Does learning take place differently in online and blended learning environments?

By Kris and Sonny

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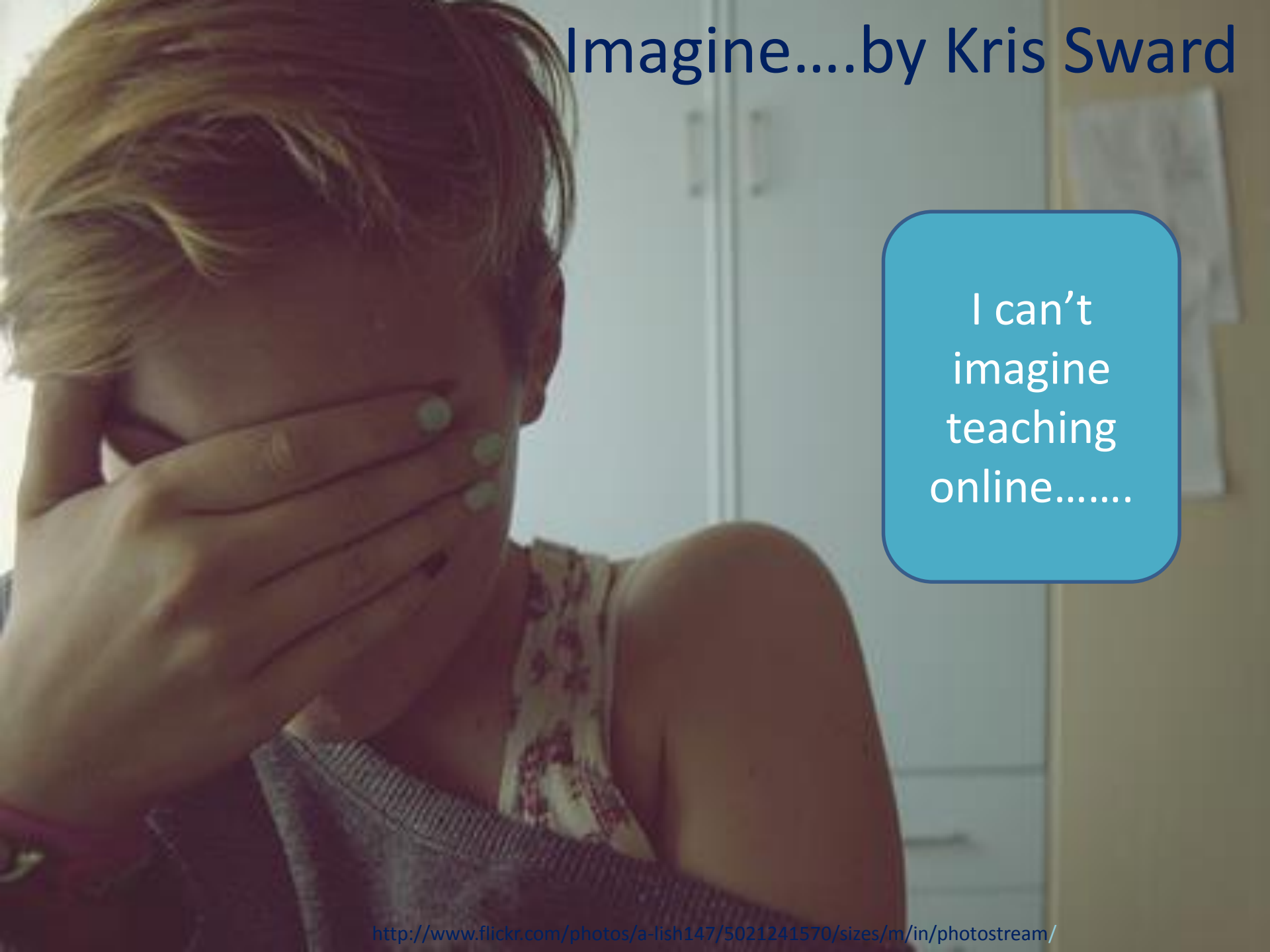
As a starting off point, we thought that we would review my Pecha Kucha slideshow as it ties directly in to our discussions and thoughts presented here…..sit back and enjoy for a moment my initial thoughts of teaching online…..

Imagine….by Kris Sward



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I can be welcoming to learners of all ages and backgrounds...

http://www.flickr.com/photos/mjparnell/435465575/

…I am supportive of my students, whatever their struggles or situations…

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…I am there when they need a little HELP from their friends…
LONELY HEARTS

…I always try to motivate them and cheer them on…
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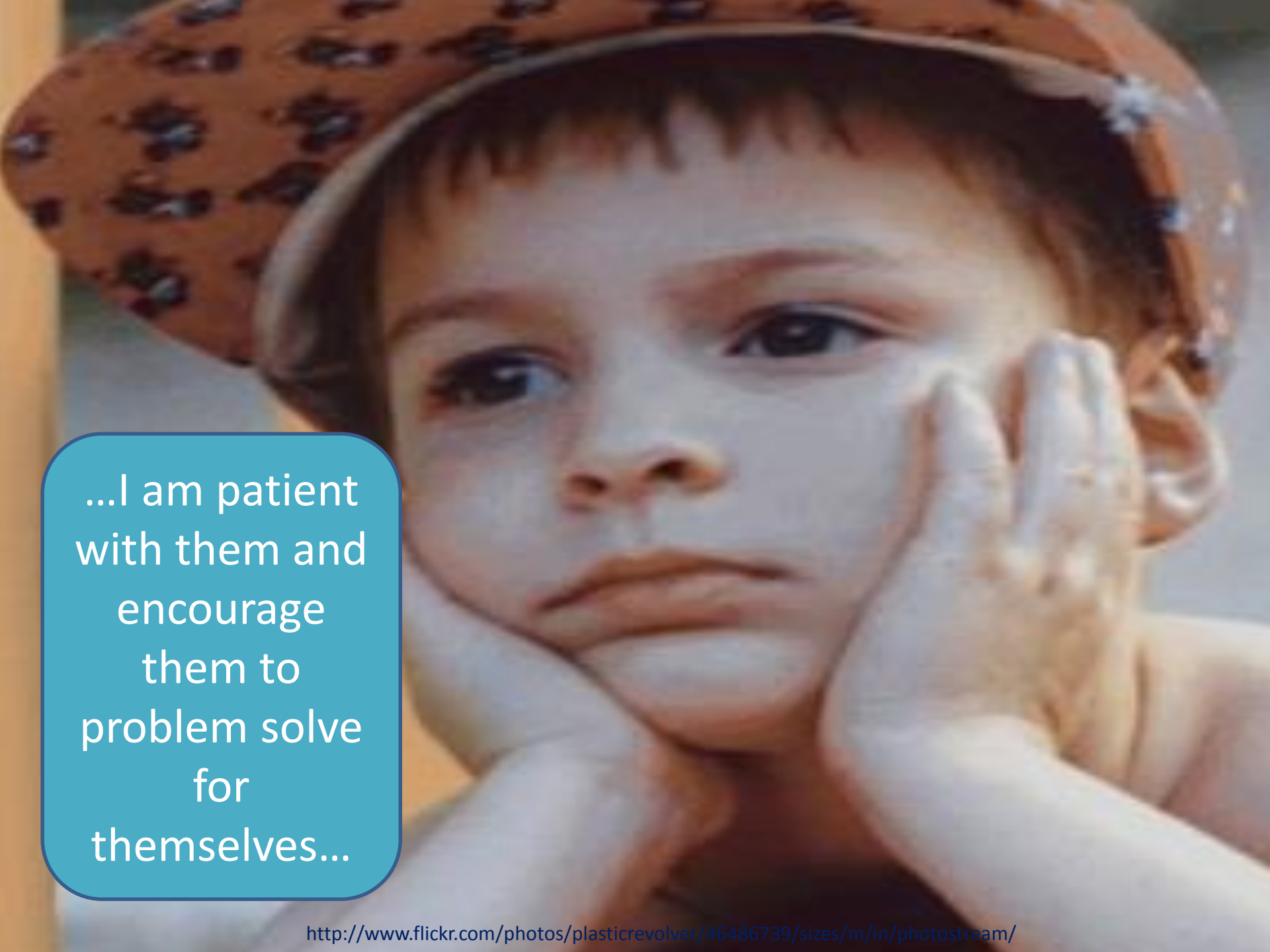

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…I encourage them to be kind and respectful to others…
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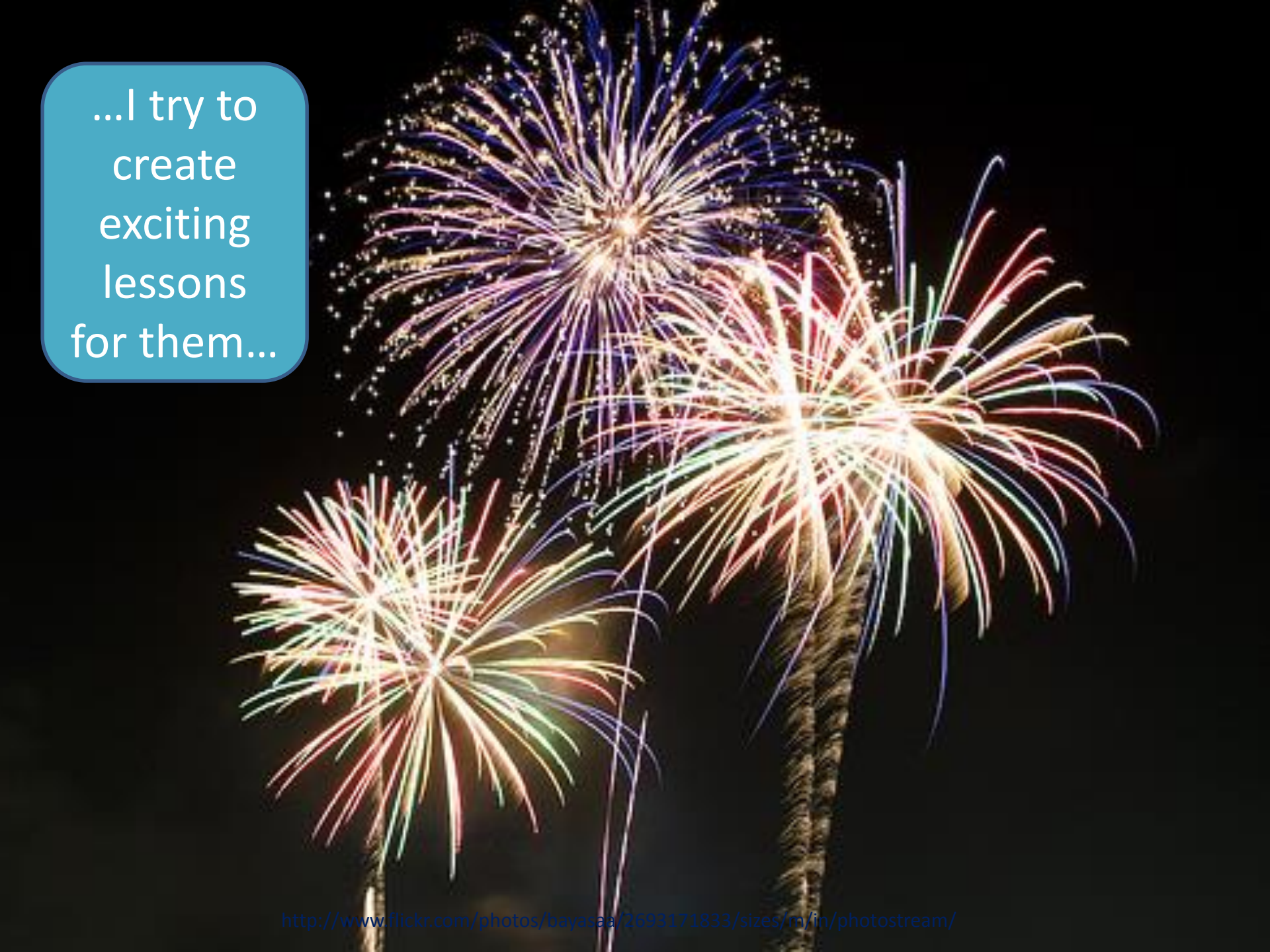

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…lessons that are also engaging for them and make them want to know more…

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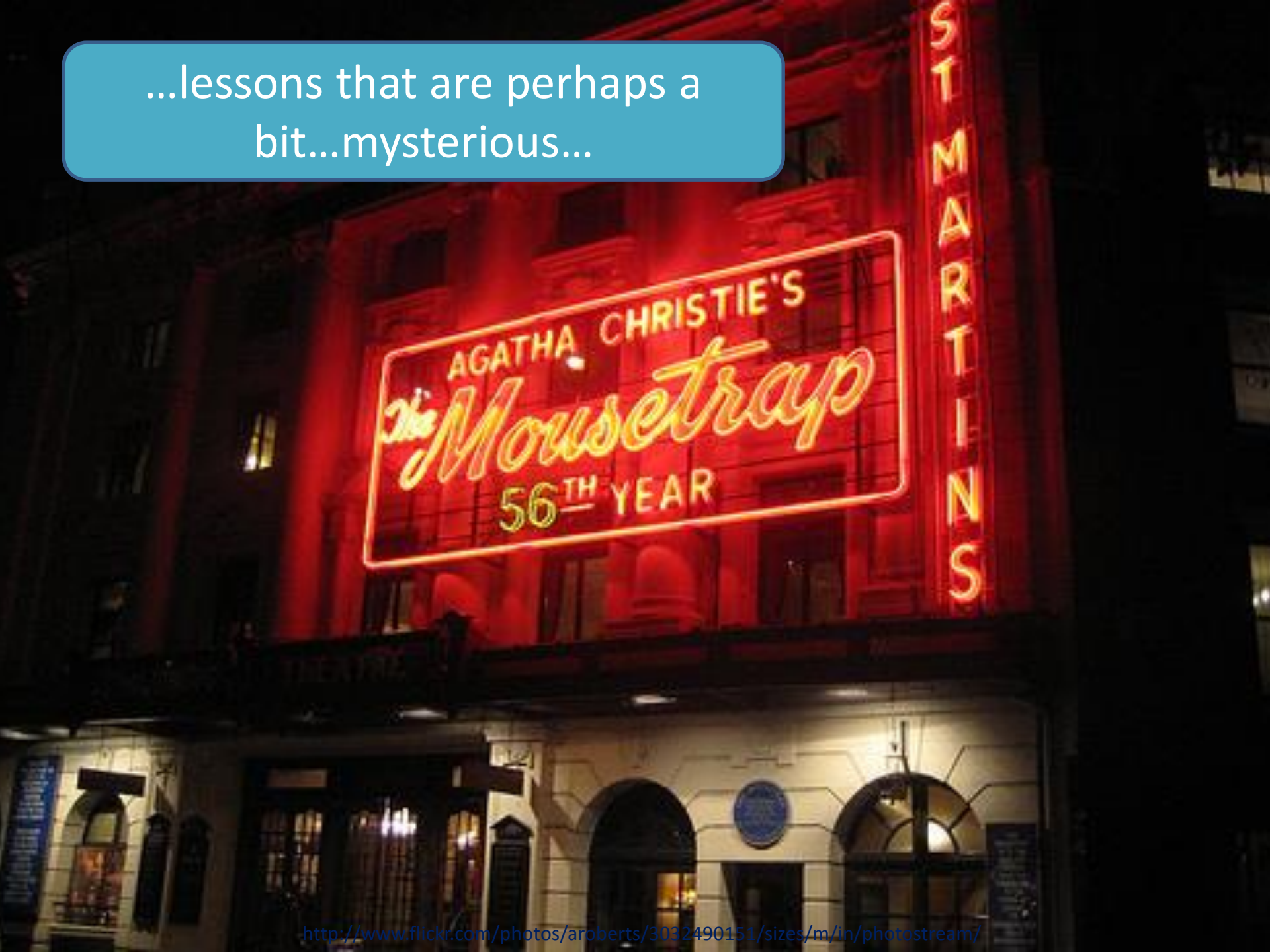
…lessons that are perhaps a bit…mysterious…



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http://www.flickr.com/photos/everydayelsie/3612303318/sizes/m/in/photostream/

…I encourage my students to collaborate to solve problems…

http://www.flickr.com/photos/west_point/5818583334/sizes/m/in/photostream/

…I try to inspire them to want to do new things and learn more…
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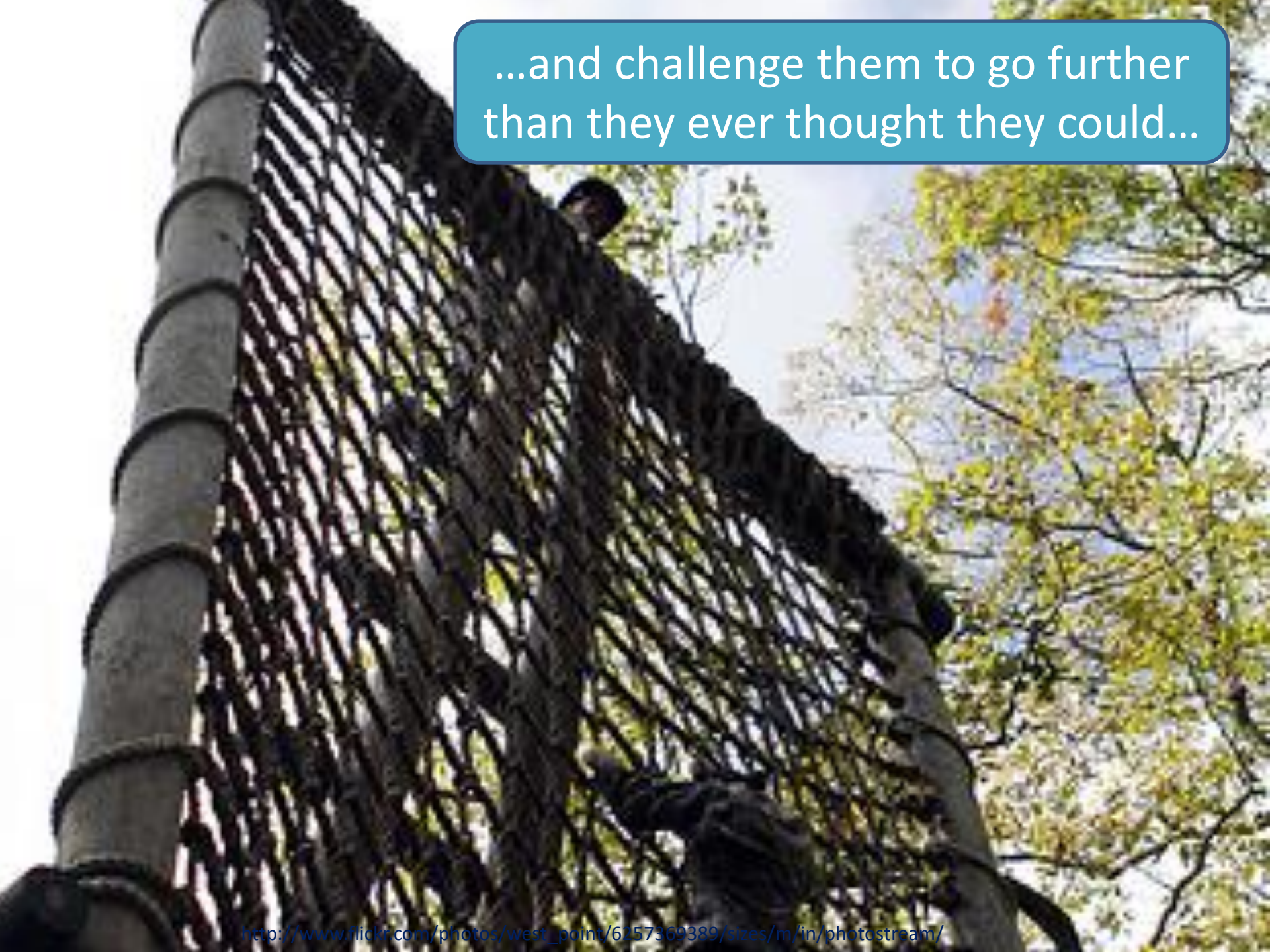

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…creative…

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I am already doing all of these things…
…and I IMAGINE I could also do them online…
Hmmm…
maybe it's not so different…

Okay –
I can do this!
☺
(I think!)

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So…..is it really so different teaching online as opposed to teaching in a blended classroom or in a face to face classroom?

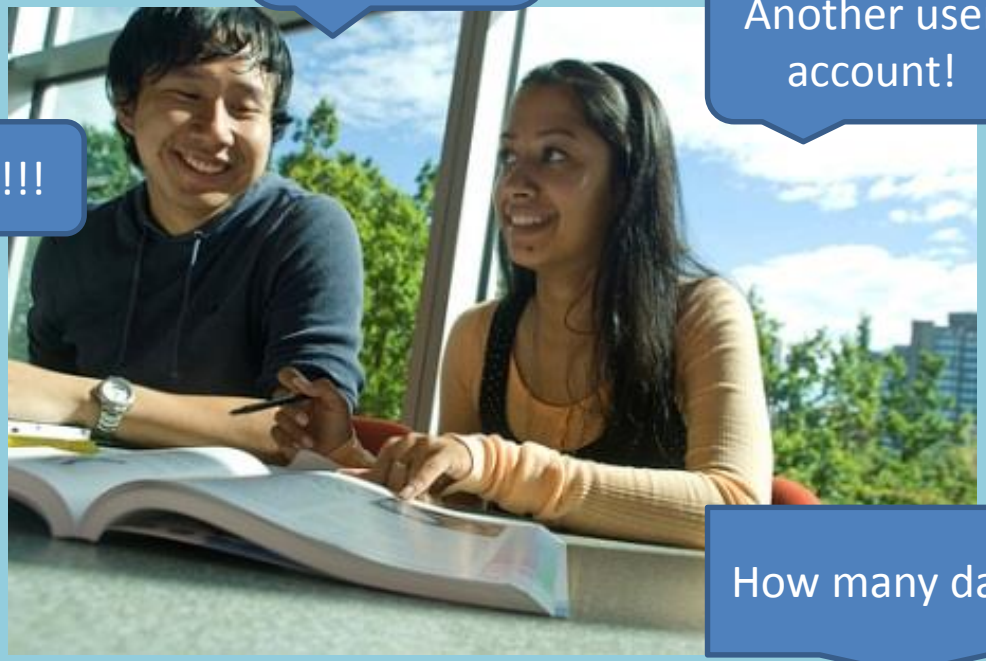
Did you get the required readings for the week?

When is our paper due?

We should get together after class…

Another user account!

So much homework!!!



Does anyone know how to compress a video file? ☺

Let's meet at the caf and talk about the project

How many days until the break?

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What do you imagine when you hear the phrase “Online Learning”?

What is it?

In this phrase we could be replace the word “learning” with “technology” and it would mean the same thing to the majority of teachers and students.

Online learning is a spectrum; at one end it can take place in a regular classroom were a teacher uses some tools from the web to enhance the lesson. Or, it could be a completely asynchronous model where student and teacher are not necessarily in the same school, town or country. The content is 100% online and teacher provides support through web 2.0 devices.

There are many degrees of online learning in between these two extremes including synchronous and hybrid models.
(speak the parts in italics, not needed in slide… what do you think?) *sounds good….do you have notes to work from?...blue background?*

First lets take a bit of a look at the history of distance learning:

http://mcdhaliwal.ca/oltd/historyofdl.html

Once you have finished watching the video please put up a green check

History of Distance Learning:

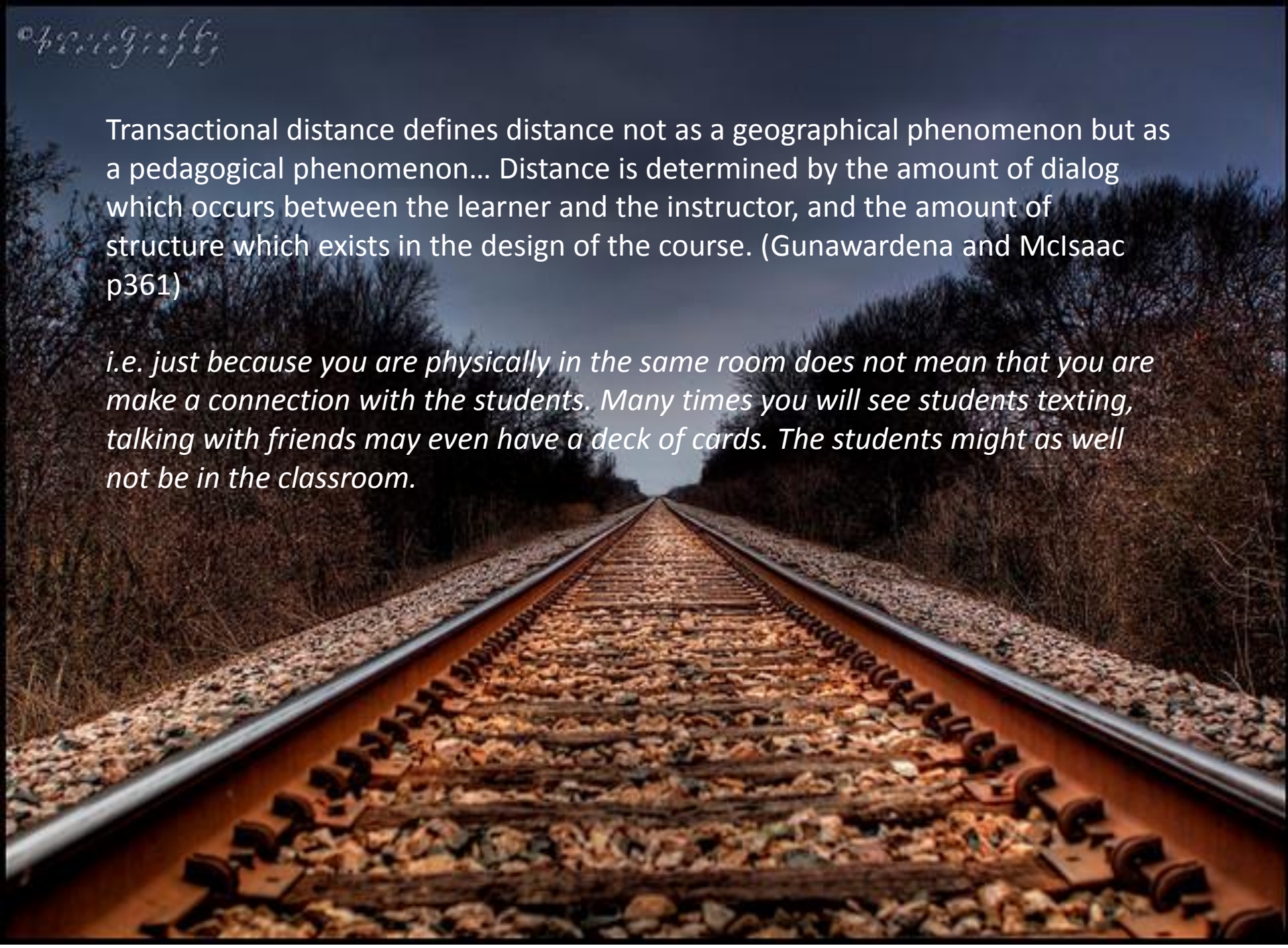
Late 1800's – introduction of a large correspondence program through the University of Chicago (this was an early attempt to bring a standard level of education to the masses, not just the elite)
1920's – saw the development of the use of the radio to transmit lessons for distance education (i.e. Wisconsin's School of the Air)
1950's – television provides yet another medium with which instructors can deliver distance instruction through recorded lessons distributed with course packages
1970 – the Open University is established in Britain, providing many options and courses for learners at a distance
1980's – technology is first integrated into distance learning in order to provide instruction more effectively.

Up until this point, distance education was mostly asynchronous, independent study for students who would work through materials at their own pace with sporadic support from either the instructor or peers taking the same course.

1990's – saw a huge increase in demand and use of distance education
1998 – the Bipartisan Web-based Education Commission (U.S.) was created to investigate the potential use of the internet for distance education
2001 – the Internet Equity and Education Act opened the door for fully online instruction for credit throughout the U.S. by removing restrictions regarding minimal face to face class time limits and the use of student loans for online educational offerings

Present day – online learning provides opportunities for synchronous activities in an online environment where students can choose their courses, work through them at their own pace with or without the support of a cohort, attend live classes fully online, chat or video conference with their instructors and peers, connect outside of regular class time for support or to complete project work, create projects and work through assignments to hand in online and work through an entire program without having to set foot on an actual campus. Distance learning is no longer restricted by issues such as timing, distance, costs of communication or delayed access to learning materials

(Distance Education, Chapter 14, Charlotte Gunawardena and Marina McIsaac, p356/7)

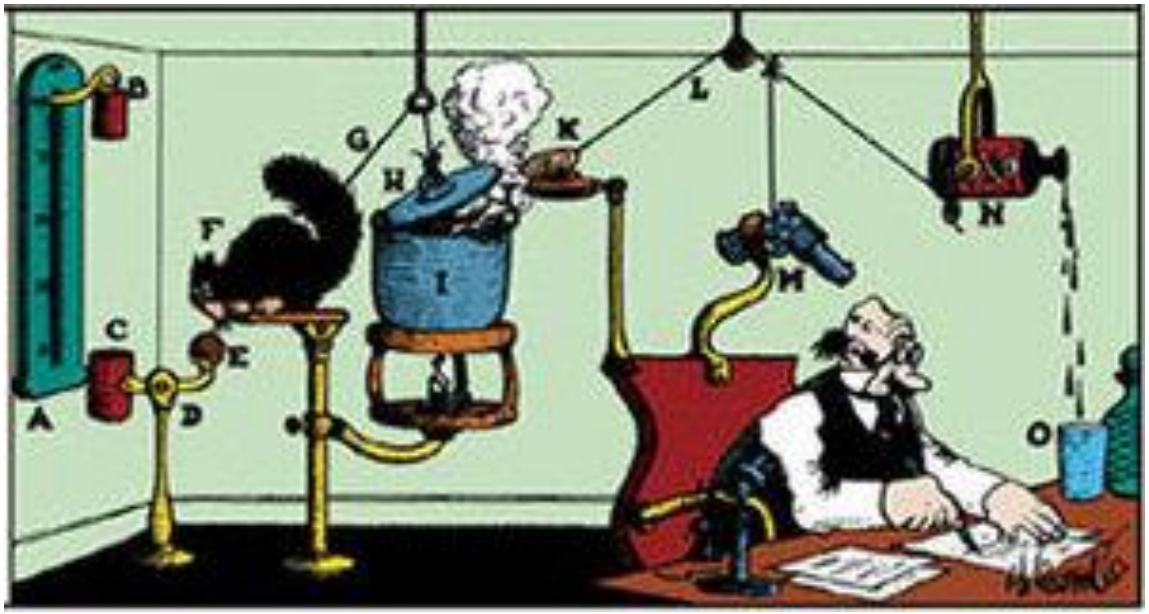


Transactional distance defines distance not as a geographical phenomenon but as a pedagogical phenomenon… Distance is determined by the amount of dialog which occurs between the learner and the instructor, and the amount of structure which exists in the design of the course. (Gunawardena and McIsaac p361)

i.e. just because you are physically in the same room does not mean that you are make a connection with the students. Many times you will see students texting, talking with friends may even have a deck of cards. The students might as well not be in the classroom.

One of the big complaints about online studies is the lack of interactions.
According to Anderson interactions can even be simulated (Anderson p55)
Before we criticize we need to determine what are meaningful interactions?
© Melanie Delgado Phillips

Interactions occur when objects and events mutually influence one another
(Anderson p55)



In the process of learning there are 3 types of interactions:

- learner-content
- learner-instructor
- learner-learner

(Gunawardena and McIsaac p362)

Learner – Content

How does this look in the classroom?
Teacher guided discussion and lessons
Student lead Presentations
Explorations

How does this look in an online environment?
Video tutorials
Interactive simulations
Self exploration
Guided explorations
Demonstration of knowledge(presentations, blogs, video projects, labs, etc)

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different tools but achieving the same goal

Learner – learner

How does this look in the classroom?
Group Projects
Pair learning
Labs
Games

How does this look in an online environment?
Discussion Groups (via software like first class)
Collaborate
Blogs (nothings says that in order for it be meaningful it needs to be synchronous)
Social Networking (Facebook, twitter, etc)

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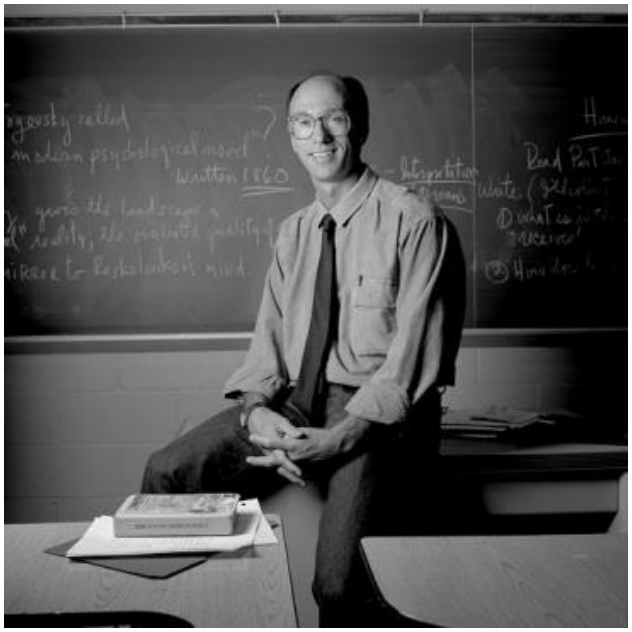
different tools but achieving the same goal

Learner – teacher



How does this look in the classroom?
Tutorial sessions
Classroom time

How does this look in an online environment?
Emails
Phone/Skype
Collaborate
Face to Face Meetings (yes that can still happen if you choose online studies)

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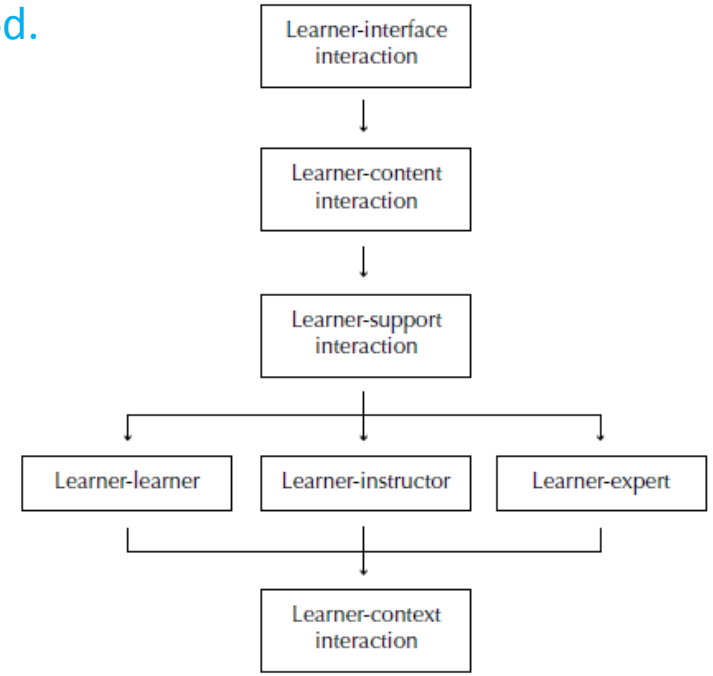
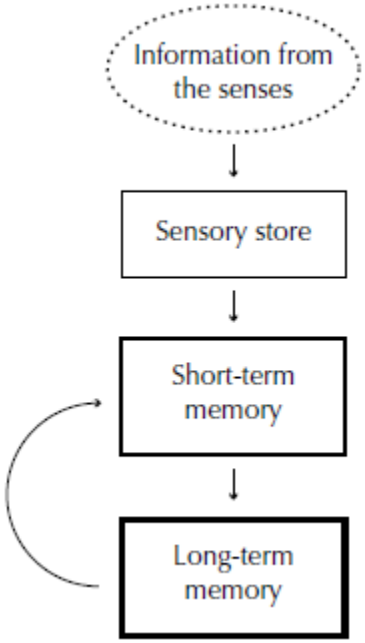
different tools but achieving the same goal

There are many theories for learning, most teachers find that they incorporate each one of these theories in their practice (at least to varying degrees). In the readings it gives implications for online learning, however when I read the implications I found that they just did not apply to online but equally to the classroom, They were best practice period.

Constructivist



Cognitivist



connectivitst

Behaviorist

Issues (maybe talk about some of these)…can we make some more slides like those that follow showing similarities and differences? Do we need to?
In an asynchronous model, motivation, staying on pace can be a problem

When having a F2F conversation with a person, there are a lot cues that we pick up from expressions that we just don't get in an online setting

Synchronous and hybrid models may result in the best overall success, however this is not a one shoe fits all scenario and there is a place for asynchronous learning.

There will always be issues with every model, including the classroom model. However learning

ry model

What is needed for a lesson to be successful?

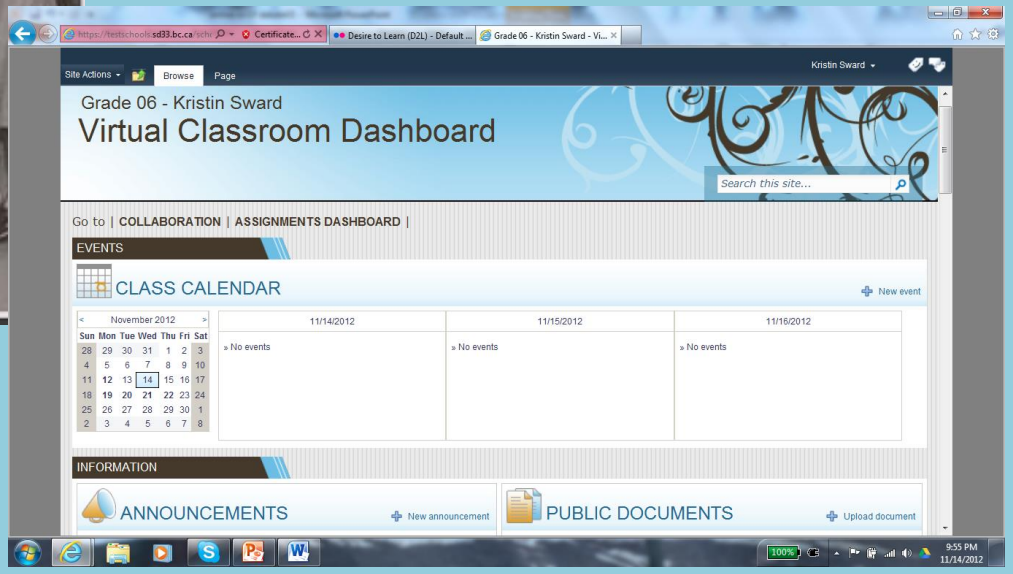
- Organization (scaffolding)
- Motivatation – make it meaningful
- Variety
- Connections with past experiences
- Feedback

Along as these objectives are meet, doesn't matter if you are online on F2F the student will learn.
(Anderson p23-28)

(move to the end??) I'm thinking yes…perhaps after slide 44?

So whereas Online Learning presents some challenges not seen in a face to face classroom it also alleviates some challenges teachers typically deal with. Online Learning uses some pretty amazing tools to reach the same objectives teachers in the classroom face.

1) Classroom Management



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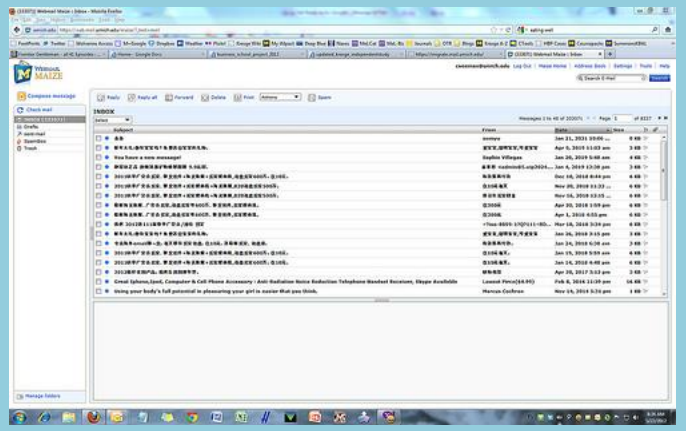
2) Communication



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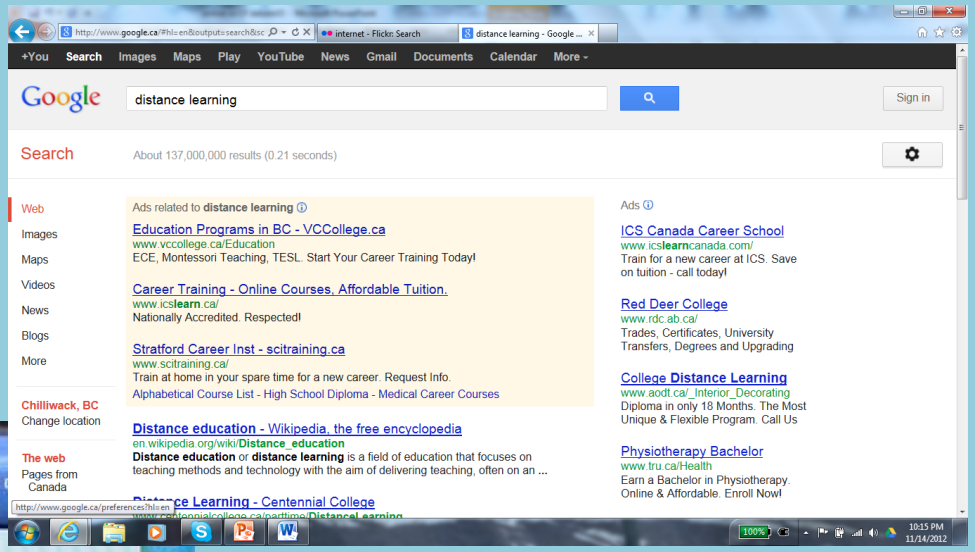
3) Resources



(137 000 000 hits for Distance Learning!!)

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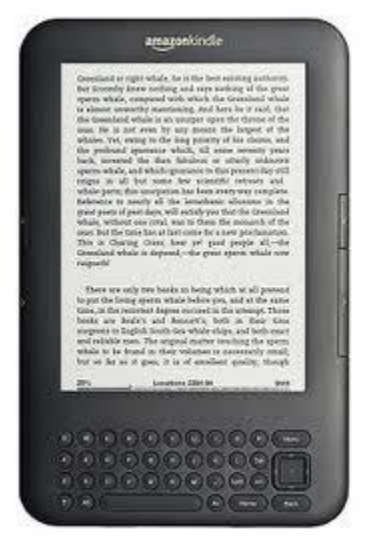
4) Meeting the needs of individual learners



5) Relevance

Is this really how you want to learn?

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Perhaps traditionally Distance Learning was in it's own world and required it's own theories, but with the advent of computer technology that increases interaction between the learner and the instructor, as well as other learners, and allows for synchronous, enriched learning activities and connections.....things have changed. No longer is Distance Learning in a world of it's own with it's own set of challenges and unique benefits. In short, it's just a different tool achieving the same goal.

"Technological advances have already begun to blur the distinction between traditional and distance education settings."

("Gunawardena and McIsaac, p363)

The reality of Distance Education today…..

…..anytime, anywhere, anyhow…..

Any questions? Comments? Concerns?

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