FEATURED PROJECT : VIDEO INTERACTIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Video Interactions for Teaching and Learning (VITAL) is a Web-based learning environment that enables students to view, analyze, and communicate ideas with video. Originally created to help students practice their observation and interpretation skills in developmental psychology courses at Teachers College, VITAL is currently deployed in a wide range of courses and disciplines across Columbia University, from the School of Social Work, where it is used for clinical training, to the School of the Arts, where it is used by courses in dance and film.
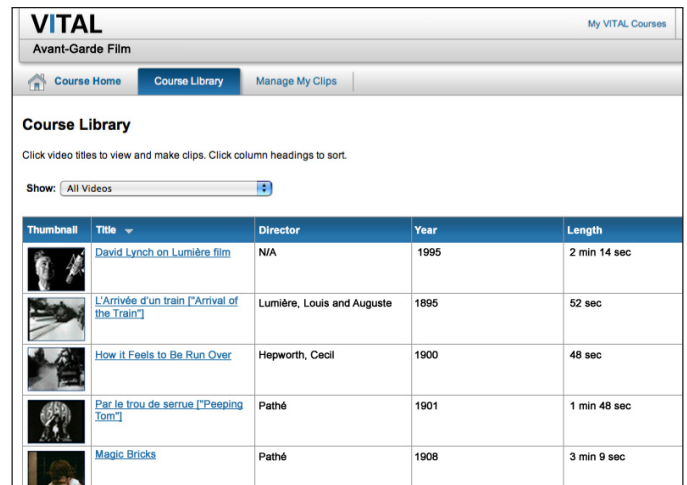
VITAL began as a partnership between CCNMTL and Herbert P. Ginsburg, Professor of Psychology and Education for his "Development of Mathematical Thinking" course at Teachers College, Columbia University in Spring 2003. Students who use VITAL learn to master close viewing skills and articulate their ideas with both text and video, utilizing multimedia for active expression rather than passive reception. "VITAL helps students move from unsupported ideology to ideas based on evidence, and develop habits of mind including looking, asking, interpreting, and critical thinking," notes Ginsburg.

Professors find that VITAL exercises encourage students to spend time with course material before class meetings. "It provides more classroom time for discussion and lecture and provides a window into their critical thinking about practice, and enhances my ability to evaluate their learning," says Professor Susan Witte, Associate Director of the School of Social Work's Social Intervention Group.
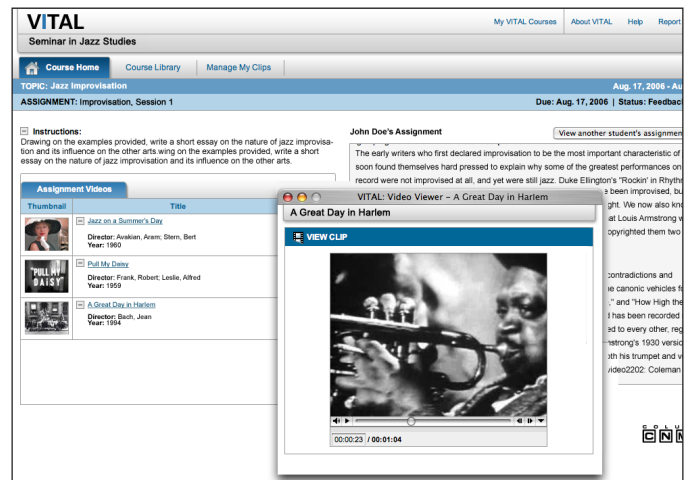
VITAL features tools that enable students to edit, annotate, and store clips that they select from a course's video library. Students then use these clips as multimedia citations in essays that are published within the VITAL environment for review and critique by the professor and classmates. Students must establish a meaningful context for the cited videos, much as they do when citing books or journal articles.

"Clipping videos forces students to really link the readings with what they are seeing in the videos, to better link theory and practice," says Professor Susan Oppenheim, Associate Director of Field Education at the School of Social Work, "which is something that can only be done with the technology. It really makes for a deeper, more connected and more sophisticated clinical training experience."

VITAL also offers a guided lesson template that allows professors to create linear, question-by-question exercises. These lessons mimic real-time events in which students must make an interpretation or decision based on limited information. After answering a question, students might read an expert's commentary, encouraging them to reflect and refine their thinking.

Students clip and add comments to videos in the digital library.

Clips are incorporated into multimedia essays within the workspace.

CCNMTL is committed to working with faculty partners to make VITAL an effective pedagogical tool that enhances both teaching and learning for each course. For more information or to view a demonstration, please contact us at ccnmtl@columbia.edu.

VITAL is currently used in courses across disciplines:

Teachers College	School of Social Work
School of the Arts	College of Dental Medicine
Oral History Research Office	Foreign Languages

For more information please visit http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu
or call us at 212-854-9058