

Social Media as an Instructional Tool

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5.2 Assignment: Addictive Elements of Facebook

Using Facebook in instructional design can transform a traditional classroom experience into something much more interactive and engaging. Facebook's addictive features can be adapted to create a learning environment that draws students in and motivates them to stay engaged. Facebook's simple and user-friendly structure, its social interaction components, and its immediate feedback loop are all powerful tools that can be used to encourage learning.

A great example of using Facebook to encourage learning is an assignment I had during my undergraduate English class. We were reading the play *Trifles* by Susan Glaspell and instead of a standard essay, we created Facebook profiles for each of the characters and posted updates from their perspectives. This assignment used Facebook's addictive qualities, like easy interaction and social feedback, to keep us connected to the material. Every time someone commented or "liked" our posts, it gave us instant feedback and encouragement, which kept us more engaged than a typical paper would have. The interaction felt immediate and rewarding, making the learning process feel more real and connected.

Facebook can be used for many other types of assignments that tap into its addictive elements. For example, Facebook could be used to facilitate group discussions where students share their opinions or reflections, while classmates comment and interact with each other's posts. This mirrors Facebook's ability to allow users to "share information with many people simultaneously," which fosters collaborative learning and makes the process feel less isolated. By posting updates, comments, and reactions, students actively engage with each other's ideas, building a sense of community and mutual learning. Facebook's addictive features also encourage observation and peer learning. Students can easily see what their classmates are posting and can be inspired by each other's ideas. If one student shares an insightful post about a

character's motivations, another might be inspired to contribute their own perspective, creating a back and forth dialogue that deepens understanding. This is similar to how Facebook encourages users to see what their friends are doing, sparking curiosity and engagement. If students know that their classmates are interacting with content or posting insightful reflections, they might feel the urge to participate as well. This can help keep students involved in the learning process, because they do not want to feel left out of discussions or miss out on valuable insights. The competitive nature of social comparison also comes into play when students see how others are performing or engaging in discussions, motivating them to keep up and push themselves further.

Facebook can be used in many other ways. Instructors could create a private class group where students share research or discuss upcoming projects. Students could also post short reflections on lectures or readings, while classmates comment to engage with those ideas. These ongoing interactions can create a sense of belonging and community that enhances the learning experience.

Facebook's addictive features can be used in so many creative ways to create a more engaging, collaborative, and dynamic learning environment. The platform has the potential to transform the traditional classroom into a space that keeps students coming back, ready to learn and interact. It is important to use the addictive elements of Facebook in ways that allow for genuine learning and connection rather than simply feeding into distraction. Facebook can be a powerful tool for engaging students and enhancing their learning experiences.

5.3 Assignment: Benefits of Twitter and TikTok: Microblogs

Social media platforms like Twitter and TikTok can actually be great tools for learning when used creatively. These platforms offer some really unique benefits for engaging students,

sparking discussions, and creating engaging content. After exploring both of these platforms, I can see how they can fit into the classroom in ways I had not really thought about before.

Twitter, or X, is known for its very short, text based posts. Twitter is all about being quick and to the point, which is great when you want to get learners to engage with new information without being overwhelming. One way I have seen Twitter used in an educational setting is by creating a class hashtag. After a lesson, the instructor can ask students to tweet one key takeaway using that hashtag. It encourages students to focus on what stood out most to them and summarize their thoughts into a short, clear message. What I like about this is that it promotes active participation, but it is low pressure because learners are not required to write long responses. This is a great way to get everyone talking about the material in a shared space, and it makes it easy for the instructor to see what concepts are resonating with learners.

What I find interesting about Twitter is how it encourages real time interaction. In my own experience, I have participated in Twitter chats where everyone responds to the same set of questions at the same time, and it turns into this ongoing, live discussion. It is cool because students can reply to each other's thoughts instantly, which can lead to some interesting debates or new insights. Instructors can host these kinds of chats too, and by following the hashtag, they can jump in with their own thoughts or questions. This definitely adds an element of immediacy and energy to the class.

TikTok might seem like an odd choice for an educational tool at first, but after seeing how creative people can be using the app, I think it could actually be a really fun way to teach. The platform is all about short, snappy videos, and that format forces you to get straight to the point. I could see using TikTok to post mini lessons that break down tough concepts into bite sized chunks. A history teacher might post a quick TikTok summarizing a key event with visuals

or even a fun reenactment. It is an engaging platform which grabs students' attention and makes learning feel more natural.

One of the coolest things I have seen TikTok used for in education is student created content. In a class setting, students could create their own TikTok videos to explain what they learned. An example of this is asking students to explain a concept in a 30 second video, using props, visuals, or even humor to make it memorable. It can be a creative way for students to reinforce their learning while also showing off their unique take on the material.

Both Twitter and TikTok tap into this idea of creating instant, engaging content that students can interact with in a way that feels natural to them. Instead of long, boring assignments or static content, these platforms make learning feel like a part of the social media experience they are already familiar with and that is what makes them so effective. Twitter helps with quick reflections, discussions, and building a learning community through hashtags and chats. TikTok is a creative, fun approach that makes learning dynamic and interactive. By using these platforms, educators can create more engaging, meaningful learning experiences that keep students motivated and connected to the material.

5.4 Assignment: Using X and Facebook in Instructional Design

Using Facebook to teach about thrift shopping - Post 1

<https://www.colorado.edu/ecenter/2023/12/15/sustainable-guide-thrifting#:~:text=When%20you%20thrift%20you%20help,manufacturing%20process%20and%20cotton%20growth.> I have always been a huge fan of thrifting—not only because I love finding unique pieces, but also because it is such a simple way to make a positive impact on the environment. Thrift shopping helps reduce waste, lowers your carbon footprint, and cuts down on the resources

needed to produce new clothes. For example, did you know it takes over 2,700 liters of water to make just ONE cotton t-shirt? That's a lot of water that we can save by buying secondhand! 
So next time you're out shopping, think about how thrifting isn't just good for your closet, it's good for the world too. 

Using Facebook to teach about thrift shopping - Post 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dLFUQvCT4s> This video gives 30 thrifting hacks. I love the comparison of thrift shopping to going on a treasure hunt because it really captures the excitement and unpredictability of it! Every trip feels like an adventure, and you never know what hidden gems you will find. What are the latest treasures you have found?

Using Facebook to teach about thrift shopping - Post 3

<https://havenhousethriftstores.com/blog/the-art-of-upcycling-turning-thrift-store-finds-into-treasures/> I really enjoy upcycling because it feels like a way to be creative while doing something good for the environment. I love the idea of taking something that might be considered "worn out" and turning it into something fresh or useful. It's satisfying to see an old item transformed with just a little effort and imagination. Plus, it's a great way to add a personal touch to my home or wardrobe without spending too much, and it always feels good knowing I'm helping reduce waste. It's a small but meaningful way to make a difference.