



RESPONDING AND CONNECTING USING VISUAL TOOLS: Record Students' Thinking Using a Video Tool



TRY THIS WHEN . . .

- you are ready to introduce some variety in the ways students can respond for formative assessment
- you need to assess student understanding in a one-directional conference
- you want to build fluency in students' speaking skills.

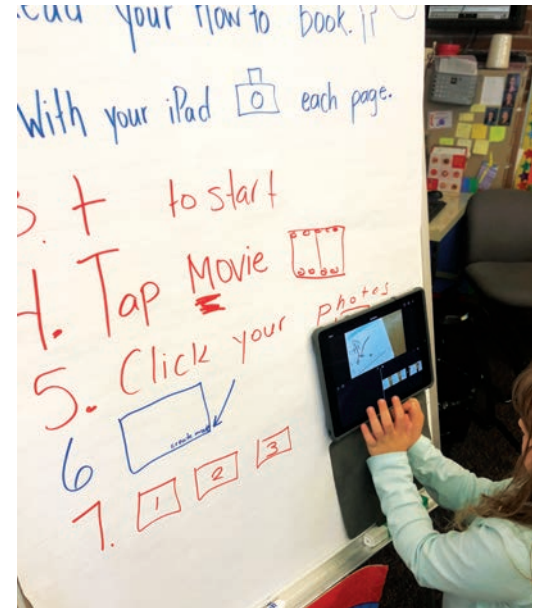
Asking students to respond to reading spurs students' thinking and provides formative assessment. But do these responses need to be written? Recording student responses as videos for the class offers students an authentic audience and can present us with a different lens through which to view and understand how kids interact with text. Video recordings have the added benefits of not limiting students based on their writing ability and of serving as powerful documentation tools to track growth.

WHAT TO DO

From book reviews to student-made math tutorials, video response can range from very structured to open-ended. We've found that the natural and authentic way that students respond when given a more open approach with a few scaffolds in place gives us the clearest view of students' perspectives.

The easiest way to explain what a video response looks like is to show students examples of video responses. If you have student examples from another classroom, use those. If not, record your own mentor examples. As you show students the models, notice what the speaker did. Pay attention to both the presentation (making eye contact, using body movements, speaking clearly and loudly) and content (giving examples from the text). Students will naturally attend to presentation, but may need coaching to listen for content. We can also help students by recording live in front of students or showing videos where we may make "mistakes" or reflect on things we forgot to say. Response videos are not "final products" but merely a snapshot of thinking and learning in progress. When discussing videos with students, emphasize the importance of their ideas, not just their final presentation, and encourage a casual tone over a more formal planned recording.

The Tips and Video Response Checklists on the following pages are distillations of the processes we've seen classes use to create video



The chart in this kindergarten classroom is not fancy; Kristin made it on the fly during a demonstration lesson on how to use iMovie. Nonetheless, this anchor chart supported students, and within a few minutes a student accessed the chart as the lesson progressed. The scaffolds and support we place in the classroom don't have to be perfect in order to be powerful for students.

Helpful Language

I see . . . [Here, name the positive behaviors you see, such as you are rewatching to see if you said what you wanted to say or you are deciding to work with a partner to help you get started.]

You shared many details about your learning.

What is the most important thing you want viewers to know?

Room 302's Tips for Recording a Check-In Video

Remember: The purpose of a check-in video is to share your thinking about a text. It's not supposed to be perfect.

- Review what you read; what is important to say?
- Give a quick overview of what you read (title, main ideas).
- Spend most of your time talking about your thinking.
 - This article made me think . . .
 - One important thing I learned was . . . , and that made me think . . .
 - Something interesting I read about was . . . because . . .
 - Something I'm now wondering about is . . . because . . .
 - I'm inferring that . . . because in the article . . .
 - One of my favorite quotes is . . . because . . .
 - A theory I have developed is . . . My evidence is . . .
 - I'd like to know more about . . .
 - This connects to . . .
- Leave by posing a question or a comment that gives your viewers something to think about or respond to.
- Rewatch to make sure you've said what you wanted to say and your technology works.

This example, from a fifth-grade classroom, supports students in crafting meaningful video responses to something they've read.

responses; they are included here to give you an idea of what might be helpful to emphasize in your modeling. As always, your students will likely feel more invested in this process if you co-create these kinds of guiding charts with them rather than posting our examples in your classroom.

Give students an opportunity to practice recording their own video responses, alone and with partners, depending on age and comfort level. Then, students can receive positive feedback from the teacher and peers on what they did well.

Once students have learned the process for video response, student videos should not be events that require lots of preparation and recording time.

If students struggle to get started or have difficulty recording themselves, try the following:

- ▶ Guide students to choose a few sentence stems from the chart to get started.
- ▶ Help students prepare by suggesting that they mark a few of their own notes (or pages, or parts of the article) that they want to share.
- ▶ Have students practice and record with a trusted friend, or have the friend record them. Some students are uncomfortable recording into a front-facing camera.
- ▶ Allow students some time to prepare what they want to say in writing ahead of time. Gently wean them from needing to write a script to using a short bulleted list of topics to cover.
- ▶ Assist students by providing sentence stems or an organizational structure.
- ▶ Allow students to record short videos or video segments that can be combined into a longer response.
- ▶ Allow students to show a still image of the text while they speak if they are nervous about being on camera.

OUTCOMES AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Students should be able to record a brief video that demonstrates their thinking, their application of comprehension strategies, or another literacy skill. Can students

- ▶ determine key ideas and details to include in their video?
- ▶ give examples from the text or resource to support their thinking?
- ▶ show awareness of their audience when they record?
- ▶ speak loudly and clearly?
- ▶ use given language, sentence stems, or other supports to record their video?

Video Response Checklist

- I spoke in a loud voice.
- I looked at the camera.
- I shared something I think about this book.
- I gave an example from the book.
- I ended with a question or comment for viewers to think about.
- I thanked my viewer.



FOLLOW UP

As a follow-up to this lesson, after we've built a strong classroom community (see the next Try It, titled "Comment Productively and Kindly"), we can teach students to offer each other feedback. We first model what appropriate feedback looks like and sounds like. Then we frame feedback as a tool for growth. Use language like *Can we give [student's name] some "positives" and some "pushes"? What did you see [student's name] do well? What would you encourage [student's name] to do next time to make it even better?* Inviting kids to unpack a student work sample actively engages them in learning strategies that will improve their own video content. Once feedback has become an established routine in the classroom, you might move students to self-assessment using a class-created checklist.

How often you use this strategy is dependent on the number of devices you have available, the age level of your students, and what platforms you are using. We find that variety and choice play an important role in keeping this strategy fresh, useful, and efficient. For example, in the fifth-grade class that presented the video check-in tips shown earlier, students used short video responses once or twice a week, keeping most responses to two or three minutes. Most responses were intended for—and responded to by—peers, with the teacher making choices about which ones to use for formative assessment and when and how to give students feedback. This feedback ranged from video or audio recordings made in response by other students and the teacher, quickly written comments, micro-rubrics/checklists, or in-person conversations. In cases when video responses were to be used for summative assessment, students were given notice in advance.