REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: DIGGING INTO EDTECH TOOLS–THE APPLICATION OF EDPUZZLE IN ONLINE HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

In this article, three online full-time faculty members collectively reflect on their teaching practices and overall purpose, which is to proactively engage students, and set them on the path to long-term success. Faculty considered EdTech applications already in use within their Learning Management System (LMS), and how they could continue to expand the use of engagement strategies in classroom discussion forums to improve student understanding and performance. After ample discussion and planning, the EdTech tool, Edpuzzle, was selected to edit and enhance instructional videos. The resulting "One-Minute-To-Win-It" videos contributed to student motivation and engagement, while providing more online classroom personalization and increased functionality for students and faculty. Through the framework of John Dewey and the lens of the lived experiences of the contributing authors, this article introduces a creative strategy to promote student learning and to foster connection in a digital environment. *Keywords: online higher education, edpuzzle, edtech tools, student motivation, functionality, student performance, active learning, engagement strategies, classroom personalization*

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This article is compiled by three online full-time faculty members at a university in Phoenix, Arizona who understand teaching in an online higher education classroom takes creativity, willingness to adapt, and ample time spent observing classroom trends and needs. Facing similar challenges with our students, we brought our own lived experiences and diverse backgrounds together and collectively worked toward supporting our online students. One author taught in a traditional kindergarten classroom, one author has taught internationally at the university level for more than a decade, and one author worked in academic counseling. With each author bringing their personal experience to the online full-time faculty role, the groundwork was laid for a collaboration rich with potential. Armed with a vision of student success, we spent time together brainstorming, planning, and collaborating to design new strategies that would proactively help our students.

According to John Dewey (as cited in Beckett, 2018, p. 381), "…growth is a constant reorganizing and reconstructing of experience." These words resonate with most educators, but more specifically, this resonates for the contributing authors of this article who sought out daily progress for the benefit of their students. Dewey also goes on to state, "… education is the means of maintaining established custom as well as improving society" (as cited in Beckett, 2018, p. 384). As online full-time faculty members, we have the unique privilege of encouraging growth, fostering connection, and promoting learning in a largely digital and solitary environment with a diverse classroom of students. As faculty we are also aware that our influence

moves beyond the digital classroom walls and through our students who impact their own families and communities. The role of a faculty member is transcendent because those we educate bring their newly acquired knowledge into their daily lives.

As faculty, we are tasked with creating an online classroom environment that feels warm, inviting, and comfortable for our students to learn in. This daily challenge to connect and engage our online students requires a response tailored to their individual learning styles and needs. According to Woods and Rosenberg (2016), faculty must be willing to explore emerging technology, techniques, and educational tools to continually expand our toolbox of innovative ideas. Our online students range from 18-80+ years old, and they are learning from all around the U.S. and sometimes even internationally. Creating a faculty presence within the online classroom is of significant importance to minimize perceived distance and to increase the sense of community between learners and faculty (Holbeck & Hartman, 2018).

Working with online students throughout their academic journey enriches the classroom experience. Some students are fresh out of high school, some are working full-time and managing families, while some are retired looking to fulfill a lifelong academic dream. Our constant desire to forge connection with our students despite distance and time differences challenged us to respond with intentionality and purpose. Our quest to spark student engagement led to the creation of this reflective article.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The use of educational tools related to technology (EdTech) is seeing continued growth, especially in the context of active learning and in the ongoing effort to encourage higher levels of thinking (Donahoe et al., 2019; Woods & Rosenberg, 2016). The search for EdTech tools is a constant process to keep our online classroom strategies current. Taking advantage of emerging technology keeps the student experience aligned with current trends and pushes faculty to be in a constant state of awareness. To provide context for the application of EdTech, it is vital to understand the structure and format of the online environment faculty and students encounter daily.

We teach and engage within a Learning Management System (LMS) that allows materials to be shared and relationships to be forged. The typical deliverables for online students include discussion questions, partcipation posts, and assignments. Assignments vary in format, such as written reflections, worksheets, formal essays, and quizzes. Discussion questions (DQ's) are initial prompts that students respond to in the forums based on topic materials and objectives that facilitate student learning. In addition to their DQ response, students earn participation by replying to posts from their classmates or by responding to prompts created by their faculty. The criteria for substantive posts are dependent on program level and classroom expectations as determined by the faculty. As students create their participation post replies they must keep in mind the goal is to carry the conversation forward. Participation in the DQ forums lays the foundation for relationship-building, encourages quality interactions with weekly topic material, and is an opportunity to for students to comprehend and learn information that will aid them in reaching weekly course objectives.

Building a classroom community where students experience meaningful connections and are energized by their learning experience requires looking past common applications of EdTech. As faculty, we are already creating and embedding videos from Loom, YouTube, Canva, and Flipgrid in our classroom discussion forums to offer students supplemental information. The videos expand on assignment directions and provide coaching on a variety of topics that assist students in proactively avoiding common pitfalls. Videos can be used to share instructions with students, but they are generally considered a "passive activity" (Cesare et al., 2021). While the benefits of these EdTech tools are many, we wanted to replace passive engagement in our DQ forums with active engagement opportunities where students can interact with the curriculum and their classmates on a deeper level of comprehension. With the desire to excite students on the path to achieving their learning objectives, we identified passive learning as a problem to be solved through creative collaboration.

Based on the classroom experiences of these faculty members, effective teaching in an online environment requires out-of-the-box thinking. Relationship building may be easier in face-to-face instructional settings while forming connections

with students within an online classroom can be more challenging (Duryee, 2020). In response to this challenge, and after ample reflection and brainstorming, we settled on a few must-haves for our creative solution. We wanted to motivate our students, encourage active engagement, improve student performance, and personalize the online student classroom experience. For this to be doable in our already busy schedules, we decided that our solution would need to be functional for us and for our students. Generating more questions instead of reducing questions would also be a clear indicator of the effectiveness of our solution. Keeping our objectives in mind, and through our ongoing collaboration and discussion, an idea sparked and then caught fire—Edpuzzle. Existing research and common applications of Edpuzzle focus on K-12 settings, but we stretched the capabilities of Edpuzzle to solve our problem, and we are eager to share out our process.

ACTIVITY/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

While searching high and low for EdTech tools, Edpuzzle rose to the top. Already using tools such as Loom, Remind, Canva, Google Slides, Flipgrid, and Padlet, we were optimistic to test Edpuzzle, but aware that student feedback could instantly squelch or grow our emerging creative solution. In alignment with classroom goals and objectives, Edpuzzle appears to provide a way to reinforce and visualize concepts, encourage active learning, and build feelings of classroom community within an asynchronous environment. Used most frequently with elementary through high school students, we felt the benefits of Edpuzzle could be successfully expanded to fit the needs of undergraduate and graduate online students.

Recent research supports the value of concept reinforcement and active learning (Brame, 2016) and classroom community (Oberne, 2017), using EdTech tools in the online classroom. The ongoing desire to establish a connection with students, assist students in meeting their weekly learning objectives, and maintain consistent engagement in the online classroom, set the scene for an innovative approach to using Edpuzzle. Through a unique application we chose to explore how Edpuzzle's capabilities could be used to benefit the learning of students in an online higher education classroom.

Edpuzzle offers a plethora of videos from sources, such as YouTube, Khan Academy, National Geographic, TED Talks, Crash Course, and many others. What sets Edpuzzle apart is that it allows users to edit and customize videos according to faculty preferences and needs. Educators can decide what works best for their students as they achieve learning objectives (Afach et al., 2018). An educator can select an available video through Edpuzzle or upload their own, and they are given the option to remove irrelevant content or add a voiceover to expand on visuals provided within the video. Educators are provided the option to insert questions into their videos—multiple-choice or open-ended—and they can also add voice notes or written notes. Videos can be customized to fit curriculum, and embedded questions may be used to prompt the student to stop and listen or answer a question before continuing. These features allow for a more personalized and engaging experience for the student and additional control for faculty to guide student learning.

For the application piece of Edpuzzle, we decided to use the same solution tailored to our own courses. Retaining the benefits of instructional videos created in Loom and enhancing them using Edpuzzle became the crux of how we would use Edpuzzle's features to our advantage. Understanding that consistency and visibility are crucial for student engagement within the discussion forums, we decided to use the Edpuzzle videos as the first spot in our weekly forums. Inspired by the trendsetting "Minute to Win It" international gameshow where participants are required to complete 60-second challenges using household items, we decided to challenge ourselves to provide our students with their own one-minute breakdown. Covering weekly objectives, important materials, and essential information in the video helps the online students "win" their week. The videos embedded in the discussion forums are titled "One-Minute-To-Win-It," and they use multiple-choice questions to assess student understanding.

Step one was to create one-minute Loom videos breaking down each week in our assigned courses. Next, the videos had to be downloaded from Loom and uploaded into Edpuzzle, and then the multiple-choice questions needed to be added in. As faculty we decided to use three questions per video, with one question per video being a

conversation-starter that students could reply to in the discussion forums.

At the same time we were testing out One-Minute-To-Win-It videos in the forums, the world was being swept up in a new conversation—COVID-19. The desire for connection was amplified in our online classrooms, and a creative EdTech solution was transformed into a key element for building a positive classroom community. With a consistent location and format, the One-Minute-To-Win-It videos provided a uniquely timed landing area within the forums for the benefit of both the online students and authors.

REASONS FOR THE PROBLEM

Reason One: Student Motivation and Student Engagement

As online faculty members it is vital to periodically stop and reflect on origins of challenges that surface within the online classroom. With further analysis and discussion, it became clear that online student engagement and motivation were challenges at the top of our list. Through observations within our discussion forums it became apparent that students who engaged more frequently maintained consistent motivation as the class progressed. In contrast, students that were regularly absent or that posted below the minimum requirements seemed less motivated to connect and complete their required weekly objectives. Although no quantifiable data was collected, each of the authors raised this same concern when discussing areas of opportunity within their classrooms.

Coming from the perspective of being active online students ourselves, we understand the depth and personal sacrifice completing a degree requires. The commitment it takes to sit down and complete an assignment when life is moving rapidly and the to-do list is growing, is no easy feat. Faculty members must remain cognizant and respectful of the time their students put forth to be successful in class. In practice, this means ensuring that discussion forum prompts and videos are organized and direct. We noticed that lengthier videos and prompts lacked adequate engagement, and longer videos embedded into prompts would need to be condensed. Our most important role as faculty members includes motivating our students through creative engagement strategies to help them achieve their ultimate goal of graduating.

Reflecting on previous student engagement strategies in our discussion forums required taking a critical approach. We had to acknowledge that even if a post met our own criteria for success it may not have resonated with students. If the students were not showing consistent and active interest in a prompt, then despite any personal attachment to what we had created, it would need to be removed or revised to fulfill its intended purpose. The ongoing process of adding, cutting, and revising is a must for faculty aiming to continually improve their teaching methods. This brought to the surface again the need for our students to engage and feel motivated by faculty-created content in the discussion forums.

It has been shown that college faculty teaching online tend to stick strictly to the curriculum with an impersonal approach that does not meet the student's individual needs or interests, which can impact their motivation (Alamri et al., 2020). We felt challenged to do the opposite. Therefore, we took time to consider how we could incorporate a more personalized approach into the LMS while encouraging engagement and motivation.

Reason Two: Student Performance and Classroom Personalization

First impressions matter in online learning. The authors are online students themselves, and on day one of a new class it is easy to determine the tone and expectations of a course based on the level of personalization. Some students may recognize the investment of the faculty member after reviewing the supporting materials provided in the forums, specifically within the discussion forums, where the majority of peer-to-peer and peer-to-faculty interactions take place. Classroom personalization eliminates the disconnect between course objectives, classroom curriculum or learning materials, and the online learners.

As we compared our personalization strategies within our discussion forums it became apparent that personalized posts sparked more student interest. We were already personalizing our classrooms through the use of color, Bitmojis, assignment explanation videos, and slideshow videos or prompts, created through a variety of EdTech applications. In the ongoing pursuit of new creative and effective personalization methods, we agreed that personalized videos seemed to earn the highest level of interest from students.

We observed an abundance of positive comments in the discussion forums regarding our videos and even on our End-of-Course Surveys (EOCS). Students felt more connected to the classroom, the material, and to their faculty through the use of personalized videos. This informed our decision to continue using a video format while also potentially increasing the performance of our students.

Through our ongoing collaboration and discussion, we agreed that the trends we saw in our discussion forums aligned with our ongoing research efforts. We observed that tailoring our video prompts in the discussion forums helped our students find greater success. Leveraging technology and adding educational videos to the online classroom can enhance student learning and provide the student with new ways to visualize concepts and the content of the lesson (Brame, 2016). The videos used in our classrooms provided the students with an alternative learning approach beyond plain written text. Hearing the voice of their instructor relay vital information while providing a visual walkthrough within the video, offers auditory and visual learners an enriched learning experience that may increase their understanding and overall performance in class.

Reason Three: Functionality for Student and Faculty

When exploring the effectiveness of an EdTech tool it is important to consider functionality. This was a top priority within our discussions. Our past shared experience of creating and testing personalized prompts within our discussion forums highlighted the need for this tool to be effective short-term and long-term. We needed the tool to be easy and quick to use after the initial time investment was made. We had the same desire for our students. When our students engage with new prompts in the forums, we want their experience to be enriching but not overly time-consuming or complicated. Drawing on classroom observations, if a prompt requires extensive effort, students are less likely to engage or will skip over the prompt for something faster they can respond to. Acknowledging this short window of opportunity to connect, we decided that any tool we selected for use would need to be both functional and a time-saver when used on a regular basis for both us and our students.

A test of functionality we also deemed important was whether or not the tool we selected would serve its intended purpose. We desired for this tool to shift our students from a passive learning state to an active learning state. If the video prompt provided was not engaging, the students would be less likely to invest their time becoming familiar with the information being presented. Alternatively, if the tool did function as intended, it would encourage students to actively review the content provided by the faculty member. It is imperative that faculty are critical of new tools and prompts tested in the discussion forums to achieve optimal functionality and efficiency. If a tool is not successful in accomplishing its original purpose, it must be removed and replaced with a new concept or a tool that is functional.

EVALUATION OF REASONS FOR THE PROBLEM

Reason One: Student Motivation and Student Engagement

The priority when selecting an EdTech tool is to evaluate its ability to increase student engagement (Morgan-Thomas & Dudau, 2019). Student engagement is an enigmatic, multifaceted construct that has long been the subject of research in terms of its extent and impact on student learning. Student engagement has been proven to increase learning and retention (Bond & Bedenlier, 2019). The embedded questions and the voiceover feature available through Edpuzzle encourage intellectual student engagement (Perveen, 2018). Students are more likely to be alert while watching videos and listening to their teacher's voiceover instructions. Plus, they have the added benefit of easily re-watching the videos as needed.

According to Bond and Bedenlier (2019), student engagement can be impacted by critical elements, which includes technology use, the activities used to enhance the curriculum, collaborative interaction with peers, and the relationship with faculty. In addition, community, support, life balance, confidence, and an individual approach to learning are five factors that promote student engagement in an online classroom (Farrell & Brunton, 2020).

While educational videos are used to promote student engagement, research indicates that videos should be less than six minutes in length, use informal language, and should be upbeat and

energetic for maximum impact (Brame, 2016). Another feature available for use within educational videos to facilitate learning are pop-up questions. This feature provides the student with immediate feedback and can confirm learning objectives are met (Haagsman et al., 2020).

Another consideration when choosing an EdTech tool is how effectively it motivates students to invest in their own learning process. Students that are actively engaged in their learning environment experience a boost of motivation (Bond & Bedenlier, 2019). Motivation can decrease when the tasks within the classroom are not applicable to the student's own learning, goals, and interests (Alamri et al., 2020). Edpuzzle provides the opportunity for a more personalized approach that aligns the curriculum with the student's interests and the ability to promote effective interaction among all learners within the classroom. This can enhance the student's ownership over their learning, satisfaction, and motivation.

With the use of Edpuzzle, we posted a One-Minute-To-Win-It video on the first day of each new week in the discussion forums. These videos provided a quick but detailed review of the expectations and material used for the week. We offered the students an opportunity to earn one substantive participation post when they replied to the prompt in the forum. This encouraged organic peer-to-peer interaction, which adds value to the forums and enhances the classroom community and morale. Additionally, students may feel motivated based on routine and they may come to expect on the first day of a new week the video will be available and posted for their viewing. The students may feel more at ease for the week ahead and supported by their faculty through the One-Minute-To-Win-It videos.

By posting the videos at the start of the week in a prominent position in the forums, this worked to highlight the importance of the weekly objectives for the student. Engagement is ongoing daily in the discussion forums. Initially, when we first tested Edpuzzle videos in our classrooms, the videos we used were on specific topics and included embedded questions, but we were not using a designated spot in the forums or posting them on a set day. The videos were posted as needed throughout a topic week to align with goals or classroom needs. We made the decision as a group to begin posting videos to a consistent location and to add in one conversation starter question at the end of each video to help build rapport and encourage interaction.

It is important to note that when students are motivated and engaged in a course using Edpuzzle, their chance of passing the course with high marks increases (Afach et al., 2018). Both student motivation and engagement are determining factors for overall student performance in a course. Keeping this in mind during our collaboration meetings, we made sure to integrate these factors into our chosen EdTech strategy.

Reason Two: Student Performance and Classroom Personalization

Online learning behaviors can predict student performance (Xu et al., 2021). Above all, we want our students to succeed, and student performance is an indicator of student learning and progress. Equipping students with the tools for success means they must opt-in to learning opportunities. Fostering a positive classroom community creates a framework of support that students may feel empowered and even excited to belong to. A personalized classroom environment also demonstrates to the student that their faculty is actively investing in their learning experience.

The intersection between classroom personalization and student performance was brought to life through the creative application of Edpuzzle. In researching Edpuzzle, one test case rose to the top as an indicator of its effectiveness. To teach the topic of bullying, a teacher found an existing video on YouTube related to bullying and added personalized questions and notes within the video (Afach et al., 2018). The enhanced video was then shared with students. The findings of the study showed that students were not only engaged and motivated but also more fully comprehended the concept of bullying (Afach et al., 2018). This test case shows the possible impact of Edpuzzle as a useful tool in the classroom setting.

According to Norris' (2017) theory of memory retention, videos may stimulate not only the short-term memory but also the long-term memory retention if there is a playback feature available. The ability to edit videos and customize them according to student needs may also increase memory recollection and retention for students. Lew and Howe (2017) discussed schema-driven

and object-location bindings that aid memory recollection and retention. As students watch the customized videos, the embedded pop-up questions can increase their awareness of the information being presented.

Classroom personalization eliminates the disconnect between course objectives, classroom curriculum or learning materials, and the online learners. Every online class seems to form its own personality through time, which may require videos to be edited to fit individual classroom needs while facilitating student performance. When educators create personalized videos for their classrooms, it promotes community and social presence as it strengthens the connection between both the faculty and the students (Oberne, 2017).

To actively establish our own instructor presence in the discussion forums, we decided to include our own personalized Edpuzzle videos. We embedded weekly One-Minute-To-Win-It videos and added three questions. Two questions focused on weekly objectives or logistics for accessing course materials, and the third question was a conversation starter that students could respond to for substantive participation credit. One conversation starter seemed to draw the greatest amount of participation and interest. The question asked students to reflect on who their hero is and why. In a follow-up post the faculty challenged their students to share their response to the initial post with the person they selected as their hero. This not only sparked meaningful conversation in the forums, but it extended the reach of an EdTech tool to social circles outside of the digital landscape.

Reason Three: Functionality for Student and Faculty

Edpuzzle allows for increased functionality for both the student and faculty in a variety of important ways. After the initial time investment to create and edit videos in Edpuzzle, they can be reused for classes or re-edited and re-posted as needed. The videos provide quick communication and offer students the chance to properly gauge the time investment required to meet the weekly objectives. Students can re-watch videos as needed, and these videos can also be sent to students catching up on work or to those who need additional guidance.

Edpuzzle is free and accessible online. All that is needed to start creating with Edpuzzle is to sign up for a free account on the website and then start creating. With a free account, educators have the capacity to create 20 videos without upgrading their account to "Teacher Pro," which has a monthly fee for use. Interactive videos for students can be classified as both educational and entertaining (Hayden et al., 2017). When physical lectures are impossible or synchronous online meetings are difficult due to a variety of limitations, Edpuzzle can bridge the gap.

Edpuzzle can also be paired with various Web 2.0 tools such as Loom and YouTube. Videos created using these tools can be easily uploaded and manipulated in Edpuzzle, which is a convenient time-saver. The voiceover functionality in Edpuzzle humanizes the message of the videos since the students can hear their own faculty member's voice. In addition, Edpuzzle can be used to personalize existing videos on the internet for classroom use. Adding embedded questions into instructional videos may also support faculty to confirm students are both watching and understanding the material (Mischel, 2019). The convenience and functionality of Edpuzzle for both the student and faculty elevates its effectiveness in an online classroom setting.

When a customized Edpuzzle video is shared in the classroom and students view it, they are prompted to answer embedded questions from the faculty once they hit play. The video will not proceed to play unless the question at the stopping point is answered. Students also have the option to rewatch or skip the question. The questions can vary from multiple-choice to open-ended questions, which gives the faculty increased customization abilities. Added notes can also provide more detail surrounding the correct answer. With the use of embedded questions, students can quickly assess if they learned the objective fully or not.

Student scores can be automatically sent to the educator if they have created a designated classroom within Edpuzzle. This creates an effective option to monitor student progress, if desired. Educators can also forego this feature and use the share preview mode to embed the video or provide a link to the video within their LMS. If used in this format, the student responses are not recorded, but the benefit of engaging students with embedded questions in the video remains.

Alternatively, once video content is created

it can also be assigned to a class, and similar to preview mode, the direct link and embed code will be available. The benefit of this option is that once the video is embedded into the classroom, the students are prompted to type in their chosen nickname before viewing the video. This is tracked within the assigned classroom, and the faculty member can see the nickname of the student, along with how much of the video was watched and when it was last watched. We opted to not have our students create their own Edpuzzle accounts or to award grades in Edpuzzle, but instead we awarded substantive participation credit in the discussion forums. There is a button that can be clicked on within Edpuzzle to prevent skipping, which forces the student to watch the entire video. We decided to leave this option on to ensure students viewed our content in full.

In the situation where faculty lack access to online learning management platforms where they can embed videos and mark participation posts, Edpuzzle is still a viable option. Faculty can opt to send the video link to either the parents' (depending on grade level) email, students' email, or via a text messaging app such as Remind. If schools do not have an online platform option, such as an LMS, Edpuzzle can still be beneficial in sharing pertinent information.

DECISION

With benefits that include active student engagement, classroom personalization, increased functionality, and student motivation and performance, Edpuzzle was undoubtedly the right decision for integration in our online classrooms. What we did not expect was the pandemic which further amplified the need and benefit of this EdTech tool. The COVID-19 pandemic upended the world, including the world of education. The pause created from the pandemic provided educators and schools an opportunity to reflect, analyze priorities, and build a technological infrastructure to minimize disruption to the teaching and learning process. As faculty we were challenged to embrace the situation, test out new strategies, and pivot until our students found their rhythm. According to Hammond and Waltemeyer (2021), faculty who take time to learn from one another, including the sharing of best practices, may prevent issues with burnout from isolation and remote teaching. During the pandemic it became clear to us that EdTech tools were a vehicle for fostering positive student engagement in an uncertain time and for maintaining our morale as faculty. The vital role EdTech tools played in the online classroom became undeniable. Online students benefit from faculty who are constantly searching for new strategies to enhance and maintain student success and learning even in a pandemic.

Online faculty have an increasingly difficult task of teaching the curriculum and finding ways to provide information to adult learners that promotes active learning (Woods & Rosenberg, 2016). This requires faculty to be willing to try new educational tools, techniques, and technology to expand upon their toolbox of ideas to best fit their classroom's individual needs (Woods & Rosenberg, 2016). Although our collaboration began prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the potential benefit of any creative EdTech applications to meet our classroom needs was made exponentially greater because of it. It became clear that continuing to pursue engagement strategies using EdTech tools was essential for online students and their faculty. We discussed the unique features of Edpuzzle and multiple theories of cognition that supported the functions of these tools. EdTech tools are not only helpful in an online higher education classroom during a pandemic, but also in the overall learning experience (Capacho, 2018).

REFLECTIVE CRITIQUE

Reason One: Student Motivation and Student Engagement

Throughout this reflective experience, we have grown as online faculty by creatively developing new engagement strategies in our weekly discussion forums such as the use of Edpuzzle. Although Edpuzzle seems to be used most with elementary to high school aged students, stretching its application to the online higher education classroom has proved to be a worthy endeavor. After the ongoing use of One-Minute-To-Win-It videos, we were prompted to stop and reflect on student motivation and student engagement. Did we reach our goal? Did our efforts positively impact student success and foster a positive classroom community with greater connections? We found that overall, the results were overwhelmingly positive, but a few tweaks would be required to smooth out the application process.

We discovered our One-Minute-To-Win-It video posts were creating a buzz in the forums and were pulling in consistent student engagement throughout the length of our courses. There was slightly less interest during week one, and an increase in weeks two and three that held strong until the end of the course. This is likely attributed to the students working to soak up an abundance of new information during the first week, but then finding their rhythm as the class progressed. The post took over one of the top three spots consistently every week for total student replies in our discussion forums. The conversation starter question embedded into each One-Minute-To-Win-it video may have not have been directly related to weekly learning objectives, but what we found was that the student interaction from the conversation starter question carried over to posts more academic in nature. It seemed that the conversation starters helped to boost classroom morale and encourage peer-to-peer connection at a deeper level. The conversations fostered a feeling of closeness and positivity in the community of learners akin to a traditional classroom setting.

Reason Two: Student Performance and Classroom Personalization

Online student performance is linked to faculty engagement and visibility (Nagel et al, 2009). Adding One-Minute-To-Win-It videos into the first spot in the weekly discussion forums made a clear statement that as faculty we wanted to be visible to our students, and we desired to not only actively engage with them, but also equip them for success. Due to the reflective nature of this article, no quantifiable data was gathered to support the observation of increased student performance; however, based on the experience of the faculty we found it to be notable. It is established through available research that student performance can be improved using EdTech and Web 2.0 tools (Donahoe et al., 2019) in an online classroom. General observations from the three faculty members reflecting on the use of the Edpuzzle seemed to align. There was consistent weekly student engagement with the One-Minute-To-Win-It post, and there were less questions about where and how to find material needed to complete the weekly assignments and meet the learning objectives. It became evident that proactively ensuring our students have the pertinent information available right at the very start of the week encouraged students to think and plan ahead instead of spending extra time locating and identifying materials needed. From the faculty perspective, the videos seemed to help students make better use of their time, which is digging into the materials and making sure their assignments are completed properly.

The use of Edpuzzle videos also presented an opportunity for a more personalized classroom. When students heard our voices, they felt more connected to us, and had a greater understanding of how to meet weekly expectations. This observation, among others, are from direct student feedback in the forums and End-of-Course Survey comments.

Due to the nature of how Edpuzzle and how the video prompts are typically used in the classroom, it became increasingly apparent that using embedded questions in videos was likely to be a first-time experience for students. The majority of students were quick to use the videos without issue, but a few students did not initially understand that for the video to continue playing, the embedded questions had to be answered. Although this is stated in the initial post, some students were eager to press play without reading the accompanying text. This is not a common occurrence, but it has been one of the only issues that has emerged since the use of the prompt began about one year ago. Overall, students have stated that the videos are helpful, a time-saver, and that they have not seen videos created in this style before. The comments are positive, and the only comments that are of a negative tone are based on misunderstanding how to select or answer embedded questions. These responses have been very minimal, which indicates the videos are still being received and used as intended by the faculty.

Reason Three: Functionality for Student and Faculty

Making videos for classroom use can be challenging and time-consuming for educators. The process of making videos starts with preparing to record, recording and re-recording, and ending with editing before posting and embedding the final product in the forums for students. Thus, discovering Edpuzzle and its functionality for video editing and production was a relief but also empowering and exciting. Since Edpuzzle has a database of videos from other websites such as

YouTube or Khan Academy, educators are not even required to record their own videos before editing and personalizing with a voiceover or embedded questions. However, if an educator decides to record their own video in another application such as Loom, Edpuzzle is flexible and accommodating. It is as easy as downloading the Loom video to the computer desktop and uploading into EdPuzzle. We found Edpuzzle to be an effective EdTech tool in the higher education online classroom because it met the functionality requirements for students and for us as faculty.

Conclusion and Future Research

EdTech tools are essential to online faculty. They provide personalization and personality to a classroom and equip faculty with innovative engagement strategies to excite students and invest in their learning experience. We have come to find that the use of Edpuzzle in our online higher education classes is now a classroom staple for consistent student engagement. Future research on Edpuzzle in the online higher education classroom could be done in a quantifiable method intended to provide concrete data for the observations stated by the faculty in this reflective practice article. There is also room for online and traditional faculty to create their own One-Minute-To-Win-It videos and provide their own unique observations on the experience. Ongoing online faculty collaboration should continue to focus on improving student learning and success through the creative implementation of EdTech tools in their classrooms.

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