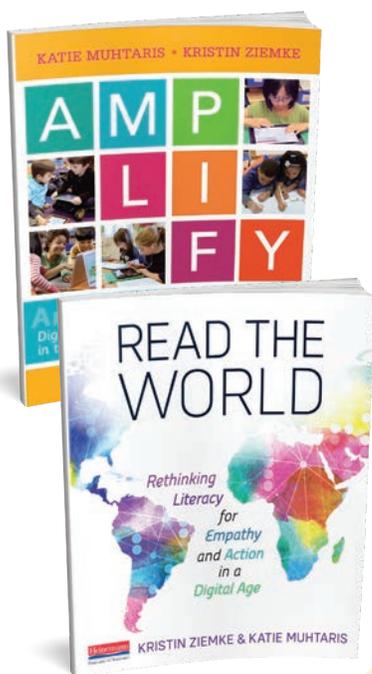# Distance Learning Lessons and Teaching Suggestions from Kristin Ziemke and Katie Muhtaris:
A Guide for Using *Amplify* and *Read the World* with Remote Teaching

CONTENTS

Fellow Educators,

This year will be unprecedented, even for those of us who have had years and years of experience welcoming students back to school. We'll need to rely on all that we know about teaching while, at the same time, being ready to learn and adjust moment-by-moment to an ever-changing learning environment. Whether you are teaching students in a virtual setting, hybrid, or in-person we know it will not be a year like any other we've had before.

For many years now, the two of us have been working to unite strong, kid-centered pedagogy with the best that technology has to offer in the classroom. Now, as so many teachers find themselves relying on technology more than ever before, we've organized the lessons and teaching moves that we know we'll be relying on the most in the upcoming school year so that you can find them easily and use them in your planning. The crosswalk document that follows shows you where to find help in our books (*Amplify: Digital Teaching and Learning in the K-6 Classroom* and *Read the World: Rethinking Literacy for Empathy and Action in a Digital Age*) as well as guidance for adjusting these lessons to distance learning. (If you don't have a copy of either of these books, we've included a few sample PDFs to give you an idea of what's in them.) The lessons and teaching suggestions on the crosswalk address setting your students up for success, teaching literacy, using technology to communicate productively, and engaging students with inquiry—even from a distance.

We often talk about how there are so many lessons and strategies that we never knew we needed to teach kids. Some examples are how to clean a device, how to write a blog comment, and how to record a video blog that doesn't look like *The Blair Witch Project*. Now, we find ourselves needing to teach lessons that we could never have imagined we would have to teach—lessons about how to build classroom communities online without having the opportunity to build that community in person first, for example. This document holds a little of both.

We hope that these resources, as well as those we've compiled on our Read The World Distance Learning Website will be of use to you. This school year will be a challenge the likes of which we have not seen in our lifetimes. We're honored to be going into it side by side.

Kristin & Katie

@KristinZiemke   @KatieMuhtaris

Every year we ensure that students begin to build skills to be successful in a new grade. We establish classroom guidelines, teach and practice procedures, and start to build foundations that will support students to achieve and exceed their goals and ours..

While this year may look different, the approach is not. We still start our year slow, fostering relationships and putting into place the systems needed to help students be successful through any model of learning.

What's the same?

If you are teaching students in person you will find that many of your lessons from last year are still valid this year, perhaps with some new safety procedures in place. For virtual classrooms we encourage you to look at the lessons you would normally teach. Many will still be valuable such as early community building games, interest surveys to find out more about students, personal writing, and projects that help you get to know kids.

What's different?

In person classrooms are likely facing some new challenges. You may have guidelines from your district or local health department about proximity. You may find yourself relying on technology for more teaching opportunities or embracing a flipped learning model. So, these early days will likely have more of a focus on getting to know and use tech tools than you've had in the past.

Virtual classrooms will need to weave tech coaching into your very first lessons. There is no saying "they're not ready yet." We have to help them be ready. It's best to start with one or two essential tools and stick to those for the first month or until students, caregivers, and you have developed proficient and flexible use. You will need a communication tool like Zoom or Hangouts, and a space for two-way communication such as a Learning Management System (LMS) like Canvas or Schoology.

LESSONS AND TEACHING MOVES FOR STARTING THE YEAR WITH A FOCUS ON STUDENTS

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Take your community online. (*Amplify*, p. 58) Guidance for moving our face-to-face classroom community into the digital arena.	Whether you are starting in person or online you will want to establish clear guidelines with students. Co-create these with students, listen to their ideas and needs, and focus on flexible positive guidelines instead of punitive lists of "don'ts." As you develop these guidelines ensure that you are taking an equitable approach, carefully considering what you know about each of your students and their learning situations.
Introduce new tools. (*Amplify*, pp. 6-7) A framework for introducing new technology tools to students.	The chart on page six breaks down using the workshop model to introduce a new tool to students. If you are teaching remotely, students may work on the guided and independent practice steps in breakout rooms of 3-5 students each, supporting each other as they practice and play.

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
	· Give time for students to play with new tools. · Share charts or digital charts with common icons and what they do. · Record very short (1-2 min) videos of how to do key things that students will need. Better yet, have students record them! Keep these somewhere that students and caregivers can access them.
Address the pros and cons of technology directly. (*Amplify*, pp. 66-67) ▶ *Don't have the book?* Download a PDF of this lesson from *Amplify*. A lesson to help students see both the promise and the limitations of technology.	Establish the use of technology at home for learning, which is likely a shift from a more entertainment based approach. Use a T-chart to help students compare and contrast tech for entertainment vs. tech to learn.
Create a bill of rights for using technology. (*Amplify*, pp. 67-69) A lesson to clarify students' rights and responsibilities when using technology.	Establish your rights and responsibilities with a lens of home and school. Have students notice what is similar and different. Which responsibilities might be easy to manage? Which might take more effort?
Make a plan for when tech goes wrong. (*Amplify*, p. 69-70) A lesson for building a troubleshooting protocol with students.	Have students help you brainstorm what troubleshooting from a distance might look like. How and when can they get help from a teacher? Classmate? District tech support?
Identify your student tech experts. (*Amplify*, p. 71-72) A plan for delegating tech support to students who are willing and able to be class experts--without overwhelming them.	Develop a digital specialist board and a system for students to request lessons from one another. Organize breakout room sessions to be run for students by students.
Teach students to stay focused on their work, not on technological bells and whistles. (*Amplify*, pp. 74-76) A lesson to help students prioritize their work.	Help students establish their own priority hierarchy for working at home to develop executive functioning and time management.

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Teach students how to care for their tech tools. (*Amplify*, pp. 76-79) A lesson to help kids keep their devices running smoothly.	Have students establish how they will ensure good care of their tech tools at home. Where will they store them? Charge them?
Establish classroom signals. (*Amplify*, pp. 79-80) A plan for using hand signals for class communication.	Establish signals that students can give during video conferencing to indicate questions, comments, or agreements.
Build in opportunities for students to reflect. (*Amplify*, pp. 96-106) Lessons for helping students take ownership of their own learning through self-reflection.	Daily reflection can be done on paper or through digital tools. They might be a note about how the day's independent work went, a reflection on progress towards goals, or a longer term collection of reflections and artifacts which can create a learning portfolio. Daily reflections can also be focused on social emotional skills or community building.
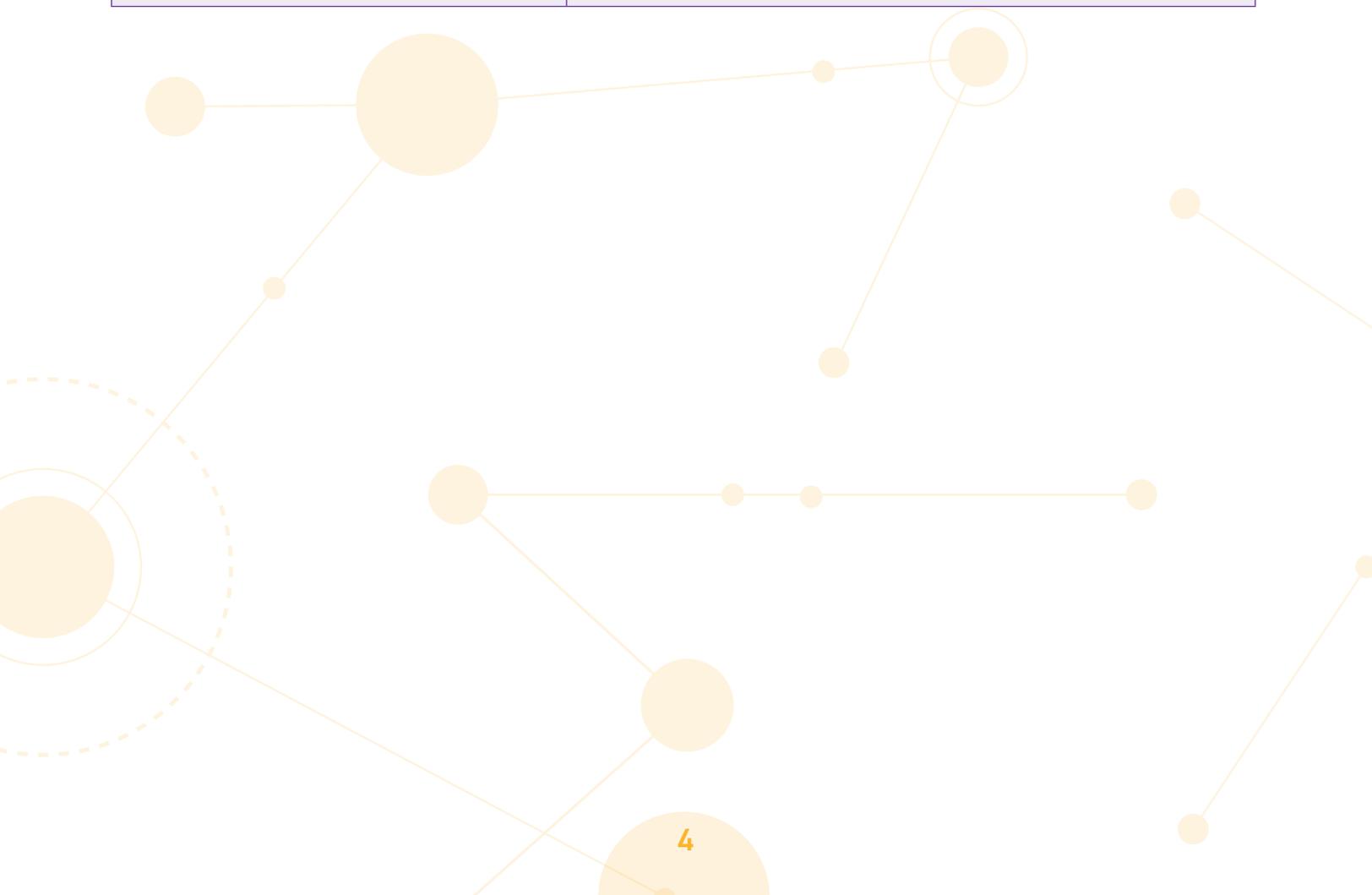
*I*f you are using a workshop model to teach reading and writing you can still teach towards independence remotely, as well as ensure that students have clarity on what they are to be working on during independent time. Students in your virtual classroom will need materials. We will have to reinvent the book bin or box, expanding it to include digital books, articles, and multimedia tech sets in order to round out their reading possibilities.

Current thinking around mini-lessons is that 5-7 minutes is the maximum for young students, whether you are in synchronous (real-time two way communication) instruction or asynchronous (pre-recorded instruction). You will want to use visuals along with your lessons. You can still use your anchor charts if you have materials accessible, however you might also consider learning a new way to display your visuals digitally. The quality of the digital visuals can be easier to read and more accessible for students.

Essentials for Workshop

If you are teaching at school you may have proximity restrictions that prevent you from conferring or teaching the way you are used to. If your district has invested in personal protective equipment to assist, that's great! However, not everyone will have this, so we will need to get creative. One strategy you might use is to have two-way communication through a tech tool like Flipgrid. Set up a topic for each student, and have them record videos to you about their reading. You can then record videos back and promote that two way conversation about books.

For virtual learners we may need to flip how we think about what students are doing in order to maintain balance. For example, if students have print books to read, then I can have them respond digitally. However, if my students are reading digital books I may need to have them switch back to a pencil and paper response. The key to the virtual classroom will be balance: synchronous vs asynchronous, analog vs digital, independent vs guided.

Another essential piece is communication. Caregivers will need clear communication about what the flow of a literacy block will look like, what your expectations are, what you are doing to help students meet expectations, and how parents can contact you to give you insight into how their child is doing with those expectations. While some parents have the privilege of working from home in a job that allows them to be highly involved in their learning, or the privilege to hire someone to do so, that is not everyone's reality. Knowing that the classroom teacher is open to feedback and concerns will go a long way to building the essential partnership needed to help kids be successful.

Finally, this year presents a unique opportunity to access digital resources more than ever before. We teach students to read online text, images, and video using literacy strategies we apply to print reading. We might:

- Use an image to launch a unit of study or introduce a literacy skill like determining importance.
- Evaluate an infographic for validity or engage data literacy to better understand a science concept.
- Teach students to actively view to learn as we share a short clip for Social Studies.

We might also take this opportunity to try something new like a virtual field trip, providing new contexts in which to apply the ways we read the world.
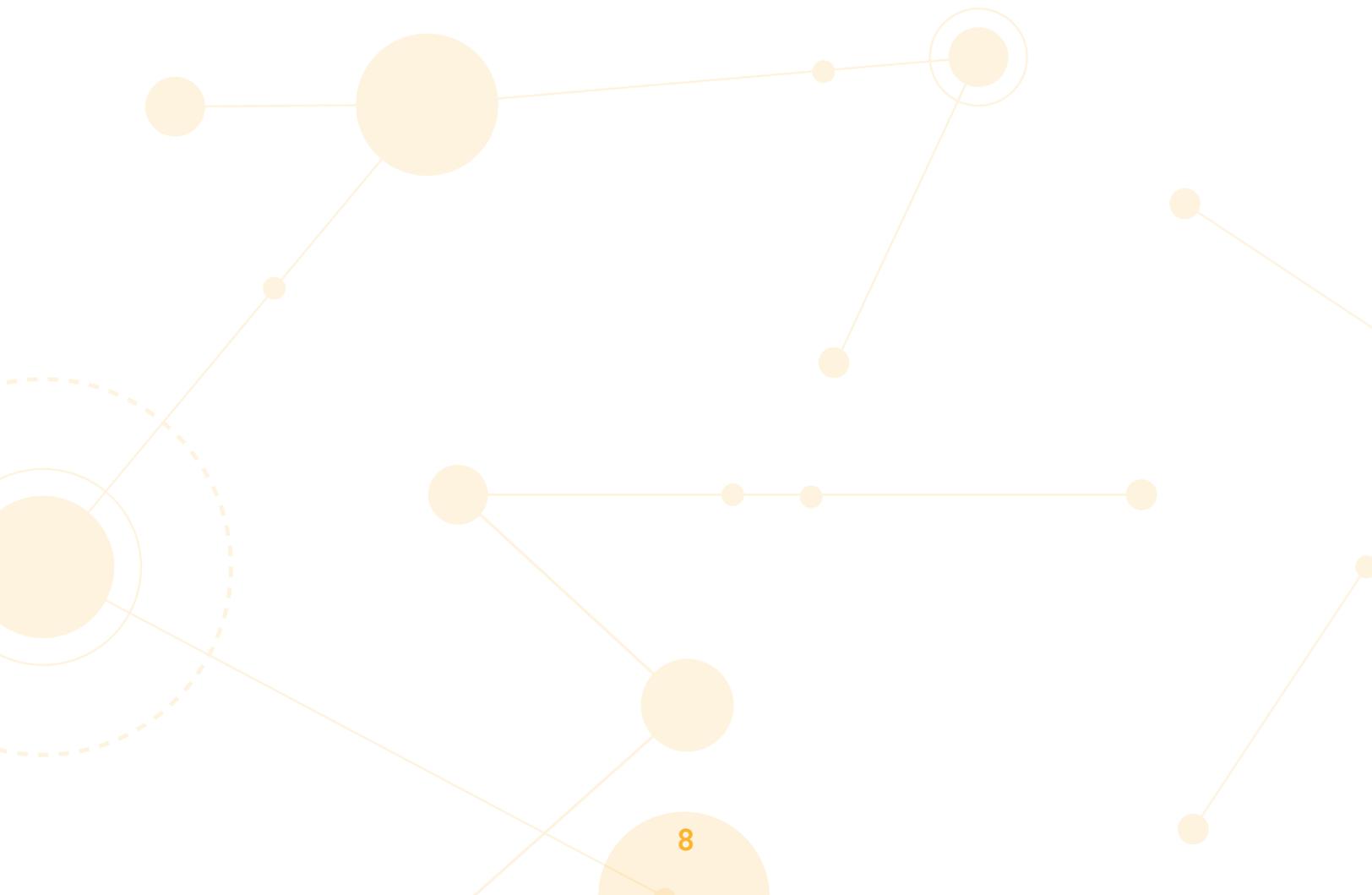
LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Get familiar with digital texts. (*Read the World*, pp. 41-42) ▶ *Don't have the book?* Download a PDF of this lesson from *Read the World.* A lesson to help students use digital texts effectively.	This lesson will be essential as we turn to more digital resources for students. In addition to the ideas listed, work with students to navigate the additional challenge of navigating between tabs or apps. While we like to balance tech and print, there are times, for example, when we will need students to be using a digital text during a video lesson.
Practice reading images. (*Amplify*, p. 63) A lesson to teach students how to use images to learn content.	There's not much you need to do to adapt this to a distance learning lesson. You may need to teach students to digitally raise hands or to use the chat box to share their thinking. Students also might benefit from structures such as Visual Thinking Strategies. You can also use this for small group instruction in breakout rooms to provide students with the opportunity for discussion and building on each others' ideas. For formative assessment we provide the image to students so they can annotate it on their device and share it back with us.
Read online daily. (*Amplify*, p.15) A daily practice to get kids reading independently online every day.	The shift to distance learning may include a shift to online reading. We've created this update for you to use with students. https://wke.lt/w/s/rBkCKW

Teach students the features of online texts. (*Amplify*, p. 48; *Read the World*, pp. 43-44)
 	
Minilesson ideas for working with web features, internet sources, infographics, media, and annotation.
 	
Complete lesson on using web features effectively.
	Topics that are especially helpful with distance learning:
	• Navigating a website
	• Using functions to help (for example, zooming in)
	• Judging reliability and accuracy of information on the internet
	• Staying focused as a reader.
	  • Use active literacy strategies (Harvey and Goudvis)
	  • Ask questions to stay engaged.
	  • Read with a purpose in mind.
	  • Read main text before clicking links

Teach students to stay focused on their work, not on technological bells and whistles. (*Amplify*, pp. 74-76) A lesson to help students prioritize their work.	Help students establish their own priority hierarchy for working at home to develop executive functioning and time management.

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Launch blogging with students. (*Amplify*, pp. 59-61) Guidance for getting students started with blogging.	Use blogging with distance learning to . . . • Have a go at writing for an audience • Use peer feedback to raise the level of writing • Comment to build community • Give students a place to write about their reading lives • Give students a place to write about something they are passionate about
Teach students how to annotate digital texts. (*Read the World*, pp. 47-49) A lesson to help students track their thinking on digital texts.	Give students several options for how to do this, considering what supplies they may have on hand. While tech tools may be a help in annotation, the goal is to help students to find a manageable way to annotate that is truly helpful to them—not just to learn how to use a new tool.
Teach students how to talk about digital texts. (*Read the World*, pp. 50-52) A lesson to help students transfer what they know about talking about print texts to digital texts.	Use breakout rooms, video chats, or other collaborative tools to facilitate discussion if needed.
Teach students to see points of view and bias in online texts. (*Read the World*, pp. 53-55) A lesson to give students practice in understanding author's purpose when reading online.	Each of these lessons can be taught as written. You may need to teach students some navigation strategies so that they can move easily between a video conference and a digital resource. Check with your tech support at school to see what options are available on the devices students are using. Most devices have a way to split screens or, at minimum, provide a quick shortcut for navigating between apps. For younger students you will want to do some of this work through shared experiences and small groups so that the teacher can share their screen to display the resource.
Teach students to evaluate infographics. (*Read the World*, pp. 57-59) A lesson to help students read infographics critically.	
Help students identify strategies for reading images. (*Read the World*, pp. 60-16) A lesson to help students become more strategic when using images to learn.	

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Help students transfer reading strategies to their study of images. (*Read the World*, pp. 63-64) A lesson to help students read images critically.	Each of these lessons can be taught as written. You may need to teach students some navigation strategies so that they can move easily between a video conference and a digital resource. Check with your tech support at school to see what options are available on the devices students are using. Most devices have a way to split screens or, at minimum, provide a quick shortcut for navigating between apps.
Teach students to read video. (*Read the World*, pp. 67-69) A lesson to help students see video as a tool for learning.	For younger students you will want to do some of this work through shared experiences and small groups so that the teacher can share their screen to display the resource.

Communication and Response

You may find yourself looking to digital tools to communicate with students, respond to student work, give students opportunities to respond to texts and to each other, and to help you assess student growth. The good news is that technology—including well-designed, kid-centric tech-based projects and assessments—can serve as an engagement hook for many students while still developing the same, if not more, skills. The catch is that it likely will take more time for students to say, create a short book trailer, than it would for them to sit down and write a summary. Balance is key, but so is understanding that the time we invest in helping students master the art of digital communication will be helpful to them far beyond this year. Here are a few examples of ways we might use digital tools to foster communication and creative responses.

- **Engage students in a digital discussion.** This may start in the chat feature of a Zoom call and then expand to more in depth conversations in blog comments or through an LMS discussion board. This gives us the opportunity to model and support productive and thoughtful written communication online.
- **Micro-writing.** Quick snippets of text with word limits force students to choose words carefully. They can also serve formative assessments.
- **Video blogs.** Any video recording medium will offer students the opportunity to share their voice and face as they talk about a favorite book, share the results of an inquiry, explain their solution to a math problem, or talk about a favorite toy.

LESSONS AND MOVES THAT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION AND RESPONSE

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Check in with a digital survey. (*Amplify*, pp. 88-90) ▶ *Don't have the book?* Download a PDF of this lesson from *Amplify*. A lesson to help students transfer what they know about talking about print texts to digital texts.	Use surveys as quick check-in for students on a daily basis, asking questions like, How are you feeling? Is there anything you would like to tell me? What can I help with?
Engage in digital discussions. (*Amplify*, pp. 118-123) Guidance for digital discussions in which you teach skills, student book clubs hold a discussion, the class solves a problem, or you host a cross-classroom discussion.	The types of discussions listed here are all appropriate for use with distance learning. Working from a distance may necessitate an increased emphasis on commenting in supportive and constructive ways (see pages 122-123).

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Introduce students to video booths. (*Amplify*, pp. 16-18) Guidance for teaching students to use video booths to set up an environment conducive to recording.	Use the ideas on these pages to help students consider how to best use the recording spaces available to them.
Use video to record students' thinking. (*Read the World*, pp. 73-76) Guidance for using video for capturing students' thinking, one-directional conferences, building fluency, and formative assessments.	These lessons can be taught as written. You will want to provide students with a chart that has steps listed clearly with icons to ensure they are able to access the tool, navigate the basics needed for the assignment, and post the final product. Instruction should include modeling, mentor examples for students to emulate, a checklist or feedback form of elements to include, and helpful tips.
Teach students to use micro-writing to summarize and share learning. (*Read the World*, pp. 80-82) A lesson for helping students write concisely and with purpose.	This slide deck offers an example of some of the kinds of tools we might use with students. The shift to distance learning may include a shift to online reading. We've created this update for you to use with students. https://wke.lt/w/s/rBkCKW
Teach students to use sketchnoting to respond to what they hear. (*Read the World*, pp. 83-85) A lesson for introducing students to sketchnoting as a way to listen actively.	This lesson transfers well to the elearning format, and we can think of new ways to apply sketchnoting. Have students create a sketchnote when watching asynchronous instruction to capture the main ideas or gist.
Teach students to make infographics to summarize and synthesize. (*Read the World*, pp. 86-88) A lesson for showing students how to create infographics that further their learning.	As students create infographics you will want to have a system set up for them to share their work in progress and get feedback from teachers and peers. Create feedback circles using your LMS, small groups where students can ask questions, get advice, and share the excitement of a work in progress.
Teach students to make vlogs. (*Amplify*, pp. 1-4) A lesson for launching kids into making videos to share their learning or to record their own book talks.	Having an audience will be key to ensuring students are engaged and growing. Establish a system for sharing and commenting, supporting students in how to give thoughtful and uplifting comments to one another. Create a commenting group that students view and respond to first before moving on to others. This way, each student is ensured that their work is seen and heard.

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Help students to make their video recordings stronger. (*Amplify*, p. 94) A sample student-facing checklist for reflecting on their videos.	Adapt the checklists as needed to meet the needs of your student's learning environments. Help students with assistive technology where you can to overcome any challenges. For example, headphones with an inline microphone can help address a noisy background.
Teach students to capture their response to a book by annotating a photo. (*Amplify*, pp. 112-113) A lesson for helping students share book recommendations.	Use this as a quick check-in after independent learning. Students might annotate with a favorite line, a reaction or thought, a question about the character, or evidence that they applied the lesson of the day. Alternately, have students post to a class LMS or Padlet to build a community of readers.
Teach students to make video book reviews. (*Amplify*, pp. 114-115) A lesson for helping students share book recommendations.	Video book reviews are another way to build community and formatively assess student reading habits. Make sure to watch several mentor examples first, and to leave room for students to be creative, showing their voice and personality.
Launch blogs with students. (*Amplify*, pp. 59-62) Guidance for getting students blogging to communicate with each other and/or with an audience beyond the classroom.	Consider switching out a writing unit for a blogging unit. Address standards through an online writing community with a built-in audience. Support students in mentioning specific writing that works really well and asking each other thoughtful questions to encourage revisions.
Teach students to comment productively and kindly. (*Read the World*, 77-79) A lesson for helping students to write comments that are genuinely helpful.	Give students lots of examples for how these lessons might apply. Practice in each tech tool you use whether it's the chat function of a Zoom or Hangout, responding to a blog post or in an LMS system. Teach students to transfer these skills to any medium!
Teach students how to use emojis effectively. (*Read the World*, 131-132) A lesson for helping students use emojis to enhance (not muddle) their communications.	

Using Inquiry for Engagement and Literacy Instruction

We know that curiosity can drive our students to great things, so an inquiry approach is a home run when it comes to developing units for this year. If our students are curious, if they genuinely want to ask questions and seek answers then the challenge of engaging them from a distance becomes much less pressing. Try some of the following ways to weave inquiry into your teaching:

Start small

Start small with a Wonder Wednesday using Wonderopolis.org. Share an interesting article, image, or video that will pique student interest and inspire them to ask questions Or, you could start virtual classes with a Mystery Image. Prompting students with language like What do you notice? What do you wonder?

Plan for students to do personal inquiry projects

Personal inquiry projects, also known as genius hour or passion projects, are a time for students to explore areas of interest outside of the typical curriculum. However, there are still plenty of opportunities for students to develop critical literacy and writing skills.

Embrace inquiry for science and social studies

If you haven't already started using inquiry in these subject areas now is a perfect time to get started. Instead of telling students what they will learn, begin by giving them opportunities to be curious and ask questions. Connect your subsequent learning sessions to their questions, helping them to develop a line of questions that are increasingly complex. Once students have built background knowledge you might set aside time for them to do their own research into lingering questions.

The lessons in this section are all appropriate for in person or virtual instruction. Again, you will want to be mindful of the balance between digital resources, print resources, and the way you are instructing-in person or virtually. By now you will have likely worked out these kinks and will be ready to take your students to the next level in responding, annotating, collaborating, and creating. Consider trying a new tool, or a new use for a tool students are already good at!

LESSONS AND MOVES THAT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION AND RESPONSE

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Provide a place for wonder. (*Amplify*, pp. 124-125) Guidance for collecting student questions for later research.	Each of these lessons can be taught as written. Consider using digital bulletin boards, Padlet, Wakelet, or Google Docs, Sheets, Forms, or Slides as collaborative tools in this work. Set aside time each week (or more often!) for students to wonder and share.

LESSON/MOVE	HOW TO USE THIS IDEA WITH DISTANCE LEARNING
Inspire wonder through images or artifacts. (*Amplify*, pp. 125-127) Suggestions for using images to spark interest—and inquiry.	Each of these lessons can be taught as written. Consider using digital bulletin boards, Padlet, Wakelet, or Google Docs, Sheets, Forms, or Slides as collaborative tools in this work. Set aside time each week (or more often!) for students to wonder and share.
Inspire wonder through video clips. (*Amplify*, p. 127) Guidance for using short video clips to spark interest—and inquiry.	
Collaborate with inquiry. (*Amplify*, p. 128) Suggestions for gathering, organizing, and sharing questions for inquiry.	
Use a multimedia tech set for inquiry. (*Read the World*, 70-71) ▶ *Don't have the book?* Download a PDF of this lesson from *Read the World.* Lesson for helping students to use a curated collection of media for inquiry.	