The Flipped Classroom
the Absolute Basics

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The flipped classroom has a high profile in education at the moment. It is a useful way of supporting both the use of technology and active learning, and is one of the key ways that blended learning is being implemented in both schools and universities.
What is the Flipped Classroom?

Flipping the classroom involves moving some of the content presentation out of face-to-face sessions so that students engage with this before the session. This frees up time during the face-to-face sessions for more activities that encourage learning to take place.

This is not a completely new technique, for example giving students readings to do before class is an example of a flip. However the accessibility of thousands of online resources, the ease of creation of new media, and the widespread use of devices such as mobile phones mean that there is now a wide variety of different media to create flips, that can easily be accessed at any time and place by students.

Absolute Basic Flips

The flipped classroom is often presented as about creating videos of lectures, however, flipping does not have to be that time consuming or complicated. In 2014-15 the University of Brighton did a project to investigate how some ‘Absolute Beginners’ to flipping could use this technique in their teaching, and the results of that project have been used to create this guide.
The results of the project identified two very easy ways to create a flip:

1. using open electronic resources (OERs) such as YouTube videos that are already available on the internet
2. using online journal articles accessible via the University library

The rest of this guide shows you how to prepare for these very simple flips.

One of the results of the project was to find out how long it took to create these flips, from considering the idea, choosing a resource, organizing how to share it with students, and considering what activities to do in class time. How long do you think this took?

- 90 minutes
- 150 minutes
- 180 minutes

The answer is 150 minutes. The good thing about creating a flip is that once it is created, it can usually be re-used with very few changes. That’s why it is a good idea to gradually add flips to your teaching to distribute the work in creating them over several years.

Staff were also asked about any issues. Which do you think their main concern was?

- The quality of the available resources
- Managing the face-to-face sessions
- Ensuring students engaged with the resources before the session

Student engagement with resources was the main concern. This is probably not a surprise - however the staff involved felt that there would be few problems once students were part of the culture change involved in flipping.
Timeline of the development of the Flipped Classroom

2000s Increasing emphasis on the role of active learning in higher education rather than lecture style delivery of content as key to student learning, based on work of theorists such as Vygotsky

2002 Learning possibilities of the internet become apparent, for example the launch of MIT’s Open CourseWare

2004 The Khan Academy’s online learning resources for wide range of abilities launched

2008 Aaron Sams and Jon Bergmann, two school teachers from Colorado make videos of their presentations for students to look at before class and do their homework questions in class time – and refer to it as the Flipped Classroom

2009-2011 Flipped Classroom spreads through schools in the USA based on Sams and Bermann’s model

2011 Salman Khan does a TED talk on the Flipped Classroom

2012 Bergmann and Sams publish Flip Your Classroom: Reach every student in every class every day Arlington, VA: ISTE

2012 Flipped Learning Network created

2012 Educause, a US non-profit organization that researches trends in technology in education published 7 Things You Should Know About Flipped Classrooms

2013 The New York Times publishes an article on the Flipped Classroom

2015 Reviews of effectiveness of flipped classroom in Higher Education begin to be published e.g. Flaherty and Craig 2015 The Flipped Classroom: A Scoping Review in The Internet and Higher Education

2012 The Washington Post publishes an article on the Flipped Classroom
Using Open Educational Resources (OERs)

OERs are educational resources that are freely available online, for example instructional videos from YouTube or PowerPoints from OER repositories.
Using Open Educational Resources (OERs)

Designing the flip

• Consider what learning objectives you want to achieve with the flip. The Six Steps to Blended Learning will help in your decision making process.

• Decide on the resource you want to use. The CLT’s resources pages have several blog posts on OERs with links to resources, including some subject specific ones. These IS pages on resources also have further guidance.

• Think of what flip activity you want students to do with the resource. They could just watch it, or you could give them questions to answer, or ask their opinion on what they have watched.

• Take time in a face-to-face session to explain to students the principles of flipping and what you are expecting them to do. The feedback from staff who took part in the flipped initiative emphasised this as a way of getting students to engage.

• Work out how to share the resource with students. You could give them a link to the webpage where it is situated, put the resource into studentcentral, or ideally, link to it via Aspire.

• If the flip involves students doing an activity with the OER, even if it is just writing notes, consider whether and how students can share their findings. Will they bring answers or opinions to class? Share them with the group via email? Post on a blog in Blackboard? And how you will use that information in the class session?

• Consider what activities to do in class – group work, discussion, a writing exercise, etc. For more ideas see the CLT’s Study Pack on Teaching Large Groups and chapter 6 of this resource: Exley, K. & R. Dennick (2004) Giving a lecture: from presenting to teaching. London: Routledge. You will need your University of Brighton login to follow the link. For ideas on using mobile technologies see this resource.
Using eJournal articles

Getting students to read a journal article before class is a very traditional flip, but eJournal articles are accessible on many devices and offer new ways of note taking and sharing.
Part 3

Using eJournal articles

Designing the flip

• Consider what learning objectives you want to achieve with the flip. The Six Steps to Blended Learning will help in your decision making process.

• Think of what flip activity you want students to do with the eJournal paper. As well as reading it, you may give them some questions to answer or ask them to review it in some way.

• The best way for students to access eJournal articles is through an Aspire reading list. If you are already set up to use Aspire, follow these instructions to add an eJournal article, for more information about using Aspire see these guidelines.

• Consider how the students are going to share the responses to the flipped activity if you have one. Will they bring answers or opinions to class? Share them with the group via email?

Post on a blog in Blackboard? And how you will use that information in the session?

• Consider what activities to do in class – group work, discussion, a writing exercise, etc. For more ideas see the CLT’s Study Pack on Teaching Large Groups and chapter 6 of this resource: Exley, K. & R. Dennick (2004) Giving a lecture: from presenting to teaching. London: Routledge. You will need your University of Brighton login to follow the link. For ideas on using mobile technologies see this resource.
Next steps

What next? Feeling confident? Need some extra support? This section will help.
Part 3

Next steps

Got it!
Feeling confident? Ready for something more complex? See these resources on getting your lectures videoed or creating screencasts of your presentations to help you make your own resources for flipping.

Need more help?
For technical help contact your LTA, for advice about flipping the classroom generally or to give feedback on this resource please contact f.handley@brighton.ac.uk

Further resources
Find out more about Blended Learning and the Flipped Classroom on the CLT resources website.