

Week one: Does learning take place differently in online and blended learning environments?

The objective for the first week's activity was to review material by Tony Bates and respond to the critical challenge question (CCQ), "Does learning take place differently in online and blended learning environments?".

This blog post will reflect on the process that I went through to delve deeper into the topic of learning in different environments.

I was lucky enough to work with Sam and Ginger on this activity. We met several times via Zoom to brainstorm and fine tune how to approach the activity, including; creating a video response, playing a Jeopardy game asynchronously and recording our responses, and playing the game synchronously with the cohort. We landed on the latter and presented the game to the group on the Saturday morning session. We chose four categories, online learning, blended learning, cohort trivia (to add some fun!) and factors that affect learning.

The first three categories were relatively easy to compile questions, as they were based on Tony Bates' video and posts. The factors that affect learning was more challenging for all of us to come up with factors that were relevant to the critical challenge question. After quite a bit of discussion we came up with the following four questions:

1. This factor is affected by the environment that it is designed for. What are learning activities?
2. These factors affect learning in online and/or blended environments. What are teacher and learner abilities?
3. This factor is critical for successful learning. What is teacher presence?
4. This factor is more difficult to teach in an online environment. What are skills (i.e., theatre, physical education, lab work)?

In the end, our group came to the same conclusion that it depends on who is delivering the education/training session, their skillset in an online environment, the topic, and the learner supports. The process that we went through as a group was where I challenged myself and grew on my understanding of the factors that affect learning. At the end of the Jeopardy game, we all felt that we had addressed the CCQ appropriately and presented it to the cohort in a meaningful and fun way.

If you want to look at the Jeopardy game here you can click on this link to the game in JeopardyLabs <https://jeopardylabs.com/play/online-learning-31>. It is free for anyone, if you want to join it the membership fee is \$20 (USD) for a lifetime membership.

References:

Bates, T. Online learning and (k-12) schools: do we need a different curriculum for online learning? <https://www.tonybates.ca/2021/01/12/online-learning-and-k-12-schools-do-we-need-a-different-curriculum-for-online-learning/>

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Bates, T. Online Learning in K-12: Hits, Misses, and Where to from Here? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZLu_lphoY

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