

SECTION I: THE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ONLINE LEARNING INTEGRATION

SUPPORTING FACULTY AND LIBRARIANS

Working in Tandem: Instructional Applications of Gale Resources

The purpose of this section is not exhaustive in its recommendations, but rather a jumping-off point to how librarians and faculty may integrate resources into a course framework as well as a source of inspiration. Let us first consider the following components to an online course. These components are the essentials, representing the best practices for instructional design while also attending a growing need for digital literacy instruction in higher education. It also extends to the overlapping capacity digital learners will need as they evolve in an environment that is increasingly steering toward online learning courses.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS.

Why do you do this? Well, you do this anyway! However, when teaching online, these questions add additional structure to how you can build learning modules with your learning management system (LMS).

Ask yourself: What do you want your students to learn?

- Learning Objective Example: Students will evaluate the events, attitudes, and behaviors that led to the Stonewall Riots and how these attributes culminated in becoming part of the LGBTQ movement in the 1960s.
- Learning Questions: Who were the key contributors to the Stonewall Riots? What were the pivotal events and developments that led to the riots? Why did the Stonewall Riots occur?



STEP 2: DETERMINE THE LEARNING NEEDS OF YOUR STUDENTS.

Why do you do this? Accessibility. It is a word you continue to hear and one you will become increasingly familiar with when you are in an online course modality. Having an “accessibility mindset” means that you make sure content is digestible and functional for all learners, including students with disabilities, and allows students to learn in different ways and with multiple perspectives.

Ask yourself: How will my students best engage with the content they need? What formats will reach the most students relative to my subject matter? Do any of my students require a customized plan that includes a different font, larger text, audiovisual materials, and so on, to provide more learning opportunities?



STEP 3: GATHER CONTENT AROUND LEARNING OBJECTIVES WITH YOUR CONTENT AND GALE RESOURCES.

Why do you do this? Your modules need a variety of content formats to engage your learners. You probably have some of this already, but you may need supplemental content, in a variety of formats, like graphics, images, and videos. Consider how long it takes students to read articles, watch videos, evaluate illustrations, and answer critical questions.

Ask yourself: What resources will support student learning? From what type of lens do I want my students to learn the subject matter from? Do multiple perspectives matter? How will the content I select align with the learning objectives for each module? How will the content provoke my students to think critically about the subject matter?





STEP 4: DEVELOP YOUR ONLINE ACTIVITIES.

Why do you do this? In this respect, online learning is not much different from face-to-face learning in a classroom or lecture hall. You are setting expectations for how the course will function and how you will provide effective interactions with, and among, your students. However, the process of developing activities is quite different when you transition to an online environment, especially when facilitating discussions and hands-on activities. It is essential to be mindful of how social interaction makes a difference in how your students will engage and critically think about the content you have crafted together.

Ask yourself: How will my students engage with learning objectives?

How do you do this? Start with your **questions**. Which activities would help facilitate critical thinking around your learning objectives and questions? Consider the following formats for activities:

- 1. Online Discussion** – Pose a question related to the objective in a given module. Allow students the opportunity to provide answers and then respond to each other's responses. Be sure to promote ongoing discussion in your grading rubric by giving points for feedback and responding to others.
- 2. Formative Assessment Questions** – Layer in some formative assessment questions that form a weekly reflection journal. Structure reflection responses with an overarching question to be answered. Ask students to relate it back to the content they read or could find. This not only provides you with the current status of student knowledge acquisition, but also reinforces the content you are, or could be, integrating into your course.
- 3. Group Inquiry Projects** – Have students come up with a question related to the course or objectives that interests them. To reinforce digital literacy skills, encourage students to search for their own content when attempting to answer their questions and require that they apply strategies that help evaluate this content. As an added challenge, ask students to find content ranging in formats such as graphics, text, and video.

STEP 5: BUILD YOUR ONLINE COURSE SYLLABUS.



Why do you do this? When you begin building your course, think of it like a story, or even a video game. Separate into modules that represent chapters or "levels" in a game, which contain embedded opportunities for recall and challenging critical-thinking activities. In doing this, students can remain engaged with the content that you have crafted.

Ask yourself: How will I create an online learning experience?

Bring it all together: Think of each module as including the following components that represent milestones in your course:

- "XXX Course: Online Summer 2022"
- Module 1: Subtopic or Sub-Course Objectives
- Learning Objectives
- Key Learning Questions
- Content Shopping List:
 - Three 15-minute chunked video lectures
 - 2–3 text documents (short form and long form)
 - 2 videos and graphics/illustrations
- Activity Shopping List:
 - 1 discussion topic (self-response and peer-to-peer response)
 - 1 weekly reflection with a formative assessment question
 - 1 completion of an inquiry-project component (summative assessment)

COURSE ACTIVITIES FOR ONLINE LEARNING

It can be challenging to maintain the same level of interactivity for online course activities that you would with an in-person course. It is crucial, however, to stress the importance of social presence in the success of your online course. As social constructivist and psychologist Lev Vygotsky stated, social presence is a critical element in the learning process (1978).

“Social presence is defined as the ability of participants in a community to project themselves, socially and emotionally, as real people through a medium of communication” (Garrison and Anderson 2003).

Below are some samples of how you can cultivate an effective discussion activity while also aligning with learning objectives, content, and engaging students.



Group Online Discussion with LMS

► Activity Format: Whole group, Discussion

► Total Points: 10

Timing: Students will have until the end of the week, 11:59 PM on Fridays, to complete all components of the discussion.

Learning Objective: In an inquiry-based dialogue, students will synthesize the information from their readings to provide a response that demonstrates evaluative skills of primary source and database materials. Students will also collaborate with peers to uncover new inferences about the topic.

Components: See the four steps indicated below.

STEP 1: Respond to the “driving question” within the discussion thread. Use quotes and information from the week’s readings to substantiate statements and use proper citing as needed.

Sample Driving Question: What prompted the Stonewall Riots in New York City, and how were they looked back on as a movement for LGBTQ rights?

STEP 2: Respond to the responses of 2–3 peers stating whether you agree or disagree and describe why in 1–2 sentences. Use two new citations from *Gale Primary Sources* or *Academic OneFile* that support the “why” of your responses.

STEP 3: Ask a peer one question about their reaction that will allow them to expand on their response as a response to you. Consider asking, “How do you think this impacted x, y & z?”

STEP 4: Respond to your peer’s question and use a citation to support your answer from one of the Gale resources available through your institution.



Individual Online Discussion with LMS

► Activity Format: Individual, Formative reflection

► Total Points: 5

Timing: Students will respond to the reflection question by 11:59 PM on Fridays.

Learning Objective: Students will evaluate and derive meaning from a primary source illustration and connect its significance to the content at hand. This reflection will synthesize learnings from other materials used throughout the week.

Components: Indicated below.

STEP 1: In your reflection thread, respond to the reflection question below in 4–5 sentences. Be sure to reference this week’s readings, along with 1–2 additional sources from Gale databases.

Sample Reflection Question: “What does the cartoon mean, and how is it a representation of the Stonewall Riots and their role in the development of LGBTQ rights?”

OTHER ACTIVITIES WITH GALE RESOURCES BY OBJECTIVES

Using Term Frequency to Refine Research

Activity Format: Skill-Building Task, Individual

Learning Objective: Identify central themes and assess how individuals, events, and ideas interact and develop over time.

► **COMPONENTS:**

Step 1: Develop a topic you are interested in from this week’s discussions and develop a list of 3–4 relevant search terms.

Step 2: Use Term Frequency in Gale’s academic databases to measure the frequency of search terms within sets of content you have gathered around your specific research question and keywords.

Step 3: In a reflection post, how does this help you identify content you wish to use for your research? Why might this be an important task to do when evaluating the effectiveness of your search terms?

Using Topic Finder to Refine Research

Activity Format: Skill-Building Task, Individual

Learning Objective: Evaluate search term and interconnected derivatives to shape research direction through content and relevant information.

► **COMPONENTS:**

Step 1: Develop a topic you are interested in from this week’s discussions and develop a list of 3–4 relevant search terms.

Step 2: Use Topic Finder in Gale academic databases to uncover related search terms that can expand your research reach.

Step 3: In a reflection post, how does this help you identify keyword derivatives that would be helpful for your research? Why might this be an important task to do when evaluating the effectiveness of your search terms? How did this change your selected search terms?

CONCLUSION

At Gale, a Cengage company, we support our customers with not only the best products, but those that can facilitate learning through effective content and learning tools. We realize that education is evolving, and we are evolving with you. Our instructional scaffolds that aid in the implementation and teaching of our products are backed by your feedback and needs in this ever-changing landscape of higher education. Whether it is teaching face-to-face, completely online, or a little bit of both, we’re committed to instilling the best practices of teaching and learning for all learners, all modalities, and all institutions.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lindsey Gervais is a digital learning manager at Gale, where she assists in the learning design and development of the Gale Digital Scholarship Program. With a doctorate background and research recognition in the field of Cognition, Instruction, and Learning Technology, Lindsey is helping to elevate the instructional framework of the *Gale Digital Scholar Lab* and other academic products. She is a graduate from the University of Connecticut and taught Educational Psychology and Research Practicum for undergraduate and graduate students for six years. She prides herself on her creativity, love for coffee, and dedication to the performing arts.