

Digital learning paths through Teams

I teach **History** in a rural **school** in Flanders.

16

age of pupils on average

540

pupils

20

pupils per class on average

30

classes



Teaching environment

I teach at a technical and vocational school. We are a care-wide school. We monitor students' well-being. There are quite **a lot of foreign-language** pupils, often refugees. The students come from **various social backgrounds**.

Digital tools

A lot of students did not have access to a laptop when Covid hit. My school has a decent ICT department and there were quite **a stock of laptops that were available on loan for free**. We also use Smartschool to exchange with our students, to give grades and homework.



Experience with digital tools before Covid-19

A lot of digital tools **were completely unknown to me**. I had no training with digital tools. I knew that online teaching was not just face-to-face in a digital way. I sometimes used a digital tool **to open or close the lesson** but that was all.

The tool : Teams

Teams allows to stay connected and access shared content at any time. It also allows to learn, make plans and innovate together.

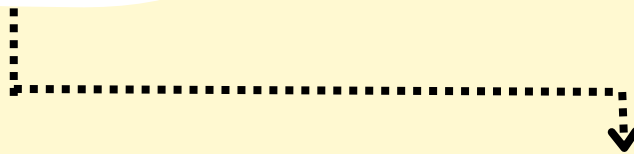
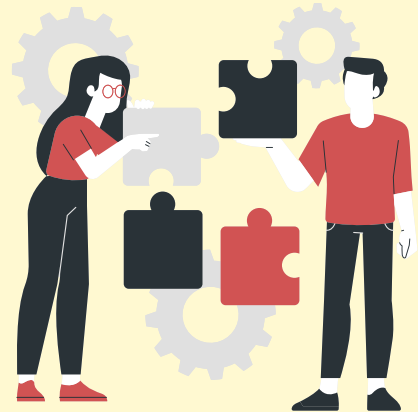


Needs before this teaching practice

I wanted to offer **structured teaching and guided autonomy**. I also wanted my students to learn by working together.

Needs solved

Teams allows **to create digital learning paths**, in which students go through a lesson completely independently or in groups.

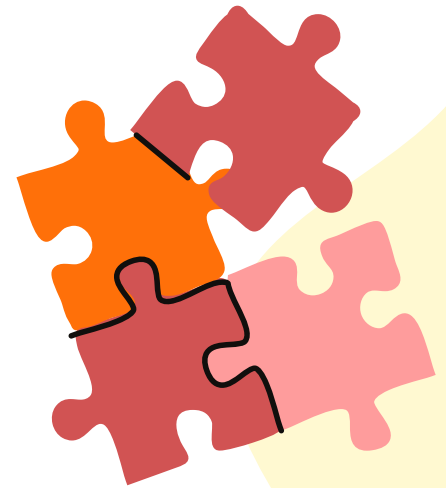


Audience targeted

All my students of all my classes. I teach **from the 3rd to the 6th year** of secondary education.



Organisation



First, the ICT department of my school set up **Teams class channels**. They created every channel to have a sense of uniformity, and they also linked all the teachers and students to those class channels. So **for each class, there is a 'room'**, a separate channel, and then the teachers can make their own separate sub-channel within the class channel for their subjects. Although I worked with **Smartschool** (e.g. for the online school agenda), where all my courses are saved, I also transferred them on Teams.

Of course, it is necessary that all teachers and students have **access to a computer and the internet**, which was made possible by the school: every teacher received a computer, and every student has a computer on loan.



Practice activity

I always started an online learning path on Teams with a very **brief instructional live moment** to explain basically the purpose of the task. I explained to the students how to proceed. After that, I directed them to the learning path or assignment. I prepared those in such a way that it was **crystal clear** for the students what they had to do while working autonomously.

I gave **varied assignments** in the digital learning path. I often used **BookWidgets** in complement to Teams, because it is a very user-friendly app, because you work with a webquest where you can actually integrate very different assignments and give **immediate feedback**.

I also made students work in groups. I gave instructions to students which takes about **five minutes**. They knew what their assignment was, and then were divided into breakout rooms. That division was done by the teacher. While working together, they could ask a question at any time using the chat. They learnt a lot from each other in this way. A very useful tool is **Padlet** as students actually see the answers of the other groups appear simultaneously.

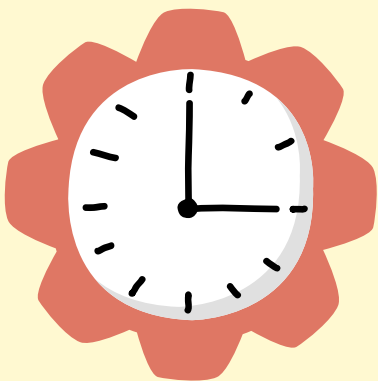


Impact of the practice

An innovation



An efficient practice



- Everything I have done, has **raised my classes to a higher level**, not 1, but 2 to 3 levels higher.
- My whole course at the moment is **fully digital.**
- Today I use a number of lessons in which **students actually work independently**, in that lesson, in groups, via those digital paths, at their own pace, with me being physically present.

Keys to success

Activate your students.

Let the students **take their time** to do their work.

Assignments have **to be clear** and **diverse**.



Benefits



Students have learnt to **work together**. It even enables **collaboration across classes**.



Students can get **support from their teacher** at anytime.



My students have **never been more autonomous**.

Ready ?

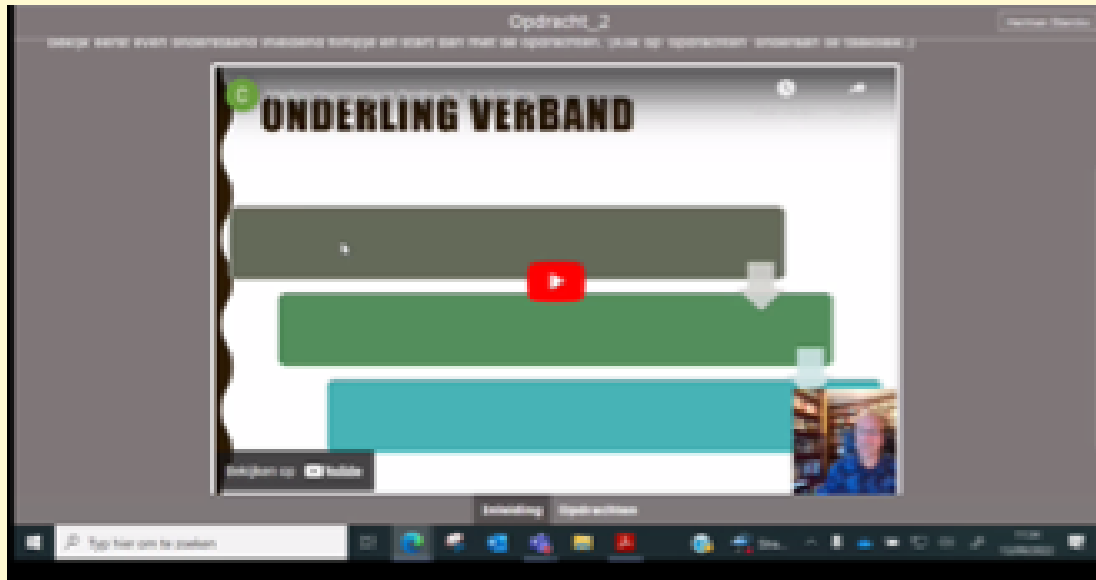
Never waste a good crisis. I think Covid has indicated that digitalisation is perfectly possible. Education can be organised in a digital way with digital learning resources. It is possible. A student with a laptop or a tablet can do everything.



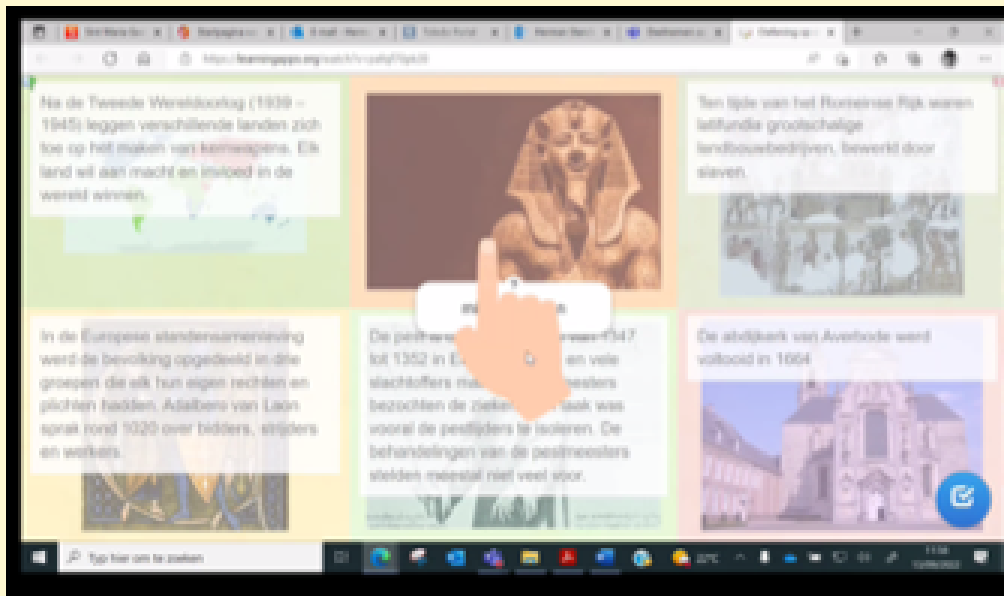
Resources

Screenshots

Every lesson starts with a brief instructional moment



Examples of exercises, which allow immediate feedback



This portrait gives a representation of the teacher's choices which are not our own. The statements in this portrait are not direct quotations but have been adapted from an interview which took place in 2022.