

Blended learning with Telegram

Introduction

In this document, you will find out how you can use Telegram to develop an asynchronous blended learning element for your students. Creating blended learning can help to extend and support your students' classroom learning, whether they are studying in the remote or physical classroom.



It can help you to adopt a flipped approach to learning by providing your students with asynchronous input before their synchronous lesson, or you can use blended learning to reinforce and review the objectives of your lessons after their synchronous studies.

To create blended learning on Telegram, you can use either a group or a channel. Channels are safer when working with students because they are 'broadcast' which means that only you can post content to the channel feed and students can't reply to content on the feed or message each other through the channel. If you use a group instead of a channel, students will be able to submit messages to the feed and discuss and comment on the content.

In the webinar Juana Sagaray talked about delivering flipped learning to remote teachers but using Telegram you can also create blended and flipped learning for students.

Tech tip

Telegram is a very powerful free application that you can download onto your mobile device and/or computer laptop. The application supports a number of forms of synchronous and asynchronous communication including text and voice messages, video communication and screen sharing, document, image and video upload. Telegram also enables communication between individuals as well as groups, and can even support broadcast communication to as many as two hundred thousand people. In addition to this, Telegram uses the least connectivity, so it can function on mobile phones even in locations where the signal is weak and where connectivity is limited.

You can download Telegram for your phone and computer at: <https://telegram.org/>
You'll need to download it on your phone first and then add it to your computer.

Telegram is recommended for 16 years and older because it does enable users to contact each other privately. Students will also need a mobile phone, so it may be best to use this with older students or negotiate parental supervision with younger students.

Webinar time reference: All.

Level: Telegram is recommended for 16 years and older.

Time: Variable.

Aim: To provide students with additional asynchronous learning support outside to the class/training room.

Preparation:

- Download and install Telegram on your mobile phone and computer from <https://telegram.org/>
- Watch the videos on the British Council's Telegram Onboarding channel: https://t.me/+AAtveOjw_ORmOGZk
- Select or plan how you will produce the content you want to share with your students.
- It's good to have a mix between materials you find on free sites such as <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org> or <https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/> and materials that you produce yourself. You may also find that the coursebook you use provides additional online materials to use with the lessons you are teaching.
- Think about how the content you want to share works with your course content. Will it be used to review and reinforce that work you do in the classroom? Or Will it be used to prepare the students and give them knowledge and language that they will use in the classroom?
- Use a spreadsheet to prepare, organise and store your blended learning content.
- Set up a new channel on Telegram and add an introductory video message to welcome your students to the channel and tell them what it is for.
- Pin the video to the top of the channel so that all students see it when they join.
- You should also try experimenting with posting content in different formats (audio, video or text).
- Remember if you post something and then don't like it you can easily delete it.

Procedure

- Show students how to download the Telegram app and enrol/subscribe to the course.
- Tell the students about your aims in using Telegram and how it can support their learning.
- Post your first assignment to your Telegram channel.
- Follow up on the assignment in the next lesson.
- Check to make sure the students didn't have any problems accessing the content.
- Continue posting resources and activities that students can do at home.

Materials:

British Council's Telegram Onboarding channel:

https://t.me/+AAatveOjw_0RmOGZk

Additional resources

Blended learning in English language teaching: Course design and implementation

- Blended learning is an area of ELT that continues to be of interest to practitioners in the field. Despite this, little can be found in the literature on blended learning course design or detailed descriptions provided of blends used in ELT contexts. This publication, which contains twenty case studies from around the world, addresses this deficit by illustrating blends being employed on EAP, ESP, Teacher Development and general EFL courses.

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/blended-learning-english-language-teaching-course-design-and-implementation>

Synchronous learning

- Synchronous learning occurs when the learner and the teacher are in the same place at the same time. It can be compared with asynchronous learning, where learner and teacher may not be in the same place at the same time. Both terms are often used when talking about online learning.

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/synchronous-learning>

Asynchronous learning

- Asynchronous learning occurs when learner and teacher are not in the same place at the same time. It can be compared with synchronous learning, where the learner and the teacher are in the same place at the same time. Both terms are used to define types of online learning.

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/asynchronous-learning>

From ELT to TLE: taking learning beyond the classroom

- Keith looks at ways to incorporate concepts such as online learning, blended learning and the flipped classroom, but also at more established ELT orthodoxies. In this talk, he offers a new approach and methodology: the 'Total Learning Experience' (TLE).

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/keith-harding-elt-tle-taking-learning-beyond-classroom>