

Facilitate Video Class Sessions

As with all teaching—no matter the group size or length of the session—facilitating video classes requires intentional planning. Teachers need to make purposeful decisions before, during, and after a class, maximizing students' time and attention. Breakout rooms are helpful for this. Interactive lectures using tools like Nearpod or Pear Deck can be helpful for facilitating student feedback and deepening their thinking.

Before the video class session

Create a space for interaction and “backchannel” communication. Ensure that students have been introduced to the tools well ahead of time so they can adequately participate during the class session.

Try this: Prepare to use the chat in a video conference as a backchannel, or create a shared Google Doc for collaborative notetaking. Also, teachers may choose to use a website like YoTeach to set up a private backchannel chat that can stretch across multiple class sessions.

During the video class session

Review video conference etiquette and protocols. Discuss when you would want students to have their video cameras on (if they are willing and able), to engage in conversation.

Try this: Use structures that support dialogue and interaction. For instance, the National School Reform Faculty has dozens of discussion protocols that can be used to provide a framework for conversation. Also, use a tool like Flippity's “random name picker” to choose student names and cue them for their turn to speak.

After the video class session

In a timely manner, follow up with students with immediate action steps.

Try this: Share an announcement and include links to the backchannel or note-taking document, as well as any assignments. Also, if the session was recorded for students who could not attend, share the link.

