

MAKING INSTANT MESSAGING (IM) GROUPS AN EFFECTIVE AND SAFE SPACE FOR LEARNING



Forwarded

"Research at Cornell's Center for Teaching Innovation confirms that collaborative learning fosters higher-order thinking skills, boosts self-esteem and improves student leadership skills." (2019)
References: School Libraries in a Time of Change: How to Survive and Thrive 2019

12:03 PM

According to surveys conducted with teachers, who use instant messaging applications to communicate with their students, **these are some of the technical and educational advantages and disadvantages that they have reported.**

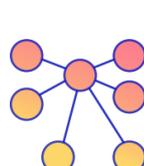
Advantages



Learning any time anywhere



Deeper acquaintance with students



Sense of belonging to the group



Accessibility to learning materials



Teacher availability



Possibility to correct mistakes immediately



Contact with graduates

Disadvantages



Limited access by some students



Overexposure to students' personal life



Message flooding



Group maintenance



Expectation for high availability of teachers



Use of incorrect language



Time-consuming

Ways to Use Instant Messaging in Your Teaching

- Sharing educational content for your students to view before the class.
- Encouraging your students to contribute with content they find helpful and interesting.
- Sharing classwork with the students who missed classes for them to catch up before returning.
- Answering questions students may have while doing their independent studies at home.
- Forming student pairs and groups for a buddy system and group projects.
- Making announcements like school trips and changes in school regulations.
- Keeping in touch with your graduate students.

Teacher Lead Instant Messaging Groups

- Make sure that your **school guidelines** allow you to use IM groups for student communication.
- Set up **another immediate communication channel** for the students who will not be included in the instant messaging group.
- Consider arranging **smaller IM groups**.
- Design your IM group as an extension of your **classroom culture**.
- Set and share **group rules and regulations** in the instant messaging group.
- **Pin the group guidelines** message and refer to it when needed.
- Explain your **grading criteria**, the rubric, if a task you give will be graded.

Example Rules to Make Instant Messaging Groups a Safe Space

- Replying during certain times of the day such as 10 AM-7 PM.
- Only sharing content that could be beneficial to peers.
- Not sharing content shared in the group with others.
- Citing the sources while sharing information.
- Giving constructive criticism when needed.
- Apologizing when being wrong and sharing inappropriate things.
- Not sharing images without the consent of the people in it.
- Being careful about sharing life details and contact information of others.
- Not pestering others for a reply.
- Paying attention to grammar rules while writing.