

This template is designed to help you create Challenges. In this process, you will first identify what you want your students to learn, then you will design individual activities in detail.

What is a Challenge?

A Challenge is a series of activities designed to guide your learners through the process of understanding the skills necessary for success in your subject area. For example, when participating in a digital photography challenge, the instructor may have 5 activities that they believe impart the core concepts and techniques to their learners. These 5 activities, mapped out in a progression of escalating difficulty, comprise the Challenge.

When designing your Challenge, it is important to choose applicable segments of your curriculum. For example, reading a chapter of a textbook may be crucial to your overall curriculum plan, but it will most likely not function well as an activity within a challenge. Creating a production based activity building on the content of the chapter will be much more effective in promoting student engagement.

Why Challenges?

Using Challenges to construct your learning and creative experiences allows your students to focus on important elements of your curriculum through a progression of activities, designed by you, to meet your specific learning goals.

Challenges allow you to construct an experience that is either self-paced or attached to a fixed schedule. Students do not move forward in the challenge until they have mastered the skills integrated into prior activities. This mastery of skills is assessed based on the requirements you will design for each activity.

Scaffolded Learning

Challenges operate under the principle of “scaffolded” learning. Scaffolding your learning experience means giving your students appropriately demanding activities complete with the resources they need to finish them successfully. Your activities should build in complexity as students progress through the Challenge. Once your students gain the knowledge and skills necessary to move forward, some of these supports, or scaffolds, may be removed to encourage independence and creativity. Considering your students’ prior knowledge is key to this concept.

Digital Music Example:

An intro level digital music challenge might consist of multiple music production and critique activities that demonstrate knowledge of production software and a basic understanding of song structure.

- *Write a blog critiquing the tone and tempo of a song.*
- *Create a 2 min instrumental with an intro and chorus that uses 3 types of sounds.*

Digital Authoring Example:

A digital magazine challenge might recognize people who have created media selected by editors to appear in an online digital magazine featuring the best work from a program’s participants.

- *Create an article, video, podcast or info graphic.*
- *Submission selected for quality and alignment with magazine theme.*

2 The Three Phases

Challenges work most effectively when these 3 phases form the foundation of the experience. Allowing time for low-barrier, introductory activities, followed by a cycle of producing original work and intentional revisions strengthens students' grasp of the skills on which the activities are built.

1. Exploration

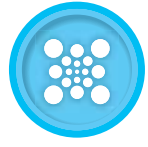
This initial phase encourages students to familiarize themselves with the tools, language, and behaviors necessary to complete the following activities. Exploration is low risk, and begins the process of scaffolding by eliminating potential barriers to participation and learning. The goal of explorational activities is not to produce finalized artifacts, but to build the confidence needed to succeed later on. These activities can also be used to gauge student experience and interest.

2. Production

The production phase involves the creation of original work. Work is submitted for review and evaluation, shared with peers, and badged. This phase is where your students will require plenty of support in the form of step-by-step instruction, technical tutorials, and clearly written activity requirements. The requirements and assessment criteria of each activity will guide their production.

3. Iteration

Revision, repetition, and reevaluation are crucial to the learning process. Each challenge should contain deliberate points for iteration. Your students will benefit from the incorporation of important skills from prior activities into the duration of the Challenge. When asking students to edit their work, or repeat certain skills, be sure to provide guidance as to the parameters of their revisions. Iteration allows you to focus on different components of a skill throughout the Challenge.



3 Challenge Sales Pitch

Challenge Name:

Challenge Duration: Start:

End:

Sales Pitch:

What will students DO?

What will students MAKE?

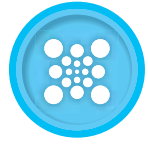
Who will students BE?

Notes:

The first step in designing your Challenge involves the identification of learning goals. If you are adapting existing lessons into a Challenge, you have probably already determined your learning goals, but this is a good opportunity to account for any missing opportunities. Ask yourself the following questions: What do you want your students to be able to do by the end of

this Challenge? What should they know and understand? What should they be able to create? Finally, what roles should they be capable of? What should your students be able to know, make, or be? The space on this page allows you to list and organize these learning goals. Keep in mind that focusing on the most important goals will make your learning activities tighter and easier to assess. In addition to content proficiency, your learning

goals can be based on social behaviors and communication as well. For example, you may want to encourage your students to practice constructive feedback on their peers' work or gain experience asking each other for help with using the tools required for your Challenge. These behaviors can be incorporated into your upcoming activities.”



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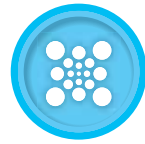


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Notes:

The second step in designing your Challenge requires you to list the skills you want your students to hone and acquire. These skills should stem from your overall learning goals, but you may think of new skills as you work. You have room on this page for 8 separate skills. If you require more space, please create more spaces on your own. Challenges vary in length and complexity, so it is perfectly acceptable to have fewer than 8 skills. Try to make your skills fairly specific, this will make your design and assessment process more clear in upcoming steps. Also, skills do not have to be production based, they can involve training in important concepts, behaviors, and interactions as well.”

Underneath each skill, you have room to list any activities that you believe will be successful in teaching this skill. Again, making these activities more specific will help you create a better learning experience. This is your chance to brainstorm-what can your students do or create in order to acquire the skills and knowledge associated with your learning goals? Once you have listed all of your skills and potential activities, you will circle the activity from each skill that you think is the best. These circled activities will be the backbone of your Challenge and you will plan them in more detail later. You can certainly create additional activities as you construct the layout of your Challenge, especially if you notice any important learning opportunities missing from your original lists of activities. Revision is encouraged throughout this process.

Next, you will need to order your activities, keeping in mind that it is important for your students to progress through the activities in a manner that helps them build their skills in complexity and difficulty as they approach the end of the Challenge. Your simplest, beginner level activities, ones that are in line with the principles of the “exploration” phase should come first, followed by production centered activities with points for your students to iterate on their work. It may help to cut out each “Skill” section to create individual “Skill” cards so that you can physically move and rearrange them during this step. This will help you visualize the layout, or map, of your Challenge. Once you have determined the best order of your activities, you will move on to the next page titled “Outline Activities.”

If you are using badges in your Challenge, this is a good time to determine points for badging, please refer to the Badge Toolkit for specific details.

A Skill:

video editing

Activities:

1 *jump cuts*

2 *color contrast*

3 *audio synching*

4

5

6

● Skill:
Activities:
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● Skill:
Activities:
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5 Outline Activities

Notes:

Pages 3-5 of the Challenge Toolkit give you a template for writing the specific details of your activities. There is space in this document for 9 activities, but it is certainly possible that you will have more or fewer than 9, please make copies of these pages if you require more than 9 activity templates.

You have already determined the order of your activities in the previous step, so begin by writing each of your activities in their proper order.

The first section of this template asks you to write the “Name + Duration” of the activity, this encourages you to think about how long each activity will take so that you can keep your students on schedule.

The “Resources + Tools” section is for listing any materials your students need in order to complete the activity. Resources include step-by-step instructions, video tutorials, images and diagrams, models of completed artifacts, readings, physical materials, starter files, etc. Tools vary depending on your content area, but they often include things like software, apps, equipment, and production materials.

The section labeled “In this activity students will...” allows you to write the description of your activity. Explain the process from the point of view of your students, what steps will they go through in order to complete this activity from beginning to end? This will help you in considering exactly how the activity should flow and what support your students will need as they work. The right side of this page contains 4 sections, each labeled with a different color. The function of these sections is explained below.

Artifact:

An “artifact” is the deliverable for each activity. What will your students produce by the end of this activity? Artifacts can include any number of products- written work of any length, depending on your goals and requirements, media texts such as videos, photographs, graphic designs, or audio files, screenshots, links to student produced work, etc. Artifacts do not have to be completed versions of the work, this is also a good opportunity to check in on student progress. For example, the artifact for an early activity could be limited to the first paragraph of a 5 paragraph essay, with the entire, completed essay being submitted later in the Challenge.

Activity Requirements:

Your students need clear objectives and goals if they are expected to complete any task successfully. Under “activity requirements” you will list the exact standards the artifact must meet in order to pass. These requirements should align with your skills and focus on the most essential factors illustrating that your students have indeed learned what you have set out to teach. These requirements will help your students understand exactly what is being asked of them, and it will help you assess their work.

Assessment Criteria:

The assessment criteria are directly linked to your activity requirements, but these should be written for the person assessing the challenges, whereas the activity requirements are student facing. How will you know for certain that your students have met the activity requirements? Being very clear in this step will allow others to assess the student work, even if they are not necessarily an expert in the content.

Activity	
Name + Duration:	E: <input type="checkbox"/> P: <input type="checkbox"/> I: <input type="checkbox"/>
In this activity students will...	
Resources + Tools:	
Artifact	Skills
Activity Requirements	Assessment Criteria

Activity			
Number:	Name + Duration:	E: <input type="checkbox"/>	P: <input type="checkbox"/> I: <input type="checkbox"/>
In this activity students will...			
Resources + Tools:			

Activity			
Number:	Name + Duration:	E: <input type="checkbox"/>	P: <input type="checkbox"/> I: <input type="checkbox"/>
In this activity students will...			
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Artifact

Skills

Artifact

Skills

Activity Requirements

Assessment Criteria

Activity Requirements

Assessment Criteria