PRACTICING OBSERVATIONS, INTERPRETATIONS, AND APPLICATIONS WITH NEARPOD

LISA TRANEL

GEOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT
MY CLASSES

INTRODUCTORY GEOLOGY CLASS FOR MAJORS AND NON-MAJORS (GEO 207)
• 25 students
• Sophomore level
• Lecture followed by lab looking at rock samples.

GEOLOGY-COMPUTER CLASS FOR MAJORS (GEO 363)
• 13 students
• Seniors and graduate students
• Lecture and lab in a computer lab
HOW I CREATED MY PRESENTATIONS:

• Mostly imported previous power point slides
• Web Content
  • Links to videos
  • Links to reference websites
TOOLS I TRIED

• Draw it
• Open ended question
• Quiz
• Collaborate
• Fill in the blank
• Matching Pairs
• Poll
MY FAVORITE?
DRAW IT!

- Geology is visual
- We make lots of observations and sketches.
- Drawing option in the app allows students to practice identifying important geologic features to sketch in the field.
DRAW IT:
START WITH A BLANK SLATE OR BACKGROUND IMAGE
MY EASY GO TO TOOL: QUIZ
ALLOWED A CHANCE TO PAUSE, REFLECT, AND ASSESS COMPREHENSION

• Similar to clickers, I could assess how well students understood a concept.

• Transition from lecture to a question was easy.

• It helped me see when I needed to spend more time on a topic to help students understand.
QUIZZES ALSO OFFERED OPTIONS TO ADD FIGURES OR GRAPHS FOR ANALYSIS.

- Test if students could interpret a graph or use a tool that would be used later in lab.
  - Clicking on the image let students see a larger view.
MY OTHER QUICK TOOL FOR PAUSE AND REFLECTION: OPEN ENDED QUESTION

- Review a topic from last class.
- Make connections between this class and other classes.
- Review a concept that proved tricky from a lab or assignment.
BENEFITS TO THE STUDENTS

GEO 207: USING NEARPOD ON A PHONE, TABLET, OR LAPTOP
- Students could follow along
- Helpful to take quizzes during lecture
- Return to notes and review/retry quizzes at a later time.
- Easier to go back and forth between phone and notebook than front of room and notebook.

GEO 363: USING NEARPOD ON A COMPUTER:
- Most students took notes as we went through slides
  - Added to a portfolio at the end of the semester.
- Exercise sparked questions and discussion which hopefully lead to better understanding of the content and applications.
- Clearer visual than always trying to see the slide at the front of the room.
CHALLENGES

• Students’ initial uncertainties in how the notes were saved and where they were sent.
• Size of images on smaller devices
• Reviewing quiz questions as a class:
  • I couldn’t see the questions the students were looking at from my computer without showing the answer
• Students can’t go back and forth to see slides during the lecture to add additional notes.
HOW DID NEARPOD AFFECT PARTICIPATION?

- Nearpod offered a non-intimidating way for students to participate.
- Some questions triggered follow-up questions from the students engaging the class in more discussion.
- Quote from a student:
  - “I liked that you trusted us using our phones while in class because it took away the temptation to check my text messages because I knew you were counting on us to stay focused.”
DID IT DETER STUDENTS FROM USING DEVICES FOR OTHER PURPOSES? NO, BUT…

GEO 207
• Students continued to use their devices throughout the rest of class in positive ways:
  • Returning to lecture notes for reference
  • Referring to electronic textbook
  • Sharing discussions through their own preferred apps (snapchat)
• Devices can serve as useful reference tools.

GEO 363
• Seniors and Graduate students may be more focused anyway.
  • More likely to be working on something for my class than a different class or something unrelated to school.
MY FINAL REFLECTIONS ON NEARPOD:

• Allowed me to feel like I was interacting a little more with each student during lectures when I went through answers to open-ended questions.

• Helped me to slow down and make sure I was clearly communicating and effectively communicating with the students.

• Using Nearpod in combination with another application for mapping in the field helped demonstrate professional benefits to devices.
  • Encouraged responsible use.

• Same activities - less paper – and more opportunity for immediate feedback and discussion!

• I mostly utilized the tools to provide immediate feedback during the class, but I like that summary reports are available for review.