

Video Title:	<b>Becoming a Successful Online Learner</b>
Video Length:	21:43 minutes
Audience:	Basic Studies Students, High School Students
Curriculum Correlation:	Transition Portfolio – Activity 5.c Videos
Summary:	Viewers learn tips for being successful online learners and pitfalls to avoid from both instructors and other students.
Vision Statement:	By watching this video, viewers will...  LEARN what to expect and strategies for being a successful online learner, as well as the expectations of online students;  UNDERSTAND the benefits and challenges of online courses;  FEEL informed and more confident to take an online course.
Learning Objectives:	LISTENING: Viewers will identify advantages and disadvantages to online courses and steps they will need to take to be successful in online courses.  SPEAKING: Viewers will share knowledge prior to viewing the video and later compare notes they take while viewing.  READING: Viewers will read sentences from the video to develop vocabulary skills.  WRITING: Viewers will practice note-taking skills.
Activity Time:	Pre-Viewing Activity – Discovery: Approximately 30 minutes Pre-Viewing Activity – Vocabulary: Approximately 30 minutes Viewing Activity: Approximately 1 hour Post-Viewing: Approximately 1 hour
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Instructional Guidelines: Pre-Viewing Activities

- Instructor tells the students that they will be watching a video titled *Becoming a Successful Online Learner*, distributes Pre-Viewing – Discovery handout and asks students to form small groups and answer the questions. After about 15 minutes, students are encouraged to share their ideas with the class and the instructor writes the results for all to see (overhead transparency, document reader or poster paper).
- Instructor distributes the Pre-Viewing – Vocabulary handout. This can be done in class or for homework. Work can be collected or corrections can be made together in class.

Instructional Guidelines: Viewing Activity

- Instructor reviews note-taking skills, as necessary.
- Instructor distributes Viewing Activity handout and plays the video. The video may be played repeatedly until the students have successfully gathered the required information.
- Instructor encourages students to compare their notes with a partner between and after video viewings.
- Instructor gathers and completes the information on overhead or document reader with student input.

Instructional Guidelines: Post-Viewing Activity

- Instructor provides students with information regarding online classes available through their institution. At SSCC the following types of eLearning courses are available:
  - **SSCC fully online courses:** Taught by SSCC faculty using a course management application (i.e. Angel, etc) and/or their own faculty website such as GoogleApps for Education (GA4E). **These courses meet online only.**
  - **SSCC Math courses:** Most (*although not all\**) of the math courses taught by SSCC faculty use Hawkes Learning System (book, software, website), and/or the instructor's own MathOnline website. For more information regarding online Math courses, please visit

<http://mathonline.southseattle.edu>, or contact your instructor. **These classes are fully online, however they require tests be proctored** (your instructor will provide you with information).

\* *MATH 109, MATH&131 and MATH&132 are often taught by SSCC staff using ANGEL.*

- **SSCC hybrid courses:** Taught by SSCC faculty using a course management application (i.e. Angel, etc) and/or their own faculty website such as GoogleApps for Education (GA4E) as their online classroom platform. **These courses include MANDATORY face-to-face meetings as well as online instruction.**
- **WAOL/SSCC online "shared" courses:** "Shared" courses are offered by SSCC through the Washington Online Consortium (WAOL) using ANGEL and follow different quarter dates than SSCC. Check the course listing for specific dates. In general, the instructor is not SSCC Faculty. The instructor may teach through any college in the state! **These classes are fully online. Course item numbers end in ".78"**
- Instructor asks students if they feel that online learning might be right for them and distributes the Post-Viewing Activity handout. Students complete the activity as a form of self-assessment.
- Instructor may choose to ask students to discuss their individual responses or may allow this work to remain private.
- If students have Transition Portfolios, instructor encourages them to save their work in Activity 5.c.

**NOTE: Special thanks to Shaunie Decker, SSCC instructor, for her work developing the activities for this video**

**(Responses will vary.)**

You will be watching a video titled: BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL ONLINE LEARNER. What do you already know about online classes? Please form groups and answer the following questions:

1. What are online classes?
2. Why would someone take classes online?
3. Have you ever considered taking an online class?

You will hear the following sentences in the video that you are about to watch. Before viewing the video, please read these sentences. Then select a synonym from the list provided that has a meaning similar to that of the word in italics. Write the letter of the word on the line provided. Each word can only be used once.

1. They will talk about the positive aspects and benefits of online learning, the *pitfalls* to avoid and the challenges.   **H**
2. It's a hard question to answer, *succinctly* anyway.   **E**
3. This *convergence* is happening for the same reason: convenience.   **C**
4. The first time I took an online course, because I've taken several now, but the first one was mostly just time *constraints*.   **G**
5. We take it by neighborhood, or *caroque*, and feed all the *malnourished* children in that neighborhood, or *caroque*, and then we go to the next *caroque*.   **A**
6. While online learning can be beneficial in many ways, online learning is still in its *infancy*.   **D**
7. The next layer for an online, especially if you haven't taken an online class before, is now you're also *navigating* a content management system that you're trying to learn.   **B**
8. Then the next thing that'll tend to happen is the *procrastination* of checking the class.   **I**
9. But now that I look back into it, I think that the forum is kind of like a good way to talk about things and issues, and I wish I would have been more *proactive* in it.   **F**
10. *Engagement* in an online class, I think, is a little bit more sophisticated when there is a discussion happening and ideally that's happening in a lot of online classes because you are forced to write.   **J**

A. underfed	D. beginning	G. limitations	I. postponement
B. steering	E. concisely	H. difficulties	J. involvement
C. merging	F. active		

**(Responses may vary.)**

As you watch the video, you will learn more about online classes. Please take notes to answer the questions below.

1. What are the advantages of online classes?

- ***Convenience and flexibility***
- ***Study wherever and whenever you want***
- ***Work alone***

2. What are the disadvantages of online classes?

- ***Have to figure out how to use the computer program***
- ***Have to focus and complete work on time***
- ***Hard to stay on track every day when you don't need to go to class***
- ***Work alone***

3. What do you need to do to be a successful online student?

- ***Become comfortable with being uncomfortable***
- ***Get organized***
- ***Be realistic***
- ***Plan/create a time management plan***
- ***Make sure you read everything/read deeply, don't just scan***
- ***Print it out and organize in binder***
- ***Contact the instructor when you have questions***
- ***Find a study buddy***
- ***Back up your work***
- ***Participate in forums***
- ***Avoid distractions***

**(Responses will vary.)**

You have learned about online classes. Now it's time to think about your own learning style. Answer the following questions as honestly as you can. Then analyze your answers using the guidelines in the shaded area to the right.

1. Do I know how to connect to the Web using a browser?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
2. Can I navigate around the Web and use search engines?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do I know how to send and receive e-mail?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
4. Can I do basic word processing, including cutting and pasting?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do I know how to open, save, and manage files?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do I have access to a computer 5-7 days per week?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do I have 12-15 hours a week to work on an online class?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
8. Can I motivate myself to log in to the virtual classroom at least five days a week?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do I have good reading comprehension and written communication skills, and do I enjoy writing?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
10. Do I enjoy figuring things out on my own and am comfortable asking for help when I need it?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

**ANALYZING YOUR ANSWERS:**

If you answered, "YES" to all of the questions, then online classes could be a good option for you.

If you answered, "NO" to any of the questions, go back to those questions and ask yourself, "Can I do something to change that answer to a YES?" For example, if you do not know how to send and receive email, could you learn how? If you can find a way to change the "NO" answers to "YES", and you are willing to put in the work, then online classes could still be a good option for you.

If you answered, "NO" to any of the questions and would not be able or willing to do what is needed to change the answer to a "YES", then online classes would not be a good option for you.

Narrator:

The Internet is playing a more significant role in our lives. Education is no different. Detailed information about schools is available online, you can apply for a school online, find and fill out financial aid forms online and, as you'll see in this video, it is becoming more and more common to attend school via the internet. As you may already know, many courses are taught online and more classes are being added every quarter or semester. At some schools, there are now classes that are only available online.

Being able to take courses online offers great benefits. But online learning has its difficulties too. For some students, listening to a lecture and doing course work in a café, library or even sitting on the beach is the perfect setting in which to learn. Other students find it a challenge to succeed in online courses and struggle with being able to focus and complete work.

In this video we will visit with several instructors and students who share their experiences. They will talk about the positive aspects and benefits of online learning, the pitfalls to avoid and the challenges.

So how is online learning, or what is often called eLearning, defined? English instructor Laura Kingston, who teaches several online courses and has used forms of online instruction for over nine years, says...

Laura Kingston (English Instructor):

Well, that's a tough question. I have a real hard time answering that because I think it's so different for everyone who comes to it. But it's basically, online learning is getting the same information that you would in a classroom in a different way. It's a hard question to answer, succinctly anyway.

Narrator:

Like newspapers, books, shopping, listening to music and so many other parts of our lives, education, at least in part, is converging on the Internet. This convergence is happening for the same reason: convenience.

Laura:

The benefit is, I think, exactly the same as the benefit for the student, in the flexibility. More and more students are working full time and have families. The majority of my online students, currently, that's the same case. So, they are in exactly the same position as I am. I'm teaching full-time and trying to balance family with that. They just happen to be learning full-time while taking a class on. So, the flexibility is fabulous.



Narrator:

Meet student Lisa Marie. Like many students, she took her first online class because it conveniently fit with the other demands on her busy life.

Lisa Marie Pimblett (Student):

The first time I took an online course, because I've taken several now, but the first one was mostly just time constraints. Two classes I was already taking on campus were going to be about four hours long, and I have a kid who is in elementary school and with commuting time I just didn't have time to fit in the third class. So, I saw that South offered online options and decided to just try it out.

Narrator:

When online classes are right for the instructor and right for the students, sometimes the benefits are truly astounding. Meet Chef David Wasson...

David Wasson (Chef/Instructor):

I teach culinary arts for South Seattle Community College and I've been teaching sanitation and food safety and nutrition for food service professionals and I've taught culinary theory, both the introductory course, theory one and theory two online, 100% online. So those are probably the most challenging. To teach theory online is sort of unheard of.

Narrator:

After making a living in the restaurant business in Seattle, Wasson decided to teach his passion for culinary arts to its new practitioners. He taught for over a decade within the Seattle Community College District. But it was after returning from a vacation that Chef Wasson discovered just how convenient online learning can be.

Chef Wasson:

Oh, I live in...I'm in Tagum City, which is on the island of Mindanao....

I came here for two weeks five years ago, and man, I honestly don't know which was more shocking to me, coming here or going back to Seattle. It was a huge cultural shock for me to go back to Seattle after only two weeks here in Southeast Asia. It's different here. People will smile. They will look right at you in the face and smile at you.

It's a really beautiful place, right now, I don't know if you can see behind me but it's a sunny morning, there isn't a cloud in the sky, there's a couple of banana trees right behind me. I've never been happier in my life.

Narrator:

And the convenience of being able to teach students from a remote location 8000 miles away, allows Chef Wasson to carry on with another vital role...

Chef Wasson:

I was very involved there in America, won a lot of awards teaching children how to cook and working on childhood hunger issues there. So, I'm like opening a food bank at this point because I was doing these feedings, like the pictures that you saw, for anywhere from 150 to 250 kids at a time. We take it by neighborhood, or caroque, and feed all the malnourished children in that neighborhood, or caroque, and then we go to the next caroque. But how to get them to gain their weight if you're feeding them once a week or once a month? So they need to eat every day.

Narrator:

While online learning can be beneficial in many ways, online learning is still in its infancy. And like many students, taking an online course is a new experience which can be a challenge.

Lisa Marie:

I had no idea what to expect, and this is my first year back at school in over ten years, so I was already not sure what to expect from school in general and this online class was just something I've never done before, looked at before, looked into before, so no, I wasn't prepared at all.

Narrator:

And while online courses can be more convenient for students, instructor Laura Kingston warns that students taking an online course will have to learn more than they may expect.

Laura:

The biggest challenge for students is there's two learning curves now with online instruction. The first learning curve is the content itself when you're taking the class. So, any class that you've come into, if it's a good class and one that you see a value in, you're going to engage in it, and you're going to be challenged by that so there's periods of discomfort and uncertainty and that usually means you're actually learning. That's content.

The next layer for an online, especially if you haven't taken an online class before, is now you're also navigating a content management system that you're trying to learn. So, not only are you negotiating content and feeling a little bit lost, you're likely also navigating the online structure and feeling a little bit lost.

Narrator:

And Lisa Marie's experience was no different. Fortunately for her, Laura Kingston was the teacher of her first online class.

Lisa Marie:

It was a little nerve wracking at first, going into it, because I had no idea what to expect. But it was pretty easy. The first class I took was with Laura Kingston and she's very good at explaining what she expects from people and laying everything out before you start the class. So, it was actually pretty painless.

John:

Lisa Marie ended up enjoying her first online class. Not everyone has a positive first experience. As you'll hear, students like Angela and Paul felt it was easier to fall behind in their online classes. Some of Mike's classes were only available online, but he'll tell you he just doesn't learn as well online.

Mike Chareunsap (Student):

I'm not a computer guy. So, I'm not on the computer that much but uhm... Online class was a little challenge, trying to figure things out, how to use the program. Just trying to figure it all out.

Angela Young (Student):

It was tougher. It was more tougher because you had to be on track every day. If you don't check online, you'll fall behind.

Paul Ung (Graduate):

Not needing to go to class and, you know, make sure you read up before the next day of class was kind of hard. And, I think it was just mainly more of a motivation factor.

Laura:

My biggest advice to students at this point is you have to become comfortable with being uncomfortable. It's just part of the learning process. I think that goes across the board for any learning, but it's particularly significant, I think, for online instruction.

Narrator:

For some students, being taught in a classroom works better, but there are instances of courses, like Chef Wasson's sanitation course, that are required and only taught online. If you need to take Chef Wasson's class, you'll have to take it online, even if you prefer learning in the classroom.

But successful learning is the ultimate goal with any instruction. Instruction styles between online instructors may differ, the way they set up their websites, and instructors or schools may use a variety of content management tools. Laura Kingston, says there are steps the student can take to ensure their own success when they take online courses.

Laura:

A successful online learner is organized. They are realistic about what they can do and cannot do. They would approach the online class like a class where they need to meet. So, they might say, 'Okay, here's my day...'

I often ask students at the end of the quarter what advice would you give the next group of students taking this on-line class and they say things like, 'this takes more time than you need,' 'make sure you read everything,' 'print it out,' 'contact the instructor if you have questions.' And they say all the same things again and again.

Narrator:

So, let's take a look at this list a little closer. It's worth reviewing and hearing the reasons why these habits are so important.

Lisa Marie:

I worked out a time management plan. I worked out a schedule when I was going to have everything done by. I'm good with computers, but I prefer to work on paper, I don't know why, but I do, so I printed everything out. I organized it in a binder and then it was all right there in front of me.

Angela:

I would definitely consider someone to do it, because, um, it gives you more free time. And, you know, you can check your stuff whenever you want. But then if you're a busy person, I definitely don't suggest it because you'll fall behind real quick.

Laura:

The assumption is that they can squeeze it in. That it's going to take less time than a classic classroom. That may be the reason they've chosen it, because they feel like 'I really want to take that third class, but I just don't have time, my schedule doesn't fit. I'll just throw this online class in so, I can knock out my degree that much more quickly.' That is one of the first steps to kind of drowning in the online class.

Then the next thing that'll tend to happen is the procrastination of checking the class. Like, I would say that 95% of the students that sign up for my classes that don't log in and check in the first week end up failing or dropping out. Even those who want to add late the second week, and I reluctantly may sign them in, there's so much to catch up on that it's too much. It's too much for anybody.

Janice Young (Graduate):

I also think that even though it's an online class, maybe setting up a chunk of your day, setting it from like 10-11 to do it, get it knocked out. That's what I did. I would leave time out and just get

my stuff done.

Laura:

They might say 'okay, here's my day, I work from 9 to 5, my kids come home, we have dinner. I know that I get tired by 8:30, so my class in the morning is going to be from 5 to 6. I'm going to log online three days a week, from 5 to 6 and make sure I'm looking for any emails from the instructor, noticing any announcements, going over assignments, doing reading.' They're somebody who plans their week and sticks to it as much as possible.

Janice:

Make sure you read. Don't pretend you read it and respond to Blackboard because people will laugh at you. Because they will come back and post something and... 'You don't know what you're talking about.'"

Lisa Marie:

And, plus it's a lot of reading. If you're not sitting in a classroom listening to someone talk to you, you're reading everything and you have to take in everything by yourself, and there's nobody there to tell you 'This is an important point, so write this down.' You have to figure that out for yourself.

Laura:

One of the biggest misconceptions, I think, is that an online class you would read as if you're getting your updates on whatever website that you read. You can scan quickly. Deep reading still has to happen in online classes. The idea that you can scan information, you will lose important information. And that's the only way you're getting it. You don't have the value of going to a classroom or the added benefit of going to a classroom and hearing the instructor tell it to you, and then you can just scan the assignment again because you've already heard it once.

Janice:

I would leave time out and just get my stuff done, print all my stuff and so I can just read at home. Printing it out is better than reading it on the computer, at least for me. Then, I can highlight it.

Laura:

There's this sense that with online you don't give enough time to really take the time to learn the way the information's presented. No time for that. There's been studies shown that when you read online, you read a lot less than say you do if you print something out. So I often suggest, I realize online might be a greener way, but to really get the information, print it out, organize it in a notebook. It's what I did for my online classes. It's the only way I could actually stay on top of everything.

Another point that I can't emphasize enough, and this goes for I think classic, traditional classrooms as much as online classes, but contact the instructor, like there's no silly questions to ask, especially the first few weeks of an online class. I have a question and answer forum, I know a lot of other online instructors have a forum where if you're lost and you're not sure what to do, post it and the instructor will get back to you. Or email me. I push that a lot. There's no silly question to ask, especially when there's layers of information that you're taking in. So, being organized and realistic and connecting with the instructor about anything is the exact way to step up as an online learner.

Narrator:

Sara Newman, a community college eLearning Coordinator agrees with Laura and adds some other tips.

Sara Newman (eLearning Coordinator):

Read all your announcements, download your courses, start a journal, read the text, read the lecture topic, get together with your teammates, get on the discussion board, boom, boom, boom, go do, go do, go do. And then whatever you do produce and send to your instructor, back it up on your computer. And so time management and study buddies I think are the biggest deal.

Narrator:

Earlier, we discussed strategies provided by both instructors and students that may help all students become better online learners. There are also some things those experienced in online learning suggest you avoid as an online learner.

Paul:

I was kind of wish-washy on kind of what to do and how to participate in the forums and everything. But now that I look back into it, I think that the forum is kind of like a good way to talk about things and issues, and I wish I would have been more proactive in it.

Narrator:

In fact, Laura Kingston couldn't agree more with Paul.

Laura:

For students the benefit is, there's a couple things. The lifelong benefit I think from online instruction is twofold. One, the material is there for you to take in to the extent that you want it, like it is a classroom, but because you can choose to give more time to it, in a way to come back and read the materials, it poses a sense of responsibility on the student that once you kind of decide, yes, I'm going to engage in this and come back to this and be involved in the online environment, that puts you in the habit to know once you do engage, anything you engage in is

going to have that benefit, it's just the benefit, it's the payoff of engagement, the payoff of engagement.

Engagement in an online class, I think, is a little bit more sophisticated when there is a discussion happening and ideally that's happening in a lot of online classes because you are forced to write. So, I think the information is processed more thoroughly in an online situation.

Narrator:

And student Lisa Marie points out another challenge.

Lisa Marie:

I think just being online for such a large amount of time, just staring at the computer, having no personal face to face interaction, that took a lot of getting used to at first. But once you do get used to it, it can actually be kind of pleasant, because you can be in your own little world and you don't have to interact with people if you don't want to.

Narrator:

Having that choice to avoid interacting with others so you can focus brings up another challenge, studying where you won't be distracted.

Laura:

I think the learning environment that you choose when you're logged into your classes is important. I think it can easily be overlooked, and I think that's another, where the instruction is the same as the learning. I know that I can't focus in on responding to student's papers or being part of the discussion forum if I'm on my couch with the TV on with the kids running around while my husband's cooking dinner. It's just not going to happen. I have to wait to focus. I think going to the coffee shop and having your lap top with you is fabulous, but it has to be a sense of this is the one thing I'm doing right now. I'm not checking my Gmail or my yahoo account while I'm texting my friend and have my iPhone open and listening to my mp3 player at the same time.

Narrator:

Listening to advice from others who have had experience with online learning will help you know if online learning may work for you. But learning what works for you, learning from past mistakes and adapting with your own strategies will also make you a better online learner.

And keep in mind that there are resources available. Any college offering eLearning courses will typically have a webpage online and most offer a variety of resources to help you navigate online classes, offer tips on how to succeed in these classes and may even help you figure out if you are ready to take online classes in the first place.

Laura:

When students sign up for an online class, regardless if they've taken a class or not before, look for information from the eLearning, or the distance learning, or the online department to find out what skills or what strategies that can be offered generally for online instruction. I know people don't feel they have time for but its working smart to avoid working harder. It's there for them to kind of figure out, okay what are the successful steps? Like read the syllabus, read it again, contact your instructor with questions. Basic stuff that's worth reminding themselves of.

Lisa Marie:

I really enjoyed it. I think that I actually learn better by reading, rather than by listening to somebody in a classroom. And I think that everybody has their own way of learning, and for people like me who enjoy reading this is a really great way to learn.