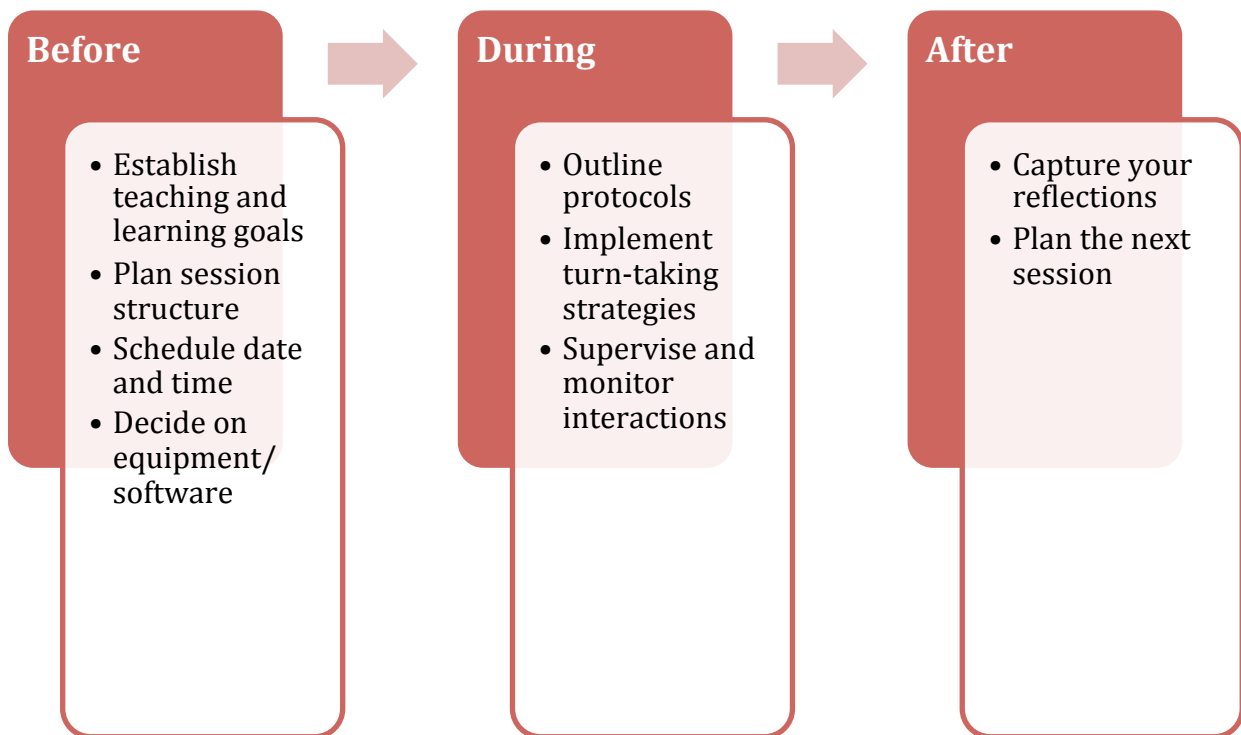




## VIDEOCONFERENCING

### Introduction

Are you planning to facilitate a **videoconference** with your partner school? Below is a three stage process which steps you through how to facilitate a successful videoconference, including strategies for before, during and after your session.



Details of each step are outlined below. The Videoconference Planner (attached) will assist you to collaboratively plan, facilitate and reflect on your session with the teacher at your partner school.

### Stage 1: Before the session

---

#### Establish the teaching and learning goals for the session

The first thing to do when thinking about setting up a videoconference with your partner school is to work together with the teacher at your partner school to clearly establish the specific teaching and learning focus for the session. This step is divided into three parts – establishing the purpose of the session, key questions and links to the curriculum.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the session should not simply be to use the videoconferencing equipment or software to connect with a partner school. It's important that the activities that take place during the session will have a significant benefit for student learning in both partner schools. For example, the purpose might be to enable students to present projects that have been working on about the

Mongol Empire and receive feedback from an authentic audience, or to allow students to conduct first-hand research about Indonesian food by engaging in a 'show and tell' session with their Indonesian partner school. Select a purpose in the Videoconference Planner, or insert your own unique purpose.

**Key questions:** Establish the key questions that you would like your students to be able to answer through their participation in the videoconferencing session. For example, 'How is Australian currency different to Japanese currency? How can we convert Australian dollars into Japanese yen?' Record the key questions in the Videoconference Planner.

**Curriculum links:** Determine which curriculum areas will be addressed through the activities in the videoconference, for both schools involved. Specify these in the Videoconference Planner.

## Plan the structure of the session

Keeping in mind the teaching and learning goals that you have agreed on with your partner school, it's now time to structure the videoconference session to support these goals to be achieved. Three important things to consider are the groupings, the protocols and the resources you will need to prepare.

**Groupings for interaction:** Decide how many students will be 'on-screen' simultaneously. This decision will largely depend on the purpose of the session. For example, if students will be asking and responding to interview questions, then it may be more appropriate to facilitate the session in small groups, rather than as a whole class. You may also choose to incorporate a number of different groupings during the session. For example, starting with a whole class interaction, followed by small group interactions, and ending with another whole class interaction. Specify your groupings in the Videoconference Planner.

If you will be facilitating small group or one-on-one interactions, it is recommended that you have another teacher or volunteer supporting you to allow you to adequately supervise the students participating, as well as those not participating, in the videoconference.

**Protocols and turn-taking strategies:** Establish protocols for student interaction during the session and ensure that teachers and students are aware of these before the session. Again, these will depend on the teaching and learning goals of your session. These could include expectations, such as:

- Follow the instructions of the facilitators
- Communicate respectfully with all participants
- Avoid speaking out of turn

Most videoconferencing sessions will run more effectively if the facilitators agree on turn-taking strategies before the session begins. For example, will you have a predetermined order in which students will speak? Or will you randomise the order by drawing student names out of a hat? Or will you ask students to raise their hand at any time when they would like to speak?

Decide on who will address any breaches of the protocols and how they will be addressed. For example, will each teacher be responsible for monitoring their own students' interactions? Will a student be asked to leave the conference if they do not respond to a verbal warning?

Record your protocols and turn-taking strategies in the Videoconference Planner.

**Resources required:** Plan and create any teaching and learning resources that will assist the session to run smoothly and the learning goals to be achieved. For example, if students will be sharing projects which are in a digital format such as a video, you may wish to upload the videos to a website before the session. Or, if you have chosen to use randomised turn-taking, you may need to prepare name cards for each student. Record these resources in the Videoconference Planner.

### **Schedule the date and time for your conference**

Communicate with the teacher at your partner school to coordinate a date and time that suits both of your classes. Record this in the Videoconference Planner.

### **Decide on the equipment/software to be used**

Discuss with the teacher at your partner school which software and equipment will work best within the schools' infrastructure. Some examples are Skype, QQ International, Google Hangout and Adobe Connect. Record your chosen technology in the Videoconference Planner.

Ensure that you are familiar with the tool and practise using it before the date of your videoconference session.

Hold a practice session with your students so that they are familiar with the technology and are not distracted by it during the session.

## **Stage 2: During the session**

---

### **Outline protocols for the session**

At the beginning of the session, read through the decided protocols for the session to ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of them.

### **Implement turn taking strategies**

Use the mutually agreed turn taking strategies to ensure active and organised participation by all students.

### **Supervise and monitor interactions between participants**

It is important that you closely monitor all interactions that take place during the videoconference session. If a student breaches any of the session protocols, address it promptly using the mutually agreed strategies.

## Stage 3: After the session

---

### Capture your reflections

It is extremely valuable to reflect on the session afterwards together with the teacher at your partner school.

- What worked well?
- What could have been improved and how?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Record your reflections in the Videoconference Planner.

### Plan the next session

Based on your reflections from the session, return to Stage 1 and plan your next session with your partner school.



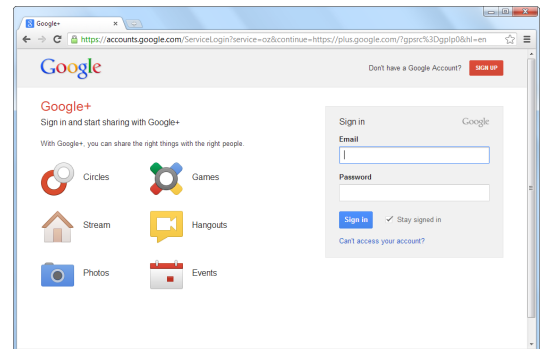
# Google Hangout

'Hangouts' is a free **videoconferencing tool** from Google that enables you to connect with up to nine other people at once. It is a feature of Google+ (Google Plus) which is Google's social networking platform. If you already use Google+, login to your account and skip ahead to Step 6 to get started with Hangouts.

## How do I use 'Google Hangouts'?

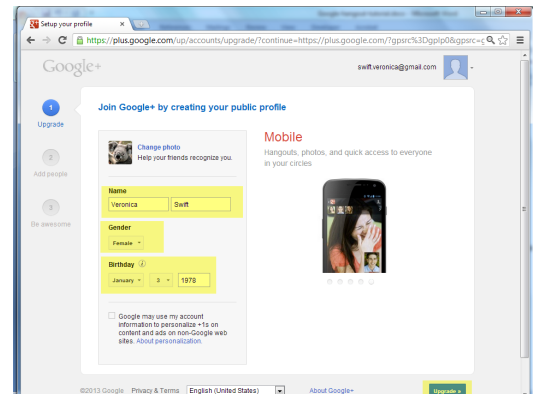
### Step 1

Go to the Google+ website at: [www.plus.google.com](http://www.plus.google.com). If you have an existing Google account, enter your login details. If you don't, click on 'Sign up' in the top right hand corner. Ask your colleague at your partner school to do the same.



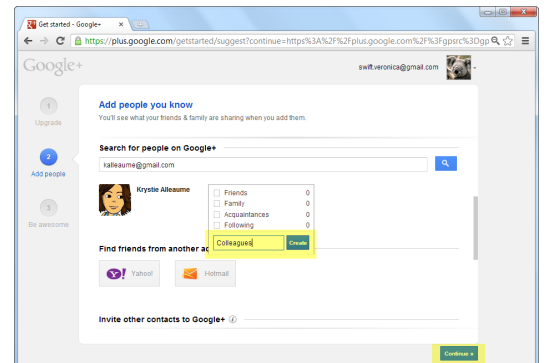
### Step 2

If it's your first time using Google Plus, you'll be prompted to upload a photo and enter your name and date of birth. Then click 'Upgrade' in the bottom right corner.



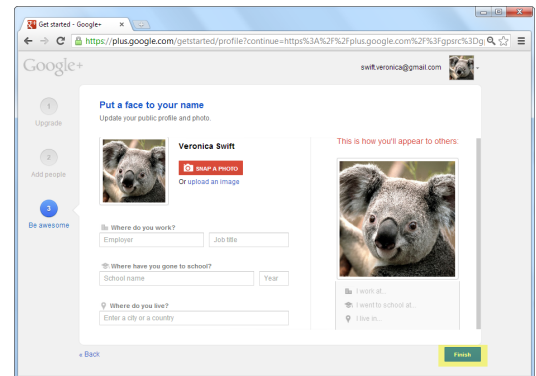
### Step 3

Next, you'll be prompted to add people you know. Scroll down to 'Search for people on Google+'. Type in the email address of your colleague at your partner school. When their profile appears, click the 'Add' button next to it. You can then choose which 'circle' (contact group) you'd like to add your colleague to. Or, you can create a new circle, for example, 'Colleagues', and click 'Create'. A message will appear explaining what happens when you add someone to a circle. Click 'Okay, got it!', then click 'Continue'.



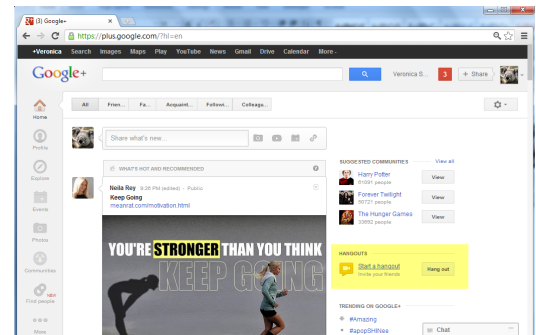
## Step 4

The next two pages will prompt you to 'Follow interesting people and pages' and then to 'Add more people'. You can simply click 'Continue' to skip these pages. Then, you can update your profile page with your details, then click 'Finish' to complete the setup of your account.



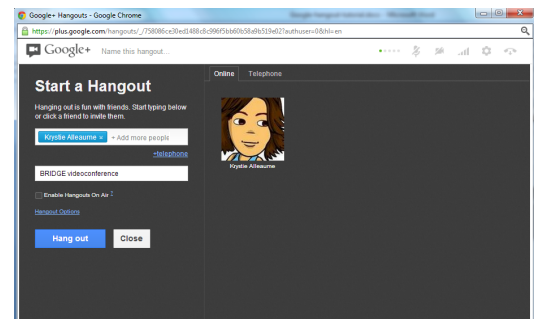
## Step 5

Now you should be logged into your Google+ account. On the right hand side of the home screen, click the 'Start a hangout' link.



## Step 6

Type in the name of your colleague(s) that you wish to invite to the videoconference. Give your hangout a name, e.g. BRIDGE videoconference, then, click 'Hang out'. Your browser may prompt you to install the Google Hangouts plug-in.



## Step 7

When your colleague joins the Hangout, you will be able to see each other, speak to each other, type messages to each other and share your screens. If you experience issues with audio or video, [click here for Help](#). When you wish to end your videoconference, simply click the red 'X' in the top right corner.

