Flipgrid

http://tinyurl.com/y8c9n7f5

Flipgrid is a video discussion platform which allows the sharing of user-generated videos, among an invited group of people, in order to form a 'social learning community'. Educators can create their own online classroom/space (what they call a Grid) and, within their Grid, create individual areas for particular Topics. In each Topic, the Grid owner can set a specific task, such as invite students to pose questions, respond to the task, reflect on a topic or whatever it might be, and students can each contribute their own video that responds to the particular Topic task. It works on the basis, I think, that using video to communicate in this way can be something that young people are comfortable and familiar with, particularly when considering use of social media platforms, and that communicating in this form can be easier than expressing ideas, thoughts or problems in other (such as written) formats.
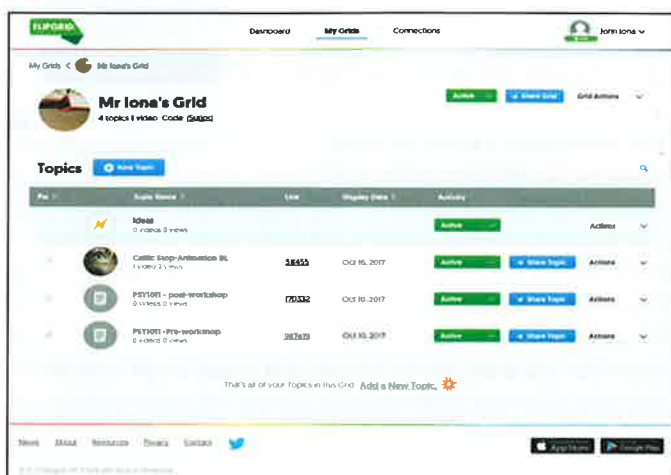
Getting started

Signing up for an account is simple and a free account gives you one Grid, with the capacity to add as many Topics as you wish to. There are a few limitations that a paid-for account will alleviate, such as the length of time of videos, and the type of feedback you can give, but the free account will certainly give access to a decent range of features for the platform to be usable and valuable.

Setting up a new Topic is fairly straightforward, with options to add a stimulus (such as a video or image that either you have created or have found online), an attachment such as a link to a file that you have saved on somewhere like Dropbox, Google Drive etc. or to another website related to your Topic. You specify whether you want to moderate all the responses posted to your Topic, as well as control whether students can 'react' (with likes or emojis) to each other's videos.

Any Grid you create is private and can only be accessed by those who have the share link or code, which you can easily share with your students. Once they have the link, they can then post their video to the Topic. In fact, the easiest way for students to post a video to a Topic is by using the native Flipgrid app. If they have the (iOS or Google Play) app on their phone or tablet, they only need the code for the specific Topic that you want them to post to, and they can then record and post their video directly from their device.

With a Topic that has moderation enabled, you will get an email alert any time a new video is posted to it, and a video won't go live until you review it and set it from 'inactive' to 'active'. Once you set a response to active it is then live, meaning anyone with the URL or Topic code can view it. This allows students to see how their peers are responding to the task, and respond to them with their own video reply or a reaction, allowing for peer-to-peer support.

Privacy and control

In terms of privacy, there are levels of control that you have, but anyone with the URL or code can view the videos and attempt to post their own. Therefore, there is the possibility that if this gets shared outside of the specific group, then the content can be viewed by them. If this happened you can, as the administrator, delete the whole Topic and its' content if you needed to. You can lock a Topic once you have received all the responses you want to gather, and this will then avoid further posts to the Topic at a later date. There is also, as mentioned, the moderation option for any posts, allowing you to review anything before it goes live to the Topic board.

Celtic Stop-Animation BL

What did you learn about stop-animation, during the workshop at the British Library?
You could talk about making the videos, the technology or technique you used to

Ideas for use

Flipgrid could be a very useful learning and teaching tool, and I can think of a range of uses in education across sectors and age ranges. Using video could be a more accessible, or at least alternative, method of gathering students' responses to a task. Although it may present some different issues for students than writing might, it may in fact be an easier medium with which to contribute an opinion, thought or response to a Topic. And so, in this way, Flipgrid can be used to encourage students to:

- pose questions that they might have before starting of a scheme of work, or particular lesson
- reflect on their learning, post-lesson or project
- self-assess their work
- peer-assess a final project
- share their top tips for a topic
- ask questions about something that they are unclear on
- present something to the group that they found useful.

These could easily be adapted and applied to an extra-curricular club, like a book group for example, where pupils can post videos in a similar way to the suggestions above.

Overall

Flipgrid is simple, easy to use, and takes advantage of technology that many, but maybe not all, students have access to. It also seems that Flipgrid is potentially a good tool for helping students to develop their speaking and presentation skills, as well as to engage with their peers and share their learning.

If you are interested, you can see an example of a Topic that I have created here: https://flipgrid.com/51f455.

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