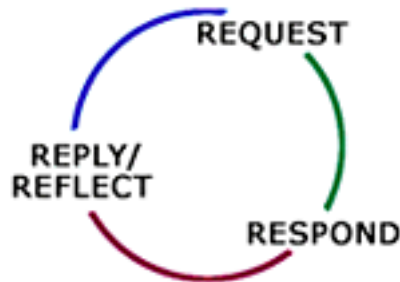


Collaborative Online Learning

Design

Dialog

Information

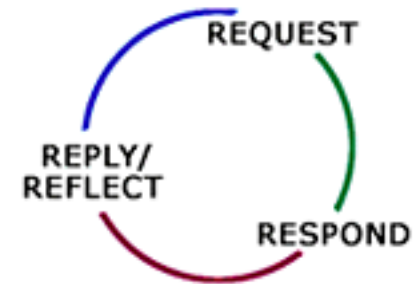


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Online Discourse gives us the unique opportunity to watch the progress of our work unfold. Time and distance provide the chance to step back, reflect, and respond. The written, visual, and audio records that remain allow us to review our experiences with enough detail so that we can enjoy them and improve.

Not all discussions are alike. Through research and practice, the WEB Project has come to identify and build upon three types of discourse: Design Conversations, Dialog, and Information Exchange.

In-person conversations provide verbal and physical cues to let us known that our audience is in attendance. To keep a mental reminder that there are people on the giving and receiving ends, we have developed a process called --



Request, Respond, Reply, and Reflect

A person or group **Requests** a conversation with the collaborative network.

Those interested in the conversation **Respond** with specifics that address the topic or piece of work at hand.

The original person **Replies** with more information, additional requests, or a Reflective statement about the dialog/design conversation.

There are times you walk away from a piece that you've made and you feel good about it, and there are times you don't. That's when you can go online for help."

Cabot high school student



Protocols

Tips

Examples

Articles

<http://www.webproject.org>

Design conversations focus on creating something new, a piece of music, artwork, a survey instrument, the plans for a multimedia production...

Collaborative discussion gives the creator a chance to gain multiple insights while the shared focus on a single piece of work broadens learning for the entire group. When conflicting viewpoints are represented, it also provides an opportunity to make informed decisions based on personal intent, the result of which sometimes leads to an otherwise unimagined idea or improvement.

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The nature of online discussion falls somewhere between the rules of spoken and written language. Ideas evolve depending upon the direction a discussion takes, yet the written format trains our eyes to find formalizations that don't yet exist.



Protocols

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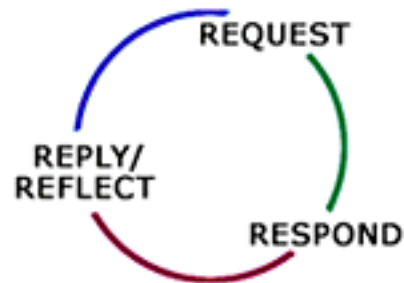
Online Dialog can be helpful to use when you are planning an event, analyzing data, etc., or discussing something for a specific goal that uses protocols to maintain a focus on the task at hand. There are also times when you may wish to have a conversation, in a free-flow manner, about ideas that have no time limits or formalized purpose. Knowing the purpose of conversation in advance determines whether to use a protocol or free-flow method. Each carries groundrules or steps that facilitate online discussion.

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The WEB Project has provided exchanges in Oaxaca, Mexico; linked school- aged children in a Nicaraguan community with their Vermont classmates; published local photos of China; digitized a UVM collection about the Vermont Eugenics Survey; and shared tips about teaching practices.



Design Dialog Information



<http://www.webproject.org>

There are times when online discussion is based on an **information exchange**, the need to know about primary source information of a current or historical nature. Such an exchange provides the opportunity to share a local collection of skills, resources, or knowledge with others who do not have the opportunity to experience this first-hand. The WEB Project has facilitated many exchanges, some of which are now websites.

identify the relationship between school
level goals and collaborative learning
activities

