) Pick a topic that students could present to teach each other.

Time frame: You will need at least a couple class periods prior to the connection to prepare, and then the 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Both classes should already be familiar with the intended note-taking/summarizing strategy. Each class prepares their presentation on the content. Teachers agree ahead of time which Summary Frame format to use.

http://gets.gc.k12.va.us/VSTE/2008/2summarize.htm

Combination Notes
Narrative Frame
Topic-Restriction-Illustration Frame
Definition Frame
Argumentation Frame
Problem/Solution Frame/
Conversation Frame

Agenda: 45 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

40 min. *Short presentations.* Classes take turns presenting. The students in the audience class take notes using the summary frame. After each presentation, some of the audience students bring up their laptops to show their summary frames.

10 min. *Question and answer*. Students may also enjoy asking each other questions about their locations.

Read more on CITW & VC: http://vcoutonalim.org/marzano/

Topic Ideas: Difficult math and science problems or brainteasers for any grade level.

Time frame: You will need at least one period prior to the connection to practice the format and a 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: A teacher or coordinator prepares the problems ahead of time. A PowerPoint presentation with the problems will make it easiest for students to understand the problem. Students may practice ahead of time with similar problems.

Agenda: 50 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school. The lead teacher gives instructions & reminders.

2-3 min. A problem is presented visually and orally.

3-5 min. Both sites mute and students attempt to solve the problem.

3-5 min. Both classes present their solutions and wait for confirmation from the lead teacher.

3-5 min. Classes share a math or science joke.

Repeat this process until you run out of time. If time and interest allows, students may enjoy asking each other questions about their respective locations.

This format is based on the following two projects:

Math Marvels by Linda McDonald: http://bit.ly/onwCc

Science Seekers by Ken Conn: http://bit.ly/Xhv91

Academic Challenges: Game Shows

Topic: Students enjoy playing roles from popular game shows such as Jeopardy, Are You Smarter than a Fifth Grader?, etc.

Time frame: You will need a few class periods prior to the connection to prepare the questions and possibly even to negotiate the question categories with your partner school. Plan for a 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: The hosting school should decide if they will just host the game show or also have a competing team. The hosting team should develop the questions and communicate the rules to the other participating class. A plan for points and various categories should be developed as well.

Agenda: 50-60 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

Visuals: Use the document camera or PowerPoint to share a few local pictures of interest.

30-40 min. The format of the questions and interaction will vary based on the game show format selected.

Visuals: Students enjoy creating a set to look like the real game show. Encourage this type of planning and creativity if you have time. See page 36 for a list of potential student jobs.

5 min. *Conclusion.* If time is available, students may enjoy asking each other questions about their respective locations and schools before signing off.

Note: Game shows make a great format for presentations in other activities as well.

Topic: You could run a quiz bowl on a specific topic, or on a collection of general knowledge topics.

Time frame: You will need a few class periods prior to the connection to prepare the quiz bowl questions and a 45-60 minute videoconference for the event.

Preparation: The hosting school should have a team to lead the quiz bowl and may also wish to have a competing team. The lead team should develop the questions and communicate the rules to the other participating classes. A plan for points and various categories should be developed as well.
Note: A quiz bowl is more fun with more than two schools connecting. A facilitator and a technician managing a bridge to connect multiple sites would be needed to make this a multi-point project.

Agenda: 50-60 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

Visuals: Share a few pictures of local interest.

30-40 min. Three-to-four ten minute question rounds. Moderator indicates the order of questions and reads the questions. Another person should keep track of the points. Rotate through each of the participating schools/teams.

Visuals: The document camera could be used to have teams record their answer and then share it. In addition, some questions may be enhanced with a visual aid.

5 min. *Conclusion.* If time is available, students may enjoy asking each other questions about their respective locations and schools before signing off.

Credit: The Saxophone Project by NOVA Southeastern.

Topic: Choose a topic where students guess what is presented by the other participating class(es). (i.e. an author, a book, an historical figure,a geographical location, a time period, etc.)

Time frame: A two month lead time to advertise to classes and give them 3-4 weeks to prepare. An hour or two videoconference with two to six classes.

Preparation: Decide on the required clues or clue categories to communicate to other the classes. Decide how to present the clues. Plan for visuals. Assign tasks and involve as many students as possible. Prepare the presentation.

Agenda: 120-170 minutes

10 min. *Welcome and introductions.*
50 min. *Presentation.* Each class shares a 5-7 minute presentation of clues.
30-40 min. *Silence on the videoconference.* Each class works to research to solve the mysteries presented.
20 min. *Clarifying questions.* Each class asks clarifying questions of all the other classes.
10 min. *Silence.* Classroom teams reevaluate their answers.
10 min. *All classes share their guesses.*
10 min. *All classes reveal the correct answers and sign off.*

Examples: MysteryQuest World Geography: www.remc11.k12.mi.us/dl/MysteryQuest
MysteryQuest USA: www.remc11.k12.mi.us/dl/MQUSA/
Texas History Mystery: www.texashistorymystery.com
MysteryQuest Beaches: www.remc11.k12.mi.us/dl/MQBeach/
Facilitating Your Own MQ: www.remc11.k12.mi.us/dl/MysteryQuest/facilitation.html

Mystery Motions

Topic: Choose a topic with concepts that can be illustrated with movement. Students remember concepts better when they create their own non-linguistic representation of the knowledge (CITW: Non-linguistic representations).

Time frame: A couple of class periods to prepare and a videoconference.

Preparation: Decide with your partner teacher how to narrow or define the concepts to be included. Have students work in groups to prepare their mystery motions. Practice the motions and make sure the other class will be able to see them clearly enough to guess the concept.

Agenda: 60 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

40 min. *Short presentations.* Classes take turns presenting their motions. After each motion presentation, the other class tries to guess and explain the concept in their own words.

5 min. *What we learned.* After sharing and guessing motions, each class has the students share some concepts they learned.

10 min. *Question and answer*. Students may enjoy asking each other questions about their locations.

Examples:

http://www.twice.cc/WeTheKids/
Dance: http://bit.ly/hNnC9
Kinesthetic Lesson Ideas: http://bit.ly/2mnVgS
Dance of the Water Molecule: http://bit.ly/lcF4A
Musical Drama on Convection: http://bit.ly/13o8K8
Learning Through the Arts: http://bit.ly/xQISC
Read more on CITW & VC: http://vcoutonalim.org/marzano/

Data Collection Projects

Topic: Data collection, analysis, and comparison projects have been popular collaborative projects since the advent of email. Students collect weather data, compare schoolyard animals and plants, observe tourist data such as license plates near their respective locations, count local types of trees, or analyze water quality data to practice data collection and analysis skills.

Time frame: Prior to the conference, students should spend time collecting the required data. You will need a class period or two to prepare your presentation. The actual videoconference can be 45-60 minutes.

Preparation: Decide on the type of data to collect and discuss with the other teacher. Collect the data. Decide how to present the data and what questions to discuss with the other class. Plan for visuals. Assign tasks and involve many students.

Agenda: 50 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school. *Visuals:* Share a few pictures of local interest.

30 min. *Presentations.* Each class shares a 10-15 minute presentation of their data collection process and results. *Visuals:* Photos or digital pictures of the process and graphs of the data collected.

15 min. *Discussion.* Teachers could team facilitate a discussion of the results and their significance. What can be learned from the information? What further questions arise for study? What issues can be discussed based on the data?

Live Data Representation

Topic: This format works best for young students learning how to graph data but could be adapted for other topics. (CITW: Non-linguistic representations).

Time frame: A couple of class periods to prepare survey questions, and a videoconference.

Preparation: Decide with your partner teacher what survey questions could be answered by all the students. Topics could include eye color, hair color, pets, favorite food, favorite toys, favorite weather, etc. Create questions for each class with 4-6 options for each question to make it easy to graph. If desired, set up your VC area with lines on the floor to mark out a live picture graph with 6 items.

Agenda: 60 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

40 min. *Live Graphing.* Classes take turns asking their survey question. Then both classes graph the data on the question by students physically lining up as the "pictures in the graph." The class who asked the question asks the analysis questions: Which is the most? Which is the least? How many more…? How many less…? Take turns asking the survey question.

5 min. *What we learned.* After sharing and answering questions about the graphs, students share some concepts they learned.

10 min. *Question and answer.* Students may enjoy asking each other questions about their locations.

Inspiration from Graph Club: http://bit.ly/2Aftt
Read more on CITW & VC: http://vcoutonalim.org/marzano/

Design Projects

Topic: Do you already have your students build something in your science classes (i.e. a bridge, a rocket, a pinewood derby vehicle, a musical instrument, an invention, an egg drop cage, or a kite.)? Instead of creating alone, build the project in tandem with another class and compare results.

Time frame: A 45-60 minute videoconference to meet your partner class, introduce the concept, and establish guidelines for building. A few weeks to create your invention/project and document the process. A few class periods to prepare your presentation. A 45-60 minute culminating videoconference.

Preparation: *Before the first connection:* Decide on the project and guidelines and concept introduction.

For the building process: Arrange for use of your school's digital camera or camcorder to record the process.

For the presentation: Decide on visuals and the best way to show the process and final product. Assign tasks and involve as many of your students as possible. Prepare your presentation and questions.

Session 1 Agenda: 45-60 minutes

5-10 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares about their location and school.

30 min. *Project overview.* Share background info. Show sample products. Share guidelines of the process.

5-10 min. *Question and answer on process & content.*

Session 2 Agenda: 45-60 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.*

30 min. *Presentations.* Each class shares a 15 minute presentation of their process and final product.

15 min. *Question and answer on process & content.*

Example: http://bit.ly/WE29Q

Debates

Topic: Take a current events topic such as homelessness, terrorism, tax cuts, or an environmental issue.

Time frame: Plan for time to prepare your presentation and a 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Teachers should pick four issues for the debate. Students at each site should be divided into two teams with each team taking one issue. Teams prepare both support and opposition. Teams must also prepare a visual in support and in opposition of the issue for display during the debate. The entire class formulates questions for each issue to be asked during the 5 minute Q & A after each debate. Teachers will hold a "draw" for positions (support or oppose) prior to the beginning of the debate.

Agenda: 50-70 minutes *(depending on class periods of participating classes)*

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

50 min. Two 15 minute debates following this schedule. (The number of debates/topics could be adjusted depending on your schedule.)
5 minutes for the support
2 1/2 minutes for rebuttal from opposition
5 minutes for opposition
2 1/2 minutes for rebuttal from support
5 min. Q&A from the audience at both sites to the presenting teams.

5 min. Audience at each site votes on the most persuasive/prepared team. Use colored voting cards. Repeat the schedule for the second issue.

5 min. *Debrief and Conclusion.* Discuss process & content learned.

Goal Sharing Projects

Topic: Are your students setting goals and keeping track of how they accomplish them? (CITW: Providing Recognition) Give students recognition from an authentic audience and have them share with another class how they achieved their goals. They could inspire the partner class!

Time frame:	Have in place throughout the school year a goal-setting and accomplishment-tracking system. A 45 min. videoconference.
Preparation:	Towards the end of the year, work with students to decide how best to share achievements with another class. The goal is to provide recognition and to inspire each other to meet goals.
Agenda:	5 min. Introductions from each school and background on goals in your school.
40 min.	Rotate between schools sharing goals. After a student shares, the other class provides feedback or at least applause.
10 min.	Ask each other questions to learn more.

Read more on CITW: http://vcoutonalim.org/marzano/

Coffee House Sharing Projects

Topic: Pick something short that students could share in a round-robin fashion, for example, poetry, issue posters, short stories, essays, and other short works.

Time frame:	Plan a class period to help students prepare, and plan for a one hour videoconference.
Preparation:	Have students write/create the work they will show. Have them practice with the mic.
Agenda:	Plan for a moderator to facilitate an open mic session and call on the participating schools in round-robin fashion.

Competition Projects: Poetry "Idol"

Topic: Poetry, advertising, essays. Choose any topic where students create something could be a competition. Poetry slams are popular, as well as using the "American Idol" TV show format for giving feedback. Ads on current issues such as the environment, internet safety are also possibilities.

Time frame: Plan for 2-3 class periods for students to create the work. Plan for a 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Students create work and practice presenting. Teacher and/or students develop a tool for criterion-referenced feedback. Rubistar is a place to start making rubrics. (CITW: Providing Feedback)

Agenda: 45-60 minutes *(depending on class periods of participating classes)*

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school. *Visuals:* Share a few pictures of local interest.

40-50 m. *Presentations and rating.* Students take turns presenting. Students at the other site give specific feedback based on the agreed upon criteria.

5-10 min. *Evaluation.* Share 3 things you learned from the partner class. Ask each other questions about the process. If time, ask each other questions about the process and local communities.

Note: This videoconference format works with both classes presenting or just one class presenting with one or more classes acting as the rating audience.

Read more on CITW: http://vcoutonalim.org/marzano/
Examples: http://texastwistedweather.com/
http://www.globalwrites.org/

Literature Circles

Topic: Student-led discussion of a novel.

Time frame: Four to eight weeks to read the book; weekly videoconferences for the literature circle.

Preparation: Decide on a book and negotiate with your partner teacher which jobs will be taken by each class. You might trade off each week. Each week the student leaders may need to communicate via web or email ahead of time in preparation of the videoconference.

Agenda: 35-50 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* In the first session, take some time to get to know the other class and share about your location. In subsequent sessions, you may wish to have a brief weather report or other introduction.

25-40 min. *Discussion.* Using the Literature Circle format, students lead a discussion of the book..

5 min. *Debrief and Conclusion.* After the discussion, teachers may wish to debrief and comment on the process and discussion. Students may wish to debrief on use of the videoconference technology as well.

Follow-up: Students may also enjoy creating and sharing a final project response to the book.

Inspiration for this template:
Through the Wardrobe: The Magic of Reading:
http://litcircle.notlong.com

Additional Resources:
http://litsite.alaska.edu/workbooks/circlereading.html
http://www.litcircles.org/

Mock Trials

Topic: Mock trials work well for high school law classes, middle school and high school history classes, and even elementary literature classes studying fairy tales (i.e. the trial of The Big Bad Wolf).

Time frame: You will need a few class periods prior to the connection to prepare your presentation and a 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: The lead teacher should decide ahead of time if the participating class will be jury only or more involved. For example, one class may be the prosecution and the other class the defense. The trial arguments and statements should be prepared ahead of time.

Agenda: 45-60 minutes *(Time can be adjusted based on grade levels and class period requirements.)*

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

Visuals: Use document camera or PowerPoint to share a few pictures of local interest.

30 min. Mock trial. Teachers should agree on the exact format ahead of time.

5 min. *Debrief and Conclusion.* After the mock trial, teachers may wish to debrief and comment on the process and content/curriculum discussed. If time is available, students may enjoy asking each other questions about their respective locations and schools.

Inspiration from this WebQuest:
http://projects.edtech.sandi.net/hoover/amistad/

Topic: Choose a subject where students could play the role of a client and business, creating a product or solution to meet the needs of the client. One class plays the role of the client and the other class the role of the business. (If desired, roles can be reversed so that classes play both parts.)

Time frame: You will need a few class periods prior to the connection to prepare your presentation and a 45-60 minute videoconference.

Preparation: Teachers should negotiate ahead of time the constraints of the product/solution. Both classes should start by becoming familiar with the topic and possible needs/problems to be addressed by a product/solution. The client class should prepare a presentation of their need. The business class should prepare a presentation showing their ability to serve the needs of the client.

First VC: 30 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.* Each class shares their location and brief information about their school.

10 min. *Present the Problem.* The client class presents the need. The business class sells their company as the best way to provide a solution.

5-10 min. *Questions.* Classes ask questions to clarify.

Preparation: The business class prepares a product or solution. Clarification via email may be necessary.

Second VC: 30-50 minutes

5 min. *Welcome and introductions.*

15 min. The business class presents the solution/product.

10 min. The client class asks questions and indicates whether they would purchase the solution/product.

Inspiration: From Art to Part

http://collaborativevcs.pbwiki.com/Pat+Bearss

Any of the preceding templates can be enhanced and extended with Web 2.0 tools such as blogs, wikis, collaborative document sharing tools, and podcasts.

Blogs

- Students write responses to their reading on a shared blog and give feedback to each other via the comments. The culminating videoconference connects students together to discuss the book or with an author or specialist related to the book. See http://stovall.notlong.com for an example.
- Students collaboratively write a story using a blog or discussion tool for writing or sharing ideas before writing. The videoconference culminates in the presentation of the story. See http://blogvc.notlong.com for an example.

Collaborative Document Creation & Wikis

Collaborative document creation tools can be used to have students work in groups across sites to develop solutions, poetry, graphs, presentations, essays and more. The videoconference is used to set the stage for the collaborative work and to culminate when the task is completed.

- Thumbstacks.com (presentations)
- Docs.google.com (word processing and spreadsheets)
- Gliffy.com or www.bubbl.us (brainstorming)
- PBWorks.com (word processing plus web pages)
- Wikispaces.com (word processing plus web pages)

Podcast

- Classes exchange podcasts on a topic and then videoconference to discuss.
- Or classes create podcasts reporting on their VC.

IP VCR Adapted Projects

What is an IP VCR? The major videoconference vendors have products that allow recording of H323 videoconferences (i.e. the Codian IP VCR, the Polycom RSS, and the TANDBERG Content Server).

The IP VCR content recorder can be used to overcome time zone differences or even simple class scheduling problems.

Test!
Both classes will need to make sure they can connect, record, and view content on the IP VCR.

Challenges
The challenge to students will be that when they are presenting, they will see themselves. This can be very distracting. However if students are prepared properly, they should be able to handle it.

Example: Adapting an Exchange Project

Time frame: A traditional one class period videoconference will take some time over two or three class periods. Include preparation time in your planning too.

Preparation: Both classes prepare their introduction and presentation as usual.

Day 1: Both classes record their introduction and presentation.

Day 2: Partner classes watch the presentation by the other class. Then they generate and record a list of 10-15 questions for the other class.

Day 3: Both classes listen to the questions and then prepare and record the answers. Record a thank you & goodbye too.

Adapt other projects using this same pattern.

IP VCR Video Postcards

Topic: Pick a topic where students from various locations could share something unique and different. Cultures, environment, perspectives, artwork, and poetry are all possibilities. For example, third graders studying regions may collect video postcards from each region. Government classes may collect video postcards advocating a perspective or presidential candidate.

Time frame: A couple weeks to advertise and a couple weeks to collect video postcards. Time to prepare your own video postcard and to view the video postcards from the other classes.

Preparation: Define the parameters of the postcard. The more specific you are, the better quality learning for all students involved. What components are required in each postcard? Be sure to require a short introduction/map activity to share the location of the participating classes. Set a short time limit for the postcards (2-3 minutes). Prepare and record welcome and instructions. Record your own sample response to the question/topic.

Listening to Postcards: Each participating class should also have direction in what to learn from each postcard. You may have a compare/contrast chart or questions for students to answer based on their listening. This scaffolding will increase the learning from viewing the postcards.

Conclusion: Thank the participating classes with a final postcard culminating the learning and thanking them for the participation.

Inspiration from Virtual Postcards & Virtual Testimonials for Megaconference Jr. http://www.megaconferencejr.org/

Time Zones
It's crucial that both sites take responsibility for checking time zones and communicating time and date appointments in both time zones. These tools are excellent:

- http://www.timeanddate.com/ - Great for comparing times to select a convenient time for both locations.
- http://www.qlock.com/ - Install on your PC and add clocks for all your partner countries.

Country Calling Codes

- http://www.countrycallingcodes.com/ - Useful for determining dialing strings for ISDN or phone calls.

Test Calls & Times
Be willing to do test calls at odd times (evening for example). Both sites need to be willing to connect outside of school hours to make the connection work. Be considerate and thoughtful of your partner school.

Getting to Know You
When doing introductions, have your students (or small groups) introduce themselves and share the following:

- I learned .... about your country.
- I didn't know that...
- If I were to come visit, I want to see...

Your partner class will be thrilled that your students took time to learn about them ahead of time.

Extend the Learning
Use collaborative tools to extend the learning beyond one videoconference. Usually due to time zones, one videoconference is all that's feasible. But online tools can enhance the collaboration and broaden students' learning.
http://www.classroom-connection.org/index.html

Collaboration advertisement should include:

- Project "title" or brief description line
- Project detailed description. Describe what you planned, i.e., agenda, outcomes, etc.
- Project time frame. Include dates and times or a range of dates & times you could connect. If you want to connect during a specific class period, give the exact time and time zone you are in.
- How to sign up
- Project registration deadline
- Number of classes that can participate (i.e. will you take the first person who responds? or can more than one school participate?)

Advertising Methods

1. **Local.** Check with your consortium to see other districts in your area have videoconference capability and if there is a listserv you can use to advertise to fellow teachers.
2. **CILC Collaboration Center.** Projects are reviewed and emailed out on Mondays. http://www.cilc.org/collaboration_center.aspx
3. **Collaborations Around the Planet (CAPspace).** Create collaborations based on the templates in this booklet. Collaborations are sent out via Twitter immediately and via email the following morning. http://projects.twice.cc/
4. **Collaboration Collage.** The oldest and most well known K-12 VC listserv. Emails are moderated and usually sent on Tuesdays & Thursdays. www.kn.sbc.com/wired/vidconf/ed1vidconf.html
5. **K12 IVC Listserv**. The fastest way to get a partner. Emails are sent immediately. http://vcrox.com/archives/1112

Preparing Questions for Projects

Often in a project there is time for students to ask each other questions. While questions like, "What time is your recess? What is your favorite subject?" are interesting questions, you may want to delve deeper to take advantage of learning how people live in a different area. What could you learn from your partner class? Consider where they live, how it might be different, and what questions could help you learn more about them. Encourage students to think of questions related to the other class' presentation.

- **Show examples**. Write some questions and show them to the students.
- **Use a KWL or KWHL chart** to set learning objectives and personalize the learning.
- **Place the students in pairs** and encourage them to select their best four questions. Each pair should select only four questions that will be presented to the class.
- **Conduct a round robin elimination** process. When your students have selected their best four questions, ask each group to read their questions to the class. Eliminate duplicate questions among the groups.
- **Revise the questions.** When the elimination process is completed, each student should have at least one unique question to ask in the interview. It is okay if the question has been rewritten to include aspects of duplicates that were eliminated.

6. **For additional information** on preparing questions, please visit http://www.remc11.k12.mi.us/dl/QsLessonPlan.htm

Presentation Tips: The Facility

So, you have made the commitment to have your students make a presentation to students at a distant site. Now comes the question, what can I do to make this a success for my students? The following are some tips you might want to consider.

Know Your Facility

Distance Learning Classrooms and Video Conferencing Centers vary in their presentation capabilities. Many provide document cameras, scan converters for computer based presentations, multiple microphones, and student and instructor cameras. Others don't. It is important to find out what presentation capabilities you have available before you begin preparing materials for your presentation. A visit to the facility and a conversation with the person from your district responsible for the facility can eliminate many potential problems on the day of your presentation.

Prepare Your Materials with Your Facility in Mind

PowerPoint presentations work well in videoconferencing. If you stay within the normal defaults of the PowerPoint software as to font size and background color selections, the students at the distant site will have no problem seeing your presentation visuals.

If you are using a document camera or preparing artwork to be shown in some other manner there are some rules you need to follow for maximum effect.

Aspect Ratio

Television is a horizontal medium. As such, vertical visuals do not work as well. Currently the aspect ratio for television is 4 units by 3 units of measurement. This ratio can be 4 inches by 3 inches, or 4 feet by 3 feet. But it is always horizontal. If you develop artwork, design the materials within the aspect ratio.

Color Choices

Television doesn't like the color red. It tends to make the signal bloom. Stay away from it as a background color choice when developing artwork. Television likes contrast. Black lettering on a royal blue background is a prescription for failure. Black lettering on a light blue background or royal blue lettering on a yellow background work well for television. Make sure the contrast choice between foreground and background is wide in your color scheme.

Document Cameras

If you are using a document camera to present artwork for your presentation use 8 1/2 by 11 paper or construction paper. Follow the aspect ratio and color choices guidelines discussed earlier. Then number your artwork pages in the order that they will be presented. Place the stack of artwork under the document camera. Then, during the presentation remove the top piece of artwork and so on until the stack is depleted.

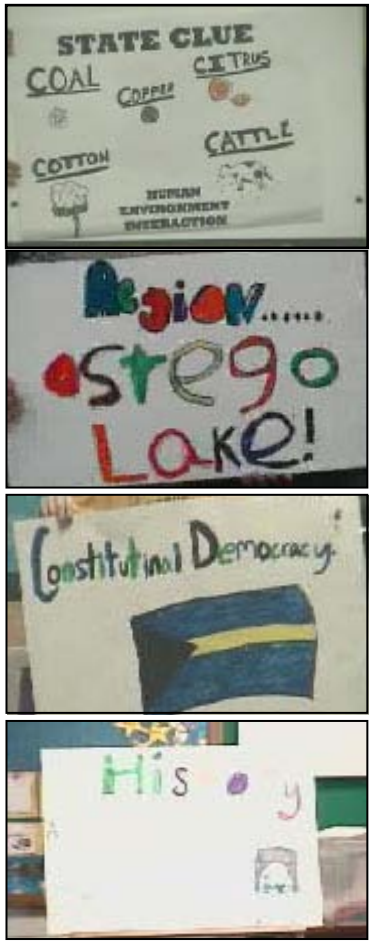
Presentation Tips: Posters

Posters are one of the most difficult visuals to show effectively in a videoconference. In presentations where the other class is taking notes, clear posters are crucial. Even in presentations where the partner class is listening, it's still very frustrating when the posters aren't clear.

Short & Simple
Posters should have small amounts of information.

Large Clear Text
Use a dark fat marker to make the key words large. Test your poster by holding it up across the room to see if you can still read it.

Hold the Poster Still
Note the fourth poster. The contrast isn't clear enough or the text large enough. It was placed on an easel which does help to increase the readability.



Use this **Poster Handout** for Student Groups Making Posters so that students can check their work on their own.

www.remc11.k12.mi.us/dl/MysteryQuest/PosterHandout.pdf

Presentation Tips: Student Jobs

Include as many students during a videoconference as possible. Here is a suggested list of jobs to assign students.

1. ***Art Crew*** - Design backdrop and paint.
2. ***Directors*** - Usually one girl and one boy.
3. ***Stage Hands*** - Move props.
4. ***Lighting and Sound Crew*** - Turn on and off lights/adjust microphone.
5. ***Narrators*** - Usually good readers who are not shy speak well in front of the camera.
6. ***Actors*** – And presenters.
7. ***Costume and Make-up*** - Help put together costumes and help with make-up.
8. ***Writers*** - Help write and edit script. Help with timing and what scenes can be deleted or added.
9. ***Cue Card Holders*** - Hold up cards with lines on them for anyone who might get stuck - hold up scene or act cards during a transition.
10. ***Question and Answer Team*** - These students will answer and ask questions to the other class at the end of the conference.
11. ***Judges*** - These students watch the performance by both schools and write down any changes that might improve the conference for the next time - we must always learn from our mistakes.
12. ***Take Down Crew*** - Cleans up after conference.

This list was presented by Kim Pearce, Gatesville Intermediate School, Language Arts 6th grade teacher, at the 123 Jazzing Up Your Curriculum Workshop Summer 2006. Used by permission.

Organize Your Students

Many times teachers choose to have their students present in small groups of three or four students. To make this work well during the videoconference, consider the seating within the facility. If your students are presenting in small groups have them sit together in that group on the day of the presentation. This eliminates much time spent gathering the students from all over the room. Make certain that the students know the order of presentation so that they are ready when their turn arises. If each group is using artwork have one student responsible for it.

Testing, Testing, One, Two, Three

Audio is the biggest problem we face in videoconferencing especially with younger elementary students. If you are using a facility with only one microphone get your students as close to that microphone as is practical for your presentation. If you are using a Distance Learning Classroom that has ceiling mounted microphones place your students under one of them and have them speak in a loud voice.

Rehearse, Rehearse, and Rehearse

Do some test runs in your classroom. Make certain each student knows his or her role in the presentation and when they are on. Time the presentation to see if it fits within the time frame allotted. If it doesn't, think of ways you can edit the presentation.

Finally, Take Pride in your Students

You have them well prepared. Now go nail your presentation. And have fun!

Evaluation Strategies

It is important to evaluate the project afterwards to improve for next time and to determine student learning.

Evaluation with Students
Discuss the following questions after the videoconference.

- What did we learn from the other school (content, process, and culture)?
- What did we do well in the videoconference?
- What can we improve next time?
- What did we learn about VC from the partner school?

Content Evaluation

- Evaluate the students' understanding of the content in traditional ways (tests, quizzes, etc.)
- Discuss with students how content knowledge was used in the videoconference and how their understanding was refined or extended.

Presentation Evaluation

- Use rubrics from http://rubistar.4teachers.org/ or other sources to evaluate the students' presentations. (CITW: Setting Objectives).
- Discuss what worked well with students in presenting via videoconferencing and what could be improved.

Teacher Reflection
Consider the following questions.

- How did the videoconference enhance or extend the students' understanding of the topic?
- Was the videoconference technology transparent or did it interfere with the learning?
- What could make the interaction more effective?

Planning Your Own Project

Topic:

Dates/times: *You will find it much easier to find partners for projects if you decide the date & time and advertise that.*

Learner Outcomes: *What do you expect your learners to accomplish?*

Methods and Activities: *How will you convey the topic (lecture, discussion, hands-on activity)?*

Materials: *What audio/visual aids, handouts, etc. will you use?*

Time: *About how much time will each part take?*

Students Will Do:

Teachers Will Do:

Agenda: *See sample agendas in this booklet.*

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