Virtual Exhibition

Method	Virtual Exhibition
Introduction	
The idea behind this method is to set your students either in groups or individually the task of creating a virtual exhibition with its own website on a particular subject. Essentially the idea is to have students take on the role of curator, selecting images and videos available online with which they can launch their own virtual exhibition. This method is best suited to group work where each group agrees the different roles to be taken up from within the group, e.g. the roles of text editor, image manager, story-writer, overall producer, etc	
Aim	To help students develop their own skills in curation, so that they understand how best to select and utilise images and video material to illustrate a particular subject. It also aims to enhance their knowledge of a specific subject, to improve their collaborative and digital skills and to help them build up their presentation and representative skills.
Target group	While it is often associated with studies in art history and other similar topics, this type of technique can be applied more broadly to other topics.
Intended learning outcomes	
- Enhanced visual and digital literacy skills - Increased knowledge of subject areas - Creation of a series of potentially valuable resources for possible re-use	
Description	
Start by preparing all necessary information about the task, time-scale, expectations and project roles. You need to decide the timing for when the website has to be available and guidelines and conditions about how and when the site will be evaluated. When doing this for the first time, we suggest you try this out with a small group to test whether everything is clear and fit-for purpose. Make sure that the necessary technical support to host the websites that are to be produced is available Then launch the task with students agreeing group composition, resources available and timescale. Use the first class to conduct a brain storm amongst the students in their groups to enable them to figure out the topic of their exhibitions Monitor, guide and support in subsequent classes. The advantage of having these exhibitions online is that you can view progress independently and take remedial action where necessary. Organise a final concluding opportunity with enough time to fully review and assess each virtual exhibition. Decide with the students during this closing session the status and maintenance of these exhibitions.	

Preparation by teaching staff	The main consideration to take into account in preparation is to ensure enough information and resources are available to get students started technically.
Required resources and equipment	WordPress is currently the most widely used technology for setting up free websites. It is relatively easy to use, does not require programming knowledge and comes with a large number of free templates which makes both designing and building freely accessible to anyone. You will need to consider how and where such websites are hosted and so for this it is recommended that you talk to your university IT service provider before you get started. After that, you will find plenty of materials to help you get started just by searching under WordPress online.
Success factors	The level of digital literacy within the group is an important factor in determining the success of this method.
Advantages	This method is really useful in supporting students creativity and skills in collaboration as well as distilling a sense of ownership.
Disadvantages	Not all students will work well in this type of a creative group so care needs to be taken in establishing well balanced groups with the necessary digital and visual literacy skills. Some preparatory training may be necessary to ensure the success of this method in this regard.
Additional information	This resource made available by the University of Maryland in the US includes a full lesson plan which although originally intended for secondary level, can be applied to higher education as well.

This video will help you to get started with WordPress

A very good source of inspiration for applying this method is to take a look at the virtual exhibitions set up by Europeana, Europe's digital library which is available here and indeed much of the potential source material for such exhibitions can be found via European's digital collections. |