



ONLINE LEARNING:  
**Top 10 tips for educators**

# Online learning: Top 10 tips for educators

Remote, online learning is very different than the in-person, in-class education experience most B.C. teachers are used to. Please know, however, that many B.C. educators have successfully transitioned from the classroom to the virtual learning environment, and you don't have to figure it out all on your own.

Drawing on our 20 years of experience providing successful distance learning to B.C. children that meets the BC Ministry of Education's objectives and goals, we share our expertise with you here. The 10 tips listed below capture the successful strategies, approaches and best practices that our B.C. certified educators rely on to ensure learners are learning, meet Ministry of Education requirements, and are engaged in their own learning.



- 1 Recognize that relationship supports learning
- 2 Recognize that real-life learning happens all the time
- 3 Use everyday life to increase literacy
- 4 Encourage outdoor activities in safe ways
- 5 Leverage children's interests and passions for learning
- 6 Don't tell children what to do - observe for learning instead
- 7 Keep the social elements of school intact during this time of social isolation
- 8 Suggest resources to further learning and for exploring new interests
- 9 Involve students in assessing where they're at in their own learning
- 10 Be gentle with yourself

# 1

## Recognize that relationship supports learning

The relationships between learner and parent and between educator, learner and parent are key to learning. When children feel safe to explore an interest, they will. Your role as an educator is to help them feel safe and supported in their exploration, so that you can guide and assist them. Look for parents to be actively involved, too, especially when learners move to online education or to observe learning taking place.

# 2

## Recognize that real-life learning happens all the time

Learning doesn't happen only between 9 am and 3 pm. Many opportunities exist throughout the day and evening for real-life learning. Model your own real-life, everyday learning for your students, and use technology to share the learning.

# 3

## Use everyday life to increase literacy

Have students write letters or emails to relatives about what they watched online or experienced that day, or write about it in a journal. Another idea is to have students read their favourite books and compare it to a movie or something they did during the day.

# 4

## Encourage outdoor activities in safe ways

Suggest that students map out a new route to a favourite park with social distancing, take photos of nature in their yard, or describe how the plants in their backyard or in the neighbourhood park change and grow from day to day.

# 5

## Leverage children's interests and passions for learning

So many day-to-day things occupy children just because they like them. Allow children to help shape how their learning will occur by allowing them to incorporate their own interests and passions into their learning.

# 6

## Don't tell children what to do – observe for learning instead

In observing for learning, parents watch and record in photos, in video or in writing what learners do, how they do it, and how they react and process the experience. When parents share the observations to the teacher, the teacher matches the observations to the curriculum. In this way, the child is learning and is being monitored – but not in a teacher-led way.

# 7

## Keep the social elements of school intact during this time of social isolation

Kids need to connect and socialize with their peers. Encourage online socialization during learning – this could involve students playing musical instruments together virtually (online) with other kids, creating a virtual science fair, or doing any group project online. As long as the activity is monitored and supervised, virtual meeting spaces can be used to connect children.

# 8

## Suggest resources to further learning and for exploring new interests

The Internet is full of resources – use your knowledge as an educator to vet and suggest resources, making sure they are safe, free of offensive material, credible, and so on. YouTube, for example, is a great asset for exploring interests, but its use for learning needs to be supervised, especially for young kids. If learners have the subtitles feature turned on and the sound turned off, they can also practise their reading skills.

# 9

## Involve students in assessing where they're at in their own learning

Rather than relying solely on objective assessment models, have students participate in their assessments of learning throughout the year. They can regularly update their progress on goals, understanding the relationship between where they are and where they want to be.

# 10

## Be gentle with yourself

It has taken SelfDesign Learning Community 37 years to hone its strategies and best practices for delivering distributed learning. It's okay if this approach to teaching is a learning experience for you – don't worry if it takes time.





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