Module 1: Asynchronous vs. Synchronous

Asynchronous Learning: Definition

During asynchronous learning, the student and the teacher are not engaged in the learning at the same time: there is no real-time interaction. Examples of asynchronous learning include working independently on an assignment, watching a recorded video, submitting answers via email or a Google form, or practicing a piece of music on the recorder. Feedback can also be delivered asynchronously, such as the return of a graded assignment submitted via Google Classrooms. Another example of asynchronous content is a recording of a webinar or live stream that is later posted to a Google Classroom.

Asynchronous Learning: Overview

At Great Hearts Live Oak, asynchronous instruction will take a central stage during distance learning. Students will spend most of their school day engaging the material through a combination of pre-recorded instructional videos, interactive Google Slides, and independent practice and assignments utilizing workbooks and other materials. Some asynchronous learning will require a device, but independent work will provide frequent breaks from the computer. The heavy emphasis on asynchronous instruction, especially in grades K-5, is designed to reduce screen time and allow parents greater flexibility in organizing their child's instructional day.

Synchronous Learning: Definition

Interaction that occurs in real-time, but from different locations, is called **synchronous**. A phone call is a common example of a synchronous interaction—two people having a back-and-forth conversation via technology while in two different locations. A Zoom call is another form of synchronous interaction—two or more people having a live video conference while in different locations. Webinars and live stream videos are also synchronous, although these do not provide the same sort of back and forth interaction afforded through video and telephone calls.

Synchronous Learning: Overview

At Great Hearts Live Oak, synchronous interactions will be used to provide instruction, tutoring, interventions, feedback, and interactive contact between students and teachers. A synchronous session may look like a literature discussion, a tutoring session, or even a social snack time where students can chat with one another. Most synchronous interactions will be scheduled in advance according to a predictable schedule and will occur via **Zoom**. Phone calls may serve as a secondary form of synchronous interaction when Zoom falters or does fit the need.

Live stream videos—e.g., Facebook Live—may also be used for schoolwide announcements or events, such as the morning Pledge of Allegiance. Such events will NOT require a Facebook account for access, and will be recorded and made available for later viewing.

Synchronous Learning: Support v. Direct Instruction

Most synchronous interactions at Live Oak will fall under the category of ***instructional support***. Tutoring, check-ins, and the administration of interventions are examples of the use of synchronous interactions as ***instructional support***. Some of these synchronous sessions, such as tutoring, are optional for the student. Most K-5 synchronous interactions at GHLO will fall under the category of instructional support.

Some synchronous sessions will involve ***direct instruction***. Examples include a discussion of *The Hobbit,* or a live lab demonstration for life science during which students will be able to ask and answer questions. Synchronous instruction will be more common in grades 6 and 7 as students are better equipped to manage technology and are honing their habits of discussion.

Synchronous Learning: What if my child misses a session?

While there is no substitute for the real-time interaction between the teacher and the student, the scheduling and use of synchronous interactions are designed to provide flexibility and support to our learners and their families. Instructional events such as a discussion or storytime will be recorded and posted with an asynchronous assignment in order to ensure the student receives the benefit of instruction. Other interactions, such as tutoring sessions and social times are highly recommended, but optional. Examples of synchronous instructional support that are not optional include regularly scheduled services for students with individualized instructional plans and classroom discussions.

Questions?

Thank you for learning more about distance learning! Please let us know if you have any further questions about asynchronous and synchronous learning using this <u>survey link</u>. Go Owls!

In partnership,
The Great Hearts Distance Learning Team