

# TEACHING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Technology for Zoom-fatigued teachers

## RESOURCES

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## Online Teaching

# Key Tips for effective teaching in a webinar (or a classroom for that matter)

1. Recognise that some students prefer to learn online. Many others like it just as much as learning in a classroom. There is also ample evidence that if done well, teaching can be as effective online as in a classroom for many subjects. Students will be more positive about the current mode of teaching if you project enthusiasm about the opportunities of learning online..
2. Recognise that in a webinar you are the size of a postage stamp. You have less physical presence. So you need to make sure that (a) you project more energy than normal and (b) you make your lessons more engaging.
3. Consider your lighting. Don't sit with your back to a window or you will look like a government whistle-blower in a witness protection program.
4. Think about what is behind you. You don't need a professional studio (students expect to see you at home), but you don't want a cluttered, distracting background. A boring room or plain wall is ideal.
5. Put your laptop on a pile of books or something so that the camera is about level with your nose. That way, the camera won't be looking up your nostrils (it is also a more complimentary angle for you ;)
6. Avoid text-heavy slides. They look boring and are a real turn-off for most students. If you have lots of text for your students to read, make a handout and give it to them as a handout. There are of course exceptions to this. For example if you are teaching language! If you know why you are breaking the rule for a reason - and you can explain that reason to yourself, that's fine!
7. Images on slides are great - especially if they are so big that they don't fit on the slide. This creates a "closure" effect, where your students' minds have to imagine the rest of the missing image. In their imagination the image will be more vivid and dynamic than if you were to show it.
8. If you are sold on the idea of using images better, then I'd recommend investing in an image editing application. Adobe Photoshop is great (but expensive). Serif's Affinity Photo is much cheaper and does almost exactly the same thing, in almost exactly the same way. In some respects it is even better than Photoshop.
9. Animations are useful if used discerningly, and if they lead the students' eyes to where you want them to be looking on the slide. Good examples include blurring all but the element you want your students to look at, and path animations that keep your students looking at the important part of the slide. Looping videos are also very effective on slides, especially if they are within an image that has a window cut in it.
10. Recognise that students at home are surrounded by distractions. Many of them are half-listening to you, whilst playing a game, chatting to friends on social media, watching TV or doing one of dozens of other things. For this reason, it's important that the screen keeps changing regularly. That will help to keep your students watching the screen.
11. Instead of making one slide with six bullet-points. My advice is to make six slides, each with one bullet point (and a different interesting picture).

12. Great images can be downloaded for free (financially and also copyright free) from

- [www.unsplash.com](http://www.unsplash.com)
- [www.morguefile.com](http://www.morguefile.com)
- [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)
- [www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com)
- [www.pxhere.com](http://www.pxhere.com)

## Pointing at the screen

# Logitech Spotlight, ScreenPointer, PointerFocus

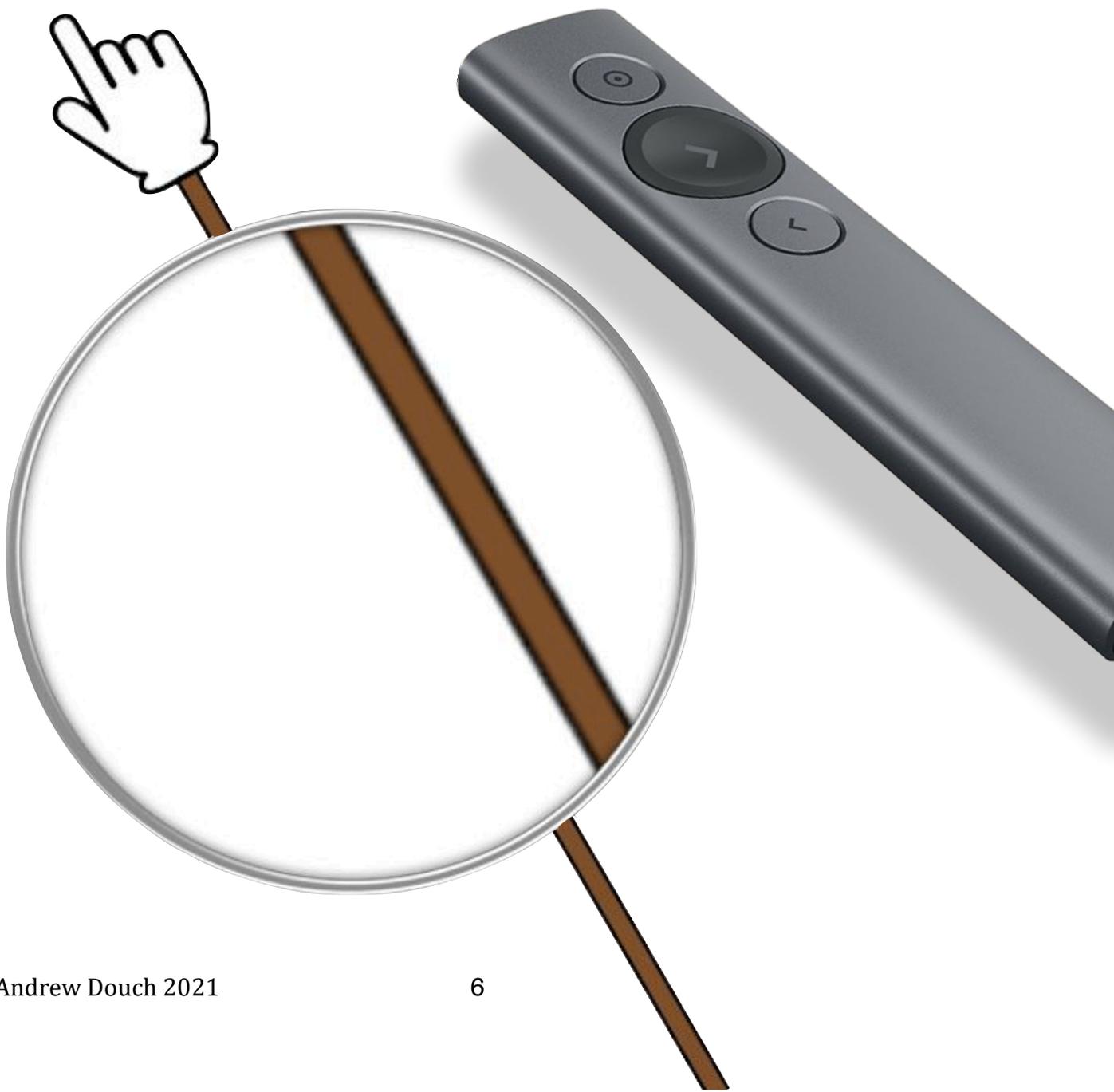
It's really important when in a webinar for students to know where they are supposed to be looking on the screen. But it's harder to direct their attention to something on the screen than in a classroom. I think you need a pointer tool.

If you have a Logitech Spotlight remote presenter, you can use the spotlight feature in a webinar. It works just as it would in a classroom.

On a Mac there is a \$5 app called ScreenPointer which gives you a virtual "finger" as well as a spotlight, magnifying glass, laser pointer and various other tools. I really like it.

The equivalent tool on Windows is called PointerFocus. It's free!

**Logitech Spotlight \$190 | ScreenPointer (Mac) \$4.49 | PointerFocus (Windows) \$free | Mouseposé (Mac) \$16**



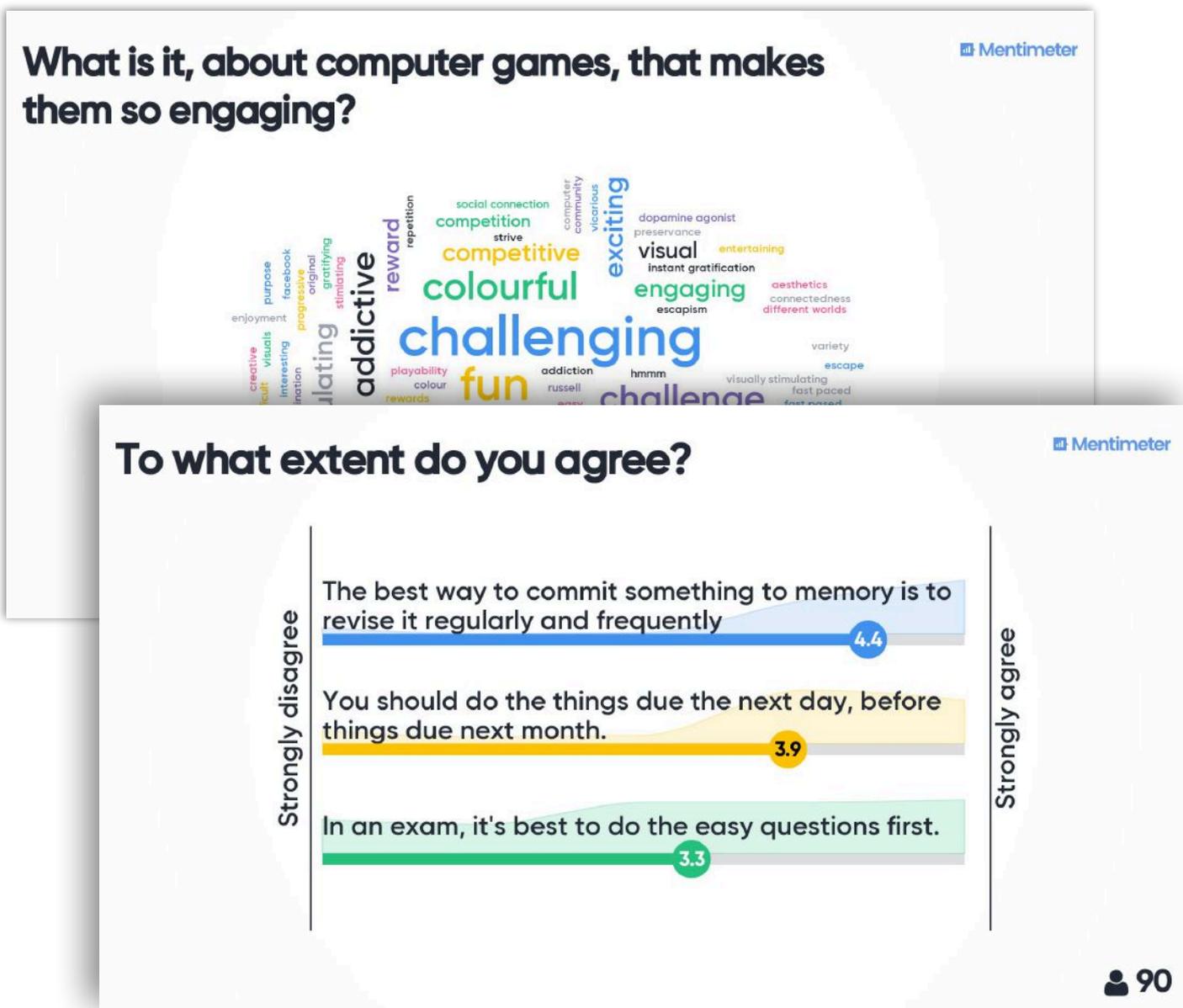
# Advanced polling

## Mentimeter

Mentimeter is a freemium tool that allows live polling, prioritisation, word clouds and other engaging participatory classroom activities. A great tool for engaging students at the beginning of a lesson. I particularly like the 'scales' activity, for asking students what they think (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) about a statement before teaching a lesson on that topic.

If you upgrade from a free plan to a paid plan, you can choose more themes (the free version only gives you nine) and the ability to make more than two activities per slideshow. You can however make as many slideshows as you like. Personally, I think the free version is sufficient.

Mentimeter | [mentimeter.com](https://www.mentimeter.com) | \$freemium



## Even more advanced polling

# WooClap

WooClap is an app that allows teachers to display questions of various kinds to a class. The class can respond from any internet-enabled device in a like way to other, similar services such as Mentimeter.

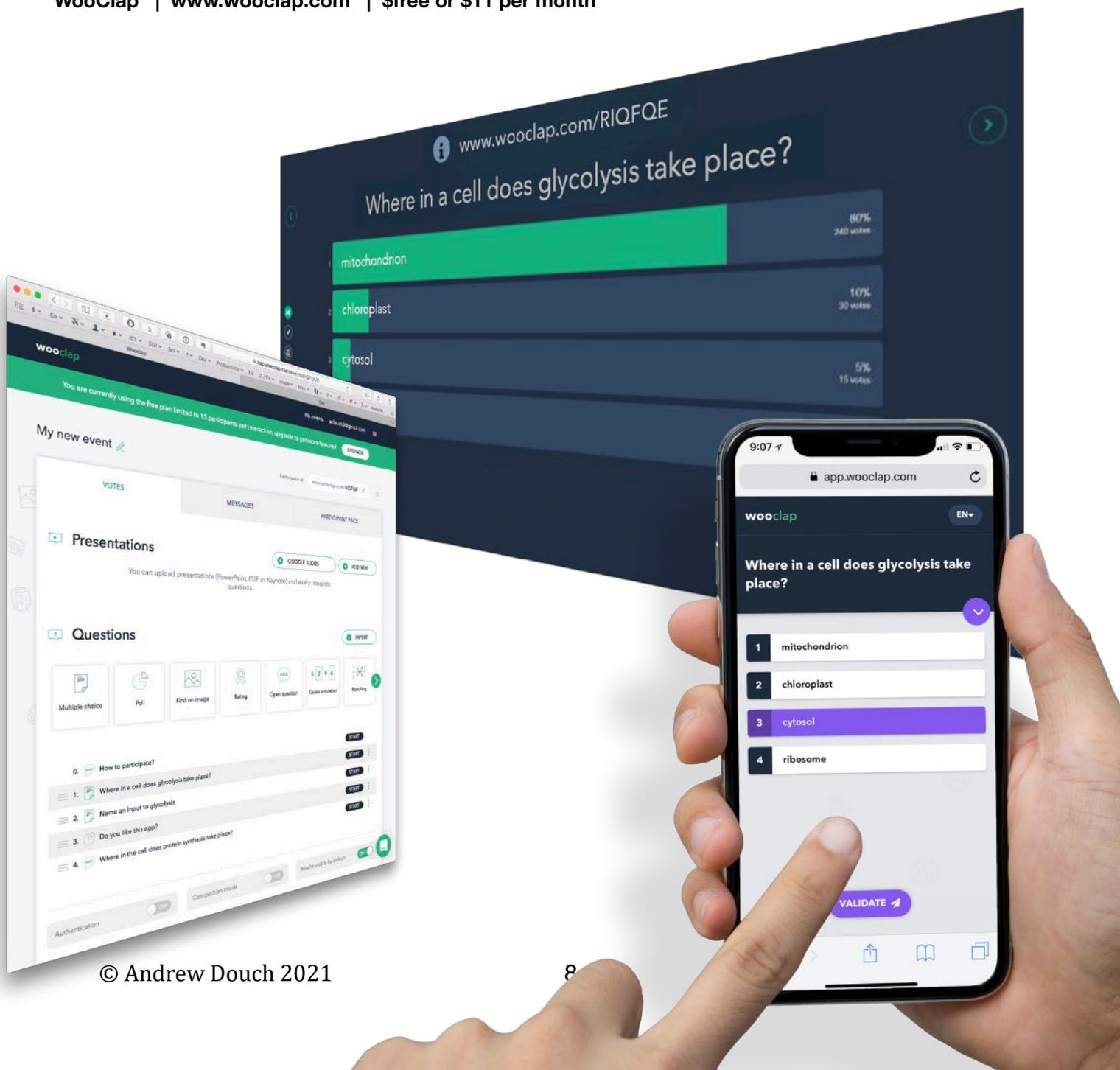
The question types in WooClap are different to those in Mentimeter (though there is some overlap).

WooClap allows you to make as many questions as you want to in lesson (for a free account, but it limits you to 15 participants, so you will want your students to partner-up if you want to use the platform for free (Unless you are lucky enough to have fewer than 16 students in your class!).

Paid accounts are relatively expensive at \$11 per month.

You could use WooClap in a number of ways, but I think it really shines for revision activities. I really like how fast and clean it is.

**WooClap | [www.wooclap.com](http://www.wooclap.com) | \$free or \$11 per month**



# Name picker

## The Wheel of Names

The Wheel of Names is a very simple website. You simply add your students names in the pane on the right, and then click to spin the wheel.

It's free and works great on a smartphone or tablet, too.



The Wheel of Names | <https://wheelofnames.com> | \$free

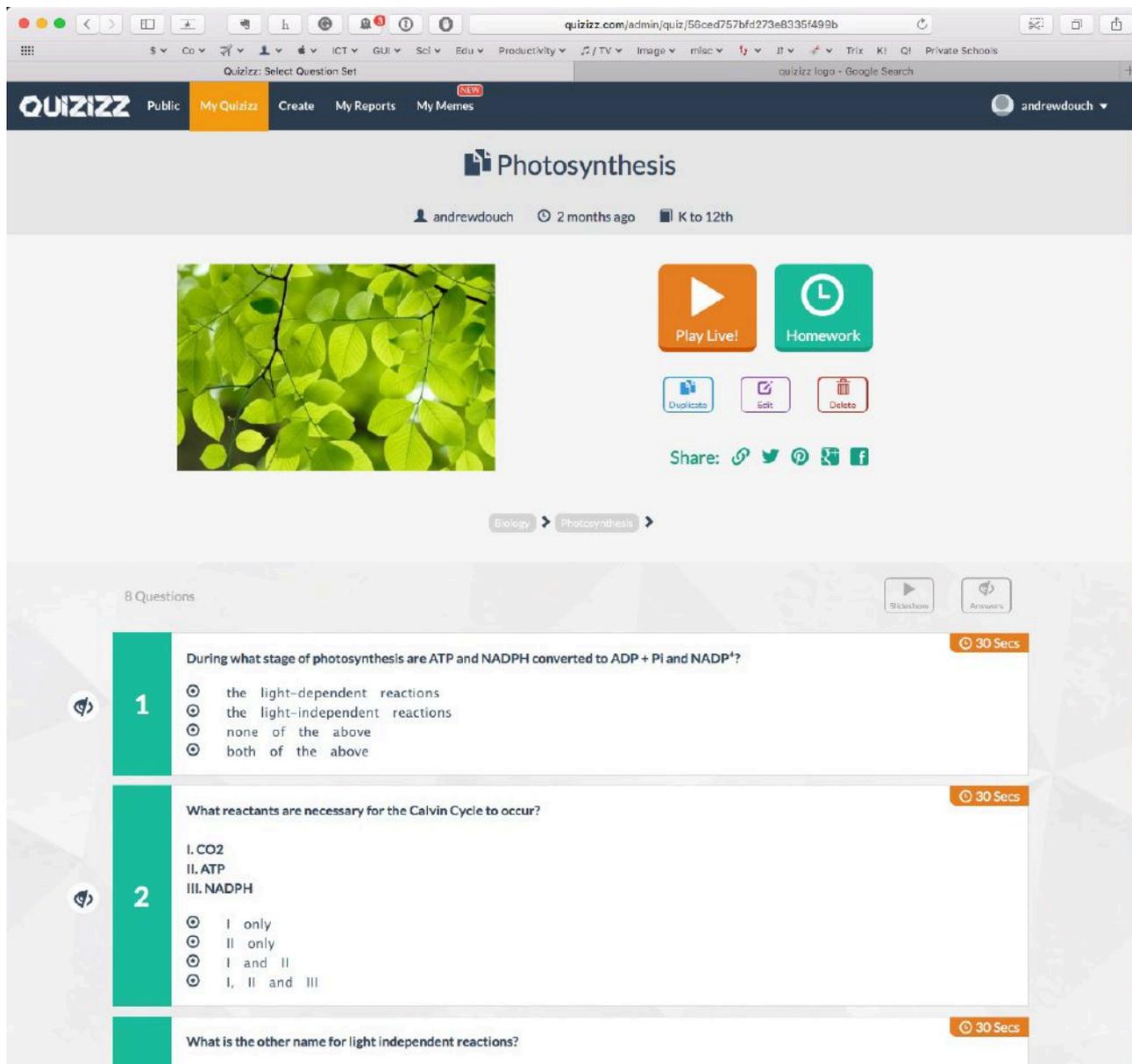
# Gamify Learning

## Quizizz

One question that teachers often ask about Kahoot, is “Do students have to all play at the same time, or can you set the quiz to be played at home for homework. Quizizz is the answer to that question. When students ‘play’ a Quizizz they don’t need to be able to see the teacher’s screen, and students can answer questions at their own pace (within the time limits allowed for each question). This means that while you can have students all play it at the same time, you don’t have to and can set it as a homework task. In other respects it is very similar to Kahoot, in that you can see how each student has answered each question, see how the class has performed on various questions, and it is just as easy to set up.

Because students can answer questions at their own pace during the quiz, I don’t think it is as much fun for a quiz in class time as Kahoot. But if you want to send a quiz home, then it’s a great option.

**Quizizz | [www.quizizz.com](http://www.quizizz.com) | \$free**



The screenshot shows the Quizizz website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Quizizz logo and options like 'Public', 'My Quizizz', 'Create', 'My Reports', and 'My Memes'. The user 'andrewdouch' is logged in. The main content area displays a quiz titled 'Photosynthesis' created by 'andrewdouch' 2 months ago, categorized under 'K to 12th'. A large image of green leaves is featured on the left. To the right, there are buttons for 'Play Live!' and 'Homework', along with 'Duplicate', 'Edit', and 'Delete' options. Below these are social sharing icons. The quiz content shows 8 questions. The first question is: 'During what stage of photosynthesis are ATP and NADPH converted to ADP + Pi and NADP?'. The options are: 'the light-dependent reactions', 'the light-independent reactions', 'none of the above', and 'both of the above'. The second question is: 'What reactants are necessary for the Calvin Cycle to occur?'. The options are: 'I. CO2', 'II. ATP', 'III. NADPH', 'I only', 'II only', 'I and II', and 'I, II and III'. The third question is: 'What is the other name for light independent reactions?'. Each question has a '30 Secs' timer.

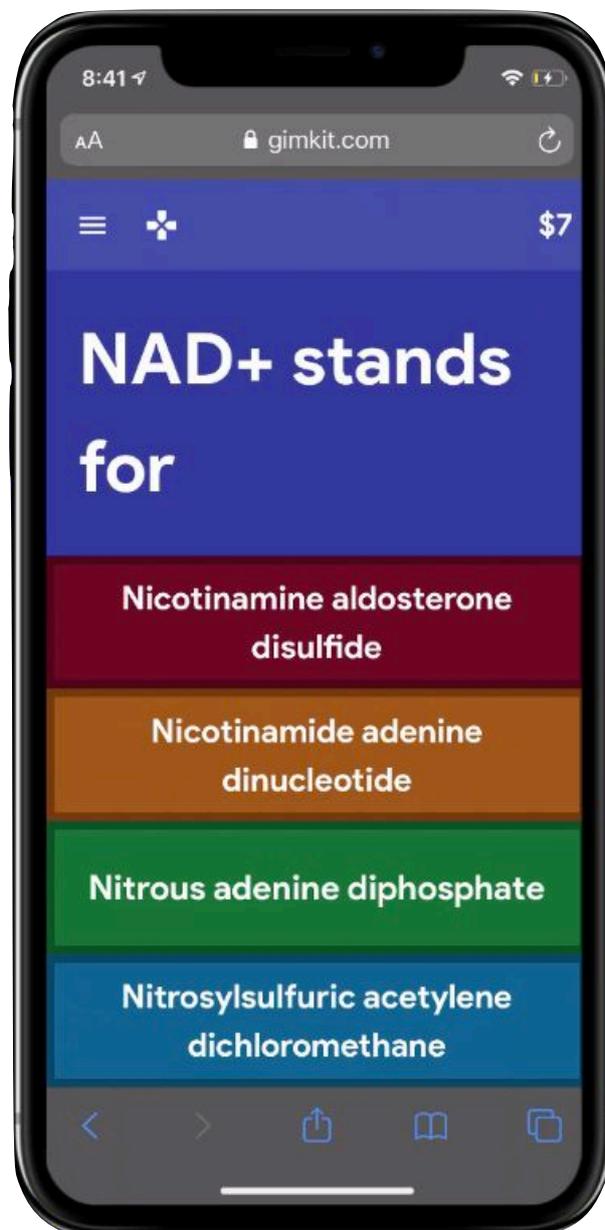
# Gamified Learning

## Gimkit

Gimkit is another learning game in the ilk of Kahoot and Quizizz. It's more fun than either, though. Students have ten minutes to make as much (in-game) money as possible. They earn money by answering questions correctly (and lose money by answering them incorrectly). After they have earned some money they can spend it in the in-game store to buy features that will help them to make more money. For example, they might purchase a points-doubler. While students are playing you can watch a graph of their performance (I.e. money tally) on the teacher's screen.

Students love this.

Anchor | [iOS App Store](#), [Google Play Store](#), [Anchor.fm](#) | \$free (with upgrades available)



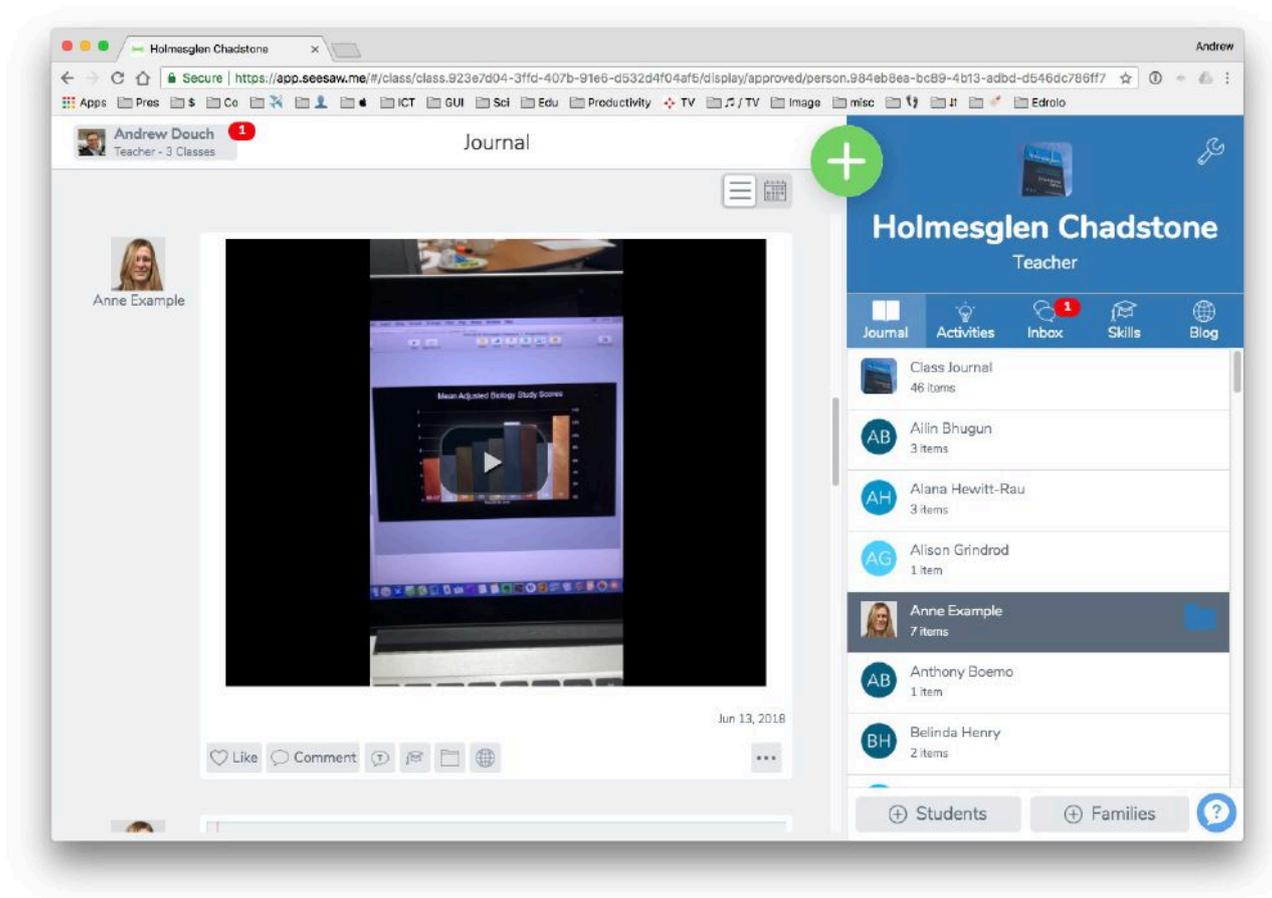
# Learning Journal

## SeeSaw

SeeSaw is a fantastic learning journal app designed for students to record examples of their work in all sorts of ways, including text, video, photographs and audio. It requires very little maintenance by the mentor/teacher, but the teacher is always able to see what students are adding to their journal. Parents are also able to see the journal entries of their child. In addition to being able to see the journal entries being made by a student, the teacher can comment on student work, move it to various folders, or even delete it.

When you first go to [www.seesaw.me](http://www.seesaw.me) and sign up for an account you will be presented with a screen that asks you whether you are a teacher or a student. As a teacher you will need to use an email address and choose a password in order to sign up (or you can use a token from Facebook if you prefer).

To invite your students to join the class, you can either give them the class code, which is available at any time by clicking on the “Get Class Code” button at the top right of the screen, or by toggling to the QR code, which can be printed out and put on the classroom wall, so that students can scan it with their iPad at any time.



SeeSaw | [www.seesaw.me](http://www.seesaw.me) | \$free (with upgrade options for schools)

## Ask them to publish it

# Weebly

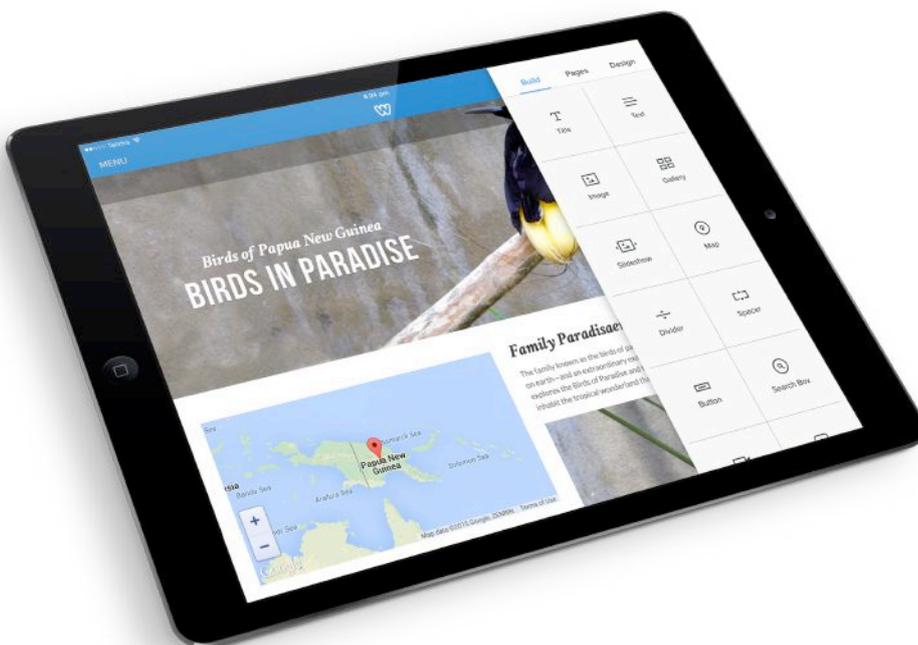


Weebly is an amazing tool for making a website. A basic account is free and gives you 5 Mb of storage space, dozens of beautiful and fully customisable templates designed by graphic designers, and free hosting with a subdomain of Weebly. In other words your website's URL will be [www.weebly.com/yoursite](http://www.weebly.com/yoursite) If you want to have your own domain ([www.yoursite.com](http://www.yoursite.com)) you can pay for that option. If you already have a domain of your own you can point it to your weebly site and it will work well (That is what I do). The Help section of Weebly gives fairly good instructions for doing this if you have the patience to follow them through. The easiest option though, is to either buy a .com or .net account through Weebly or to use a subdomain of Weebly. In both of these cases the setup process is automatic.

A paid account gives you more storage space, some extra widgets you can put on your site and removes a tiny weebly add at the bottom of the page (so you cannot tell that the page was made using weebly).

My own professional website I made using Weebly. It looks fantastic. There really is no way of knowing that it was not made via traditional means - which would have either required me to pay hundreds (or even thousands) of dollars, or learn some really advanced website design skills.

The Weebly interface is very intuitive.



Until recently, Weebly was not able to be used natively on an iPad because the interface was flash-based (though it did work in the Puffin Browser). A recent update however saw a major changes to Weebly, most significantly (for us) the app was re-written in HTML5 - which means that it now works natively in the Safari browser on an iPad.

The settings tab allows for very powerful control of the way your site works. Here you can set passwords for specific pages, set up e-commerce (to sell products), create a favicon, enable ssl encryption for added security, change the URL of your site, and much, much more.

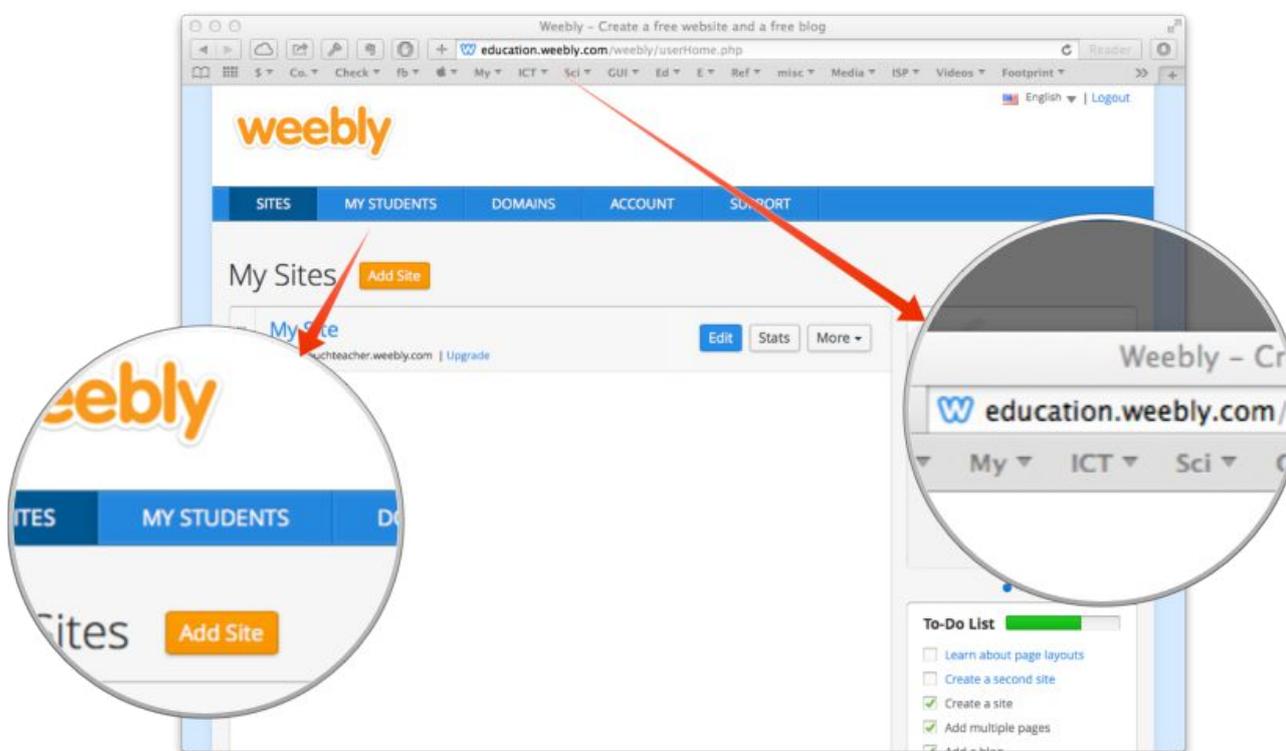
A few years ago, building a website that had these types of features required a great deal of technical know-how. Now, using Weebly it just requires clicking a button.

When your site is finished, simply click the orange “Publish” button at the top right and your website will be live. No need to purchase server space, no need to ftp your files to get them online - none of that fiddly stuff - just click the button!

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## Education Weebly

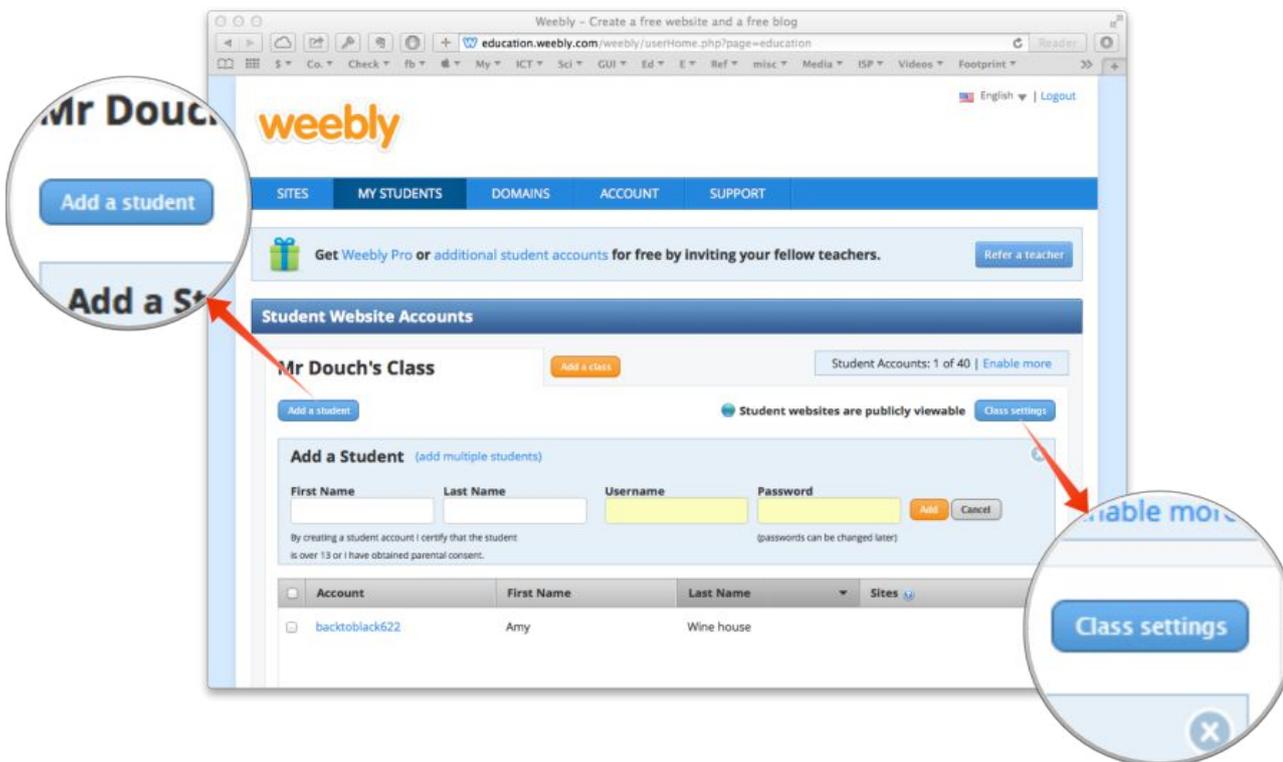
Education Weebly [www.education.weebly.com](http://www.education.weebly.com) has everything Weebly has and more. You are only allowed to have an Education Weebly account if you are a teacher.



The most important features of an Education Weebly account concern supervision of students. You can create a free sub-account for each of your students (up to 40 students in each class - or more if you pay some money). You add each of your students, give them a username and password. Then you can print a sheet of paper to give each student a slip with their login details (very convenient). When your students log in they can change their password, but you can see what they have changed it to, and you are always allowed to log into their account. You can also turn on comment moderation, so that you see any comments that are made on your students' blogs, and approve them before the students see them. An Education Weebly account also give you and your students the ability to password-protect pages, and you can even password-protect all your students websites (so that your students can see each others' websites but they are not visible to the public. These are just some of the options available to you to help you keep your students safe.

If your students are younger than 13, they are not allowed to have a Weebly site UNLESS you create it for them via your Education Weebly account and they have parental permission to make a website. Students over 13 could just as easily create a site for themselves at weebly.com but I would still advise you to use education.weebly.com because not only does it help you to supervise what your students are publishing but it gives your students access to some features (such as password-protecting individual pages) that one would have to pay for in a regular Weebly account.

If you decide you want Weebly's Pro features (including HD Video and Audio hosting, as well as some other additional elements) it costs just \$39 for a teacher with an Education account, compared to \$99 for a regular Weebly user. Furthermore, if you upgrade your account to a pro account all your students get the pro features as well!



Weebly

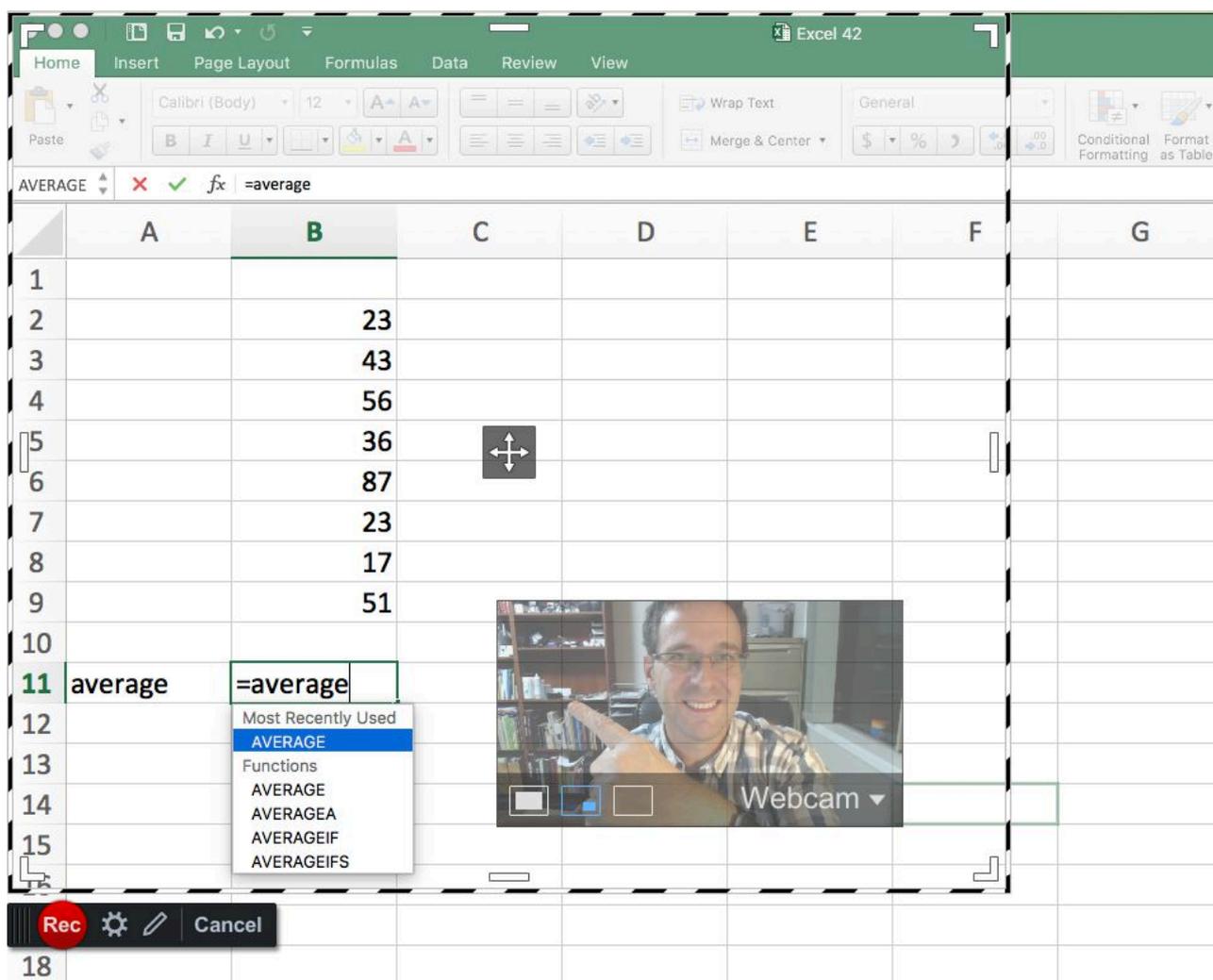
| www.weebly.com | \$Freemium

# Make a screencast on your mac or PC

## Screencast-O-Matic (Mac or PC)

Screencast-O-Matic ([www.screencastomatic.com](http://www.screencastomatic.com)) is a really great option for making screencasts using a computer. It allows you to record up to 15 minutes, allows you to record your webcam video as well as your screen, allows publishing directly to YouTube and allows downloading in MP4 format. Best of all, it's free! In addition, if you want more features, a "Pro" account is only \$15 per year. A pro account removes the watermark on your videos, and provides you with a number of other features such as basic editing, and the ability to draw and zoom while recording. On a Windows PC it also allows you to record the system audio (rather than just the sound coming into the microphone).

Start by dragging the handles on the marquee to define the area of the screen you want to capture. If you are recording your webcam, you will see the video window on your screen. It is not necessary for this to be inside the marquee.



Once your

screen

is set up and ready to go, check the microphone and webcam settings in the panel beneath the marquee and then press the red "record" button.

Screencast-O-Matic will give you a 3-second countdown and then start recording.

While recording, the area of the screen that is being recorded will be framed with a red line. Note that it is possible to pause the recording to move things into the red box, but anything that happens outside the red box will not be recorded.

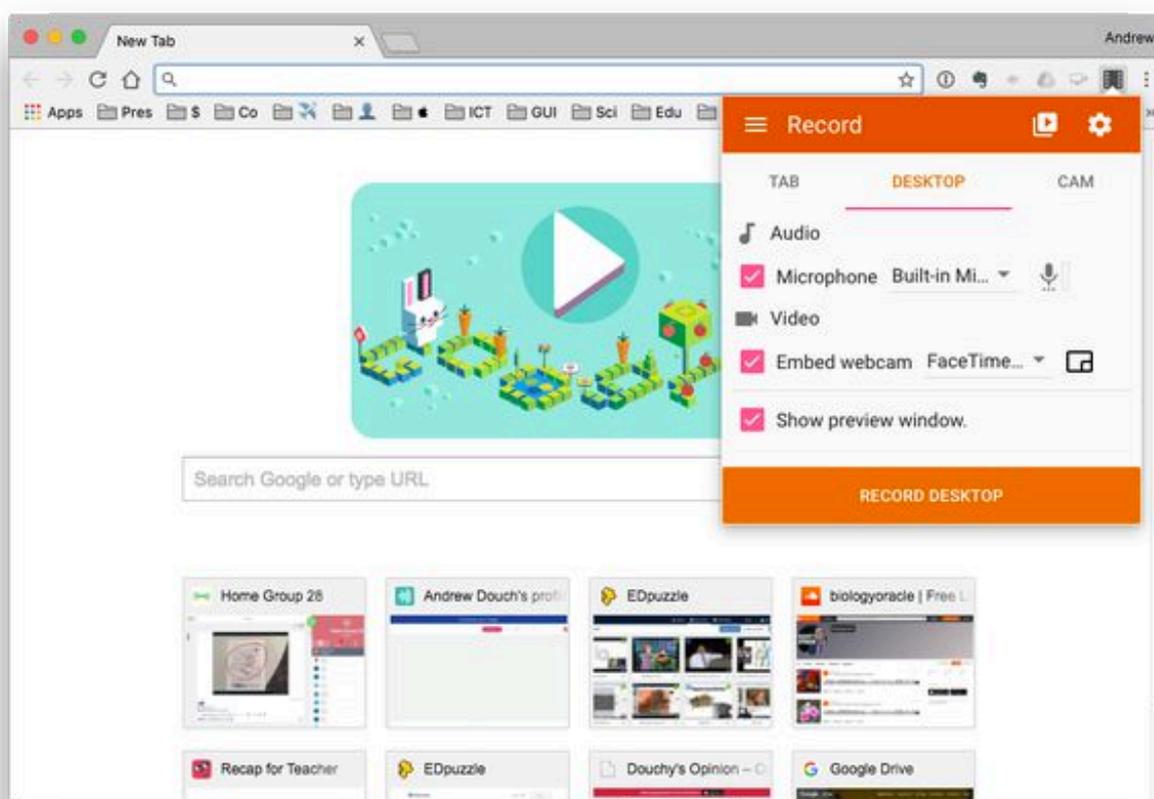
Once you press “Done” a preview/publishing window will open automatically. In here, you can resize and position the webcam video on the screen. You can also publish the video directly to Screencast-O-Matic or to YouTube (my preference). Or if you prefer, you can download the MP4 file directly to your computer and upload it to Dropbox, or your school LMS, etc.

While I think Screencast-O-Matic hits the sweet-spot for most teachers in terms of price, simplicity and features, if you want instructions and details for one of the other tools, you can download them in PDF format from here: <http://bit.ly/28-2-14>

# Screencasting in Chrome

## Screencastify

Another really great, simple screencasting tool that I highly recommend to teachers – especially Chromebook users, is Screencastify. It's as easy to use as Screencast-O-Matic, and has many of the same features, but it runs as a Chrome plugin, and saves your recordings to Google Drive. Having said that, it doesn't just let you record the browser window; you can record your entire desktop and optionally even your webcam (which, like Screencast-O-Matic will appear as a cameo picture-in-picture at the lower right of the video). Screencastify also allows you to annotate over a Tab recording, and has some basic editing features which you can use in post (if you want to).



The free version allows you to record up to 50, 10 minute videos (which in my opinion is long enough) per month, and watermarks your videos with a Screencastify message. To remove these limitations, and to enable editing and cropping, Screencastify Pro costs just US\$2 per month.

**Screencastify | <https://www.screencastify.com> | \$free - US\$2 per month.**

## On-The-Fly ScreenCasting

# CloudApp

CloudApp is another fantastic tool for recording your screen or part of it, including your webcam if you wish, and uploading the video to the cloud. It does most (not all) of what Screencast-O-Matic does but it does some other things, too (such as file sharing).

What makes CloudApp so attractive is its convenience. It runs in the menubar (taking very little memory) and when you record something on your screen, it automatically gets uploaded to the cloud, and instantly gives you a link to share the video (even before the video has finished uploading). That means you don't have to wait for the video to finish uploading before you can share the link, or before you can start recording another video. In fact, you can have several videos uploading in the background when you get to work recording your next video. That's great if you are giving video feedback to your students on work they have submitted!

**CloudApp | [www.getcloudapp.com/education](http://www.getcloudapp.com/education) | \$free year for teachers (normally \$168/year)**



# Adding Questions to your Videos: EDpuzzle

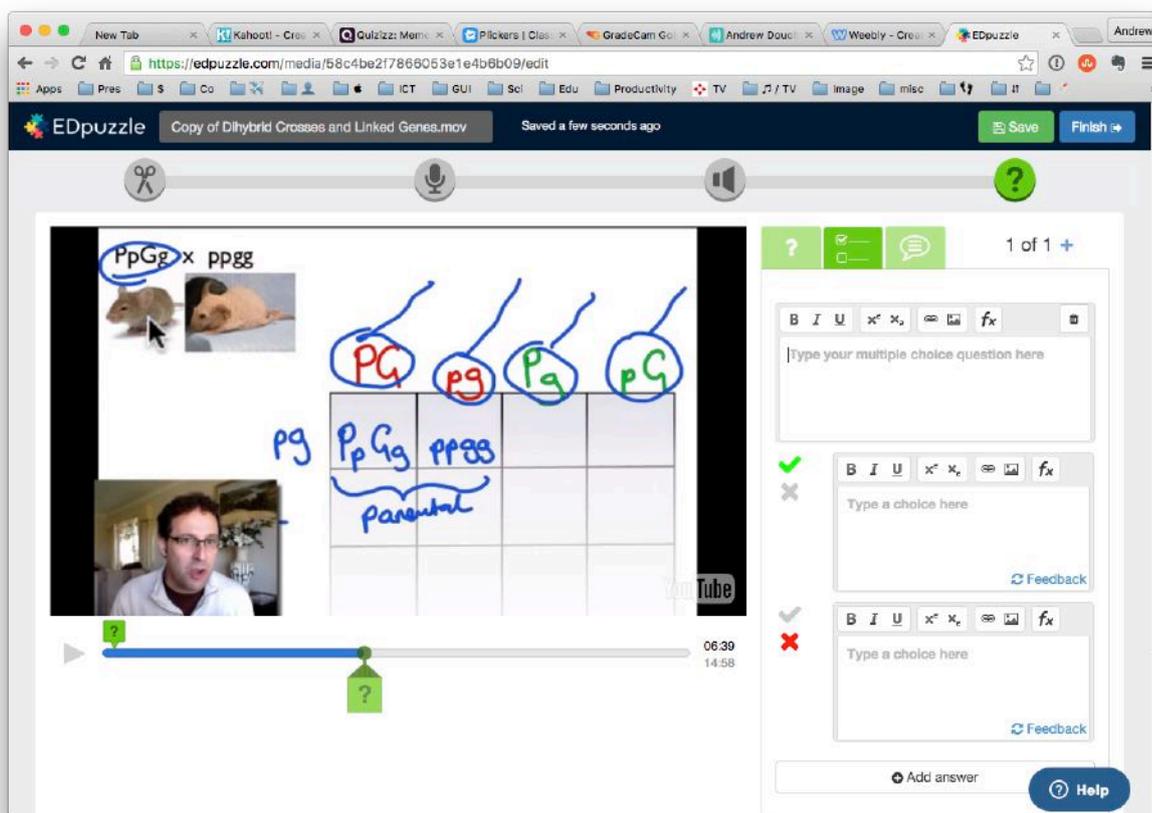
EDpuzzle is a web service and app (for iOS and Android). It solves two problems that are often raised by teachers who start flipping their classes: 1. It lets the teacher know if a student has or has not watched a particular video. 2. it lets the teacher see whether students have understood what they were watching.

To start go to EDpuzzle.com and click on “My Content”. There you can create a new lesson by clicking the “Create” button. You can create a lesson by either uploading your own video, or by entering the URL of a video in an online video sharing site such as YouTube.

Once the video has been selected, you can then add a question by clicking the “?” button at the top right of the screen, and then clicking the green “?” button on the timeline at each point you want to add a question to the video.

Once you have added all your questions you can share the video with your class. As your students watch the video either in a web browser or in the app, the video will automatically pause at each point where you have inserted a question.

By logging into your account, you can see which students have watched the video and what response they made to each question.



EDpuzzle |

[www.edpuzzle.com](http://www.edpuzzle.com) | \$free

## Make a vodcast using Swivl

The Swivl is a “Personal Cameraman” for your iPhone or other video camera. When recording video, you wear (or carry) the remote IR emitter, and the Swivl follows you very smoothly. If using an iPhone, the remote also contains a high-definition remote microphone to record your voice, and the recording can be started and stopped remotely. Some video cameras (such as Flip) can also be used with the Swivl, as long as they have a tripod-screw hole in the base. The Swivl comes with an adaptor that can be screwed into the tripod-screw hole and the adaptor then fits into the adjustable locking mechanism on the Swivl.

There are now four models available at different prices, ranging from US\$400 for the Gen2 “Legacy” model to US\$1000 for the flagship “C5” model. The model I use is the Gen2 “Legacy” model, which I am very happy with, though if you are purchasing, I would recommend one of the newer C-series models. The details and product comparisons are explained at [swivl.com](http://swivl.com).

Swivl is available directly from [www.swivl.com](http://www.swivl.com) (in the USA) or from [www.aptech.com.au](http://www.aptech.com.au) - an Australian distributor. (phone 02 9452 6001). Compare the prices, as relative value will depend on the current exchange rate. Buying from Aptech will mean you will take delivery in days rather than weeks.



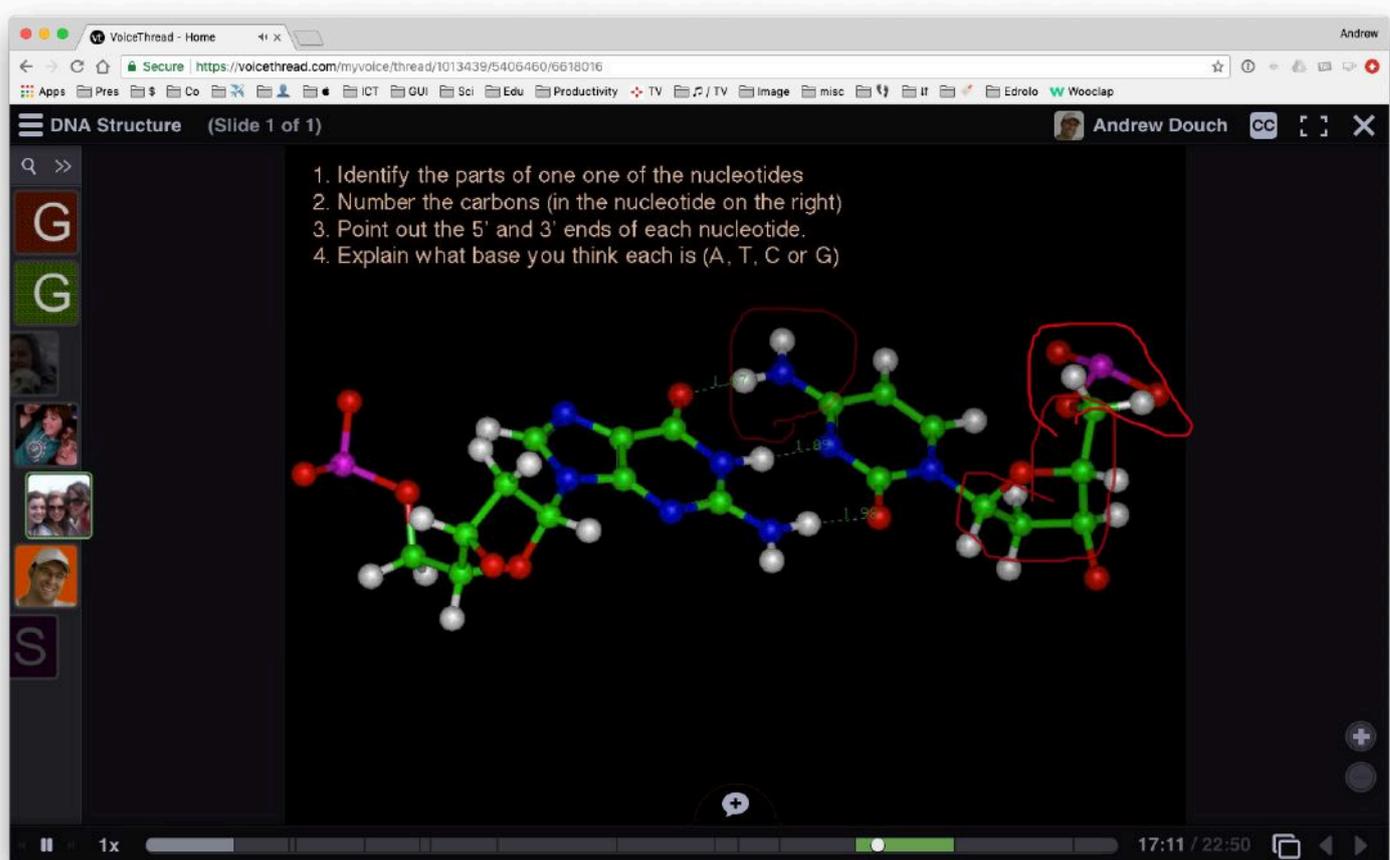
# Social Podcasting

## VoiceThread

VoiceThread is a great platform to get students all talking about a single topic. You can upload an image, and speak to your students about the image and then your students can respond in kind by clicking the microphone and speaking with their voice and drawing on the screen as they do so if they wish. All the students in the class can hear what each other have said.

The free license is quite limited. Ideally a teacher will have an educator license, which allows them to create up to 50 student accounts in a secure environment (students log in with a username and password to participate).

VoiceThread | <https://voicethread.com> | \$75 per year / \$15 per month / \$free



The screenshot shows a VoiceThread interface in a web browser. The browser address bar displays the URL: <https://voicethread.com/myvoice/thread/1013439/5406460/6618016>. The page title is "DNA Structure (Slide 1 of 1)" and the user is identified as "Andrew Douch".

On the left side, there is a vertical list of user avatars, with the letters "G", "G", and "S" visible next to some of them. The main content area features a list of four questions:

1. Identify the parts of one one of the nucleotides
2. Number the carbons (in the nucleotide on the right)
3. Point out the 5' and 3' ends of each nucleotide.
4. Explain what base you think each is (A, T, C or G)

Below the text is a 3D ball-and-stick model of a DNA double helix. The model uses different colors for atoms: carbon (green), oxygen (red), nitrogen (blue), and phosphorus (purple). Red circles are drawn around specific parts of the model, likely corresponding to the questions. The interface includes a search icon, a microphone icon, and a video player control bar at the bottom showing a 1x zoom level and a progress bar at 17:11 / 22:50.

# A Better Show and Tell

## FlipGrid



FlipGrid is a similar idea to Recap. In many ways it is even more flexible. You can for example upload a video for students to watch and respond to. There are also more options able to be turned on or off - such as comment moderation, login via email, ability for students to leave video replies to other students, the ability to embed a grid in your website or LMS, the ability to create custom grid login codes, etc. Some of the advanced features require a paid account.

What really makes FlipGrid useful (I think) is that it *now* has the ability for students to record their screen instead of using the camera to record themselves. That makes it a useful platform for students to give a talk to the class including PowerPoint slides!

FlipGrid | <http://flipgrid.com> | \$free with paid upgrades

