

VTS in the Time of Remote Learning

A resource for teachers who have been practicing VTS in their classrooms

VTS Discussions

Facilitating VTS discussions virtually can be a challenge, but we're hearing from teachers that they're making it work! You can try posting an image from the [VTS curriculum](#) or the [NYTimes Learning Network What's Going On in This Picture?](#) using the screen share feature in your video conference application. Facilitate the discussion orally as you would in the classroom, making use of tools that allow one student to speak at a time. Try pointing with your cursor as students speak. You can also ask students to type their responses in chat boxes and perhaps even reply to one another.

VTS and Writing

Consider having your students write about an image. Writing can focus on an image they haven't discussed as a group, following an online VTS discussion or perhaps they revisit an image that was discussed earlier in the year. (*The VTS curriculum images can be copied or saved by holding down the Control key and clicking on the image if you're using a Mac or right click and copy or save on a PC.*)

At this point in the school year they should be familiar with the three VTS questions, but provide them as prompts as a reminder.

- *What's going on in this picture?*
- *What do you see that makes you say that?*
- *What more can you find?*

Encourage them to write full paragraphs, more like a free write, rather than answering each question individually. This is more like a reflective journal entry, rather than a formal paper.

Written Self-Reflection

Adapted from a presentation by Heidi Arbogast and Marion Schlicker Bageant and the essay, "The Power of VTS Writing Lab Changed Me, Then My School District"

www.vtshome.org/site-specific/

- One thing I did well was _____ (provide evidence)
- One thing I want to improve upon is _____ (provide evidence)
- What could you change in your writing to make it flow better?
- List some strong words from your writing
- Set a writing goal for next time

Optional Peer-to-Peer Reflection (if technology allows)

- Students read their own work to a group of four
- They share their self-reflection handouts and their writing goal.
- The group of four looks at each individual goal and calibrates the goal to match the writing.
- In other words, they hold each other accountable for their writing goals. They ask each other:
 - *Is the goal valid?*
 - *What do you see that makes you say that?*
 - *What more can we find?*

Note: If you're interested in learning more about how teachers have used VTS to support writing, visit the VTS Journal, [Site-Specific](#):

[Using VTS to Teach Claims, Evidence, Reasoning, and Writing](#)

by Aija Simmons

[The Power of VTS Writing Lab Changed Me, Then My School District](#)

by Marion Schlicker Bageant