

Past Pedagogies, Present Perspectives, and Future Directions: Reading Classics Online Workshop.

Roundtable 3: Perspectives from other disciplinary and institutional contexts.

Introduction

Jamie Wood:

Okay everyone, I think we will begin again. So, in the in the next session, we're gonna spend some time thinking about moving beyond Lincoln - as painful as that may be - to think about other institutional contexts and disciplinary contexts. So, moving beyond Lincoln and beyond classics. I think there will be some interesting connections to what we've what we've looked at so far. So, we've got four speakers, we'll work through them and then we'll open up the questions and discussion afterwards. Our first speaker is an Anna-Rich Abad, who is from the University of Nottingham History department, who I have worked with for a number of years and I'm delighted you could come over and share your expertise with us.

Anna-Rich Abad, Is the honeymoon over? Talis Elevate, my students and me

I'm not so sure about expertise, but I'm delighted to be here as well! Yeah. So my question that I think that for the things that I have said earlier in the conversations is that, I am under the impression that at the beginning we took into the digital technologies very enthusiastically. They saved our lives during the covid crisis. Is the honeymoon over? That's my question. So how have I worked with Talis Elevate? I have basically a one-year module with a large cohort of students. I am the convener, but I only teach several of the seminar sessions, it varies between one and four years, but the group is about 20 students. So, in the first year they have to be assessed with two history essays; one of them is source based and the other one is synoptic kind of essay. So that's the current work.

And now a word on how I integrated Talia Elevate into my seminar sessions. One of the seminars is dedicated to primary sources examination. The other is to the historiography in the module, and they are linked to the lectures in the module, and so each one of my groups I give them one Talis page that is another page, and they have all the documents there week by week, I send them some questions through Moodle. And I also have a padlet to compliment, so they work integrally with this. And then synchronously in class I used the material. So, what they do is synchronously helps me to inform my class preparation and focus on the questions that I see where there are gaps. And I also use it in year two and this is a more specific module where I do the lectures for all of them and all the seminars also entails a primary sources essay based and historiography-based essay.

Initially I used Talis only asynchronously and because I used it attached to the seminar here and the seminar was only one hour. Then the lecture was 2 hours, so I gave a traditional kind of lecture; 2 hours long with some short text analysis. Then in the seminar we continued in more depth about the historiography and the field of debate. But I realised that I didn't have time to go into depth in any of them.

So, as you'll find in the in the next iteration, I will show you later I changed it and I gave more time to asynchronous work.

Initially in 2020, the work that I did with talis had very good response from the students. So basically it was more emotional kind of response that this is making me feel more confident. It allows me to engage when I can't engage because I'm in lockdown. It's something that is helping me to grow in confidence and a lot of students said that it allowed them to discuss things. Which is something that in in the things that that we have been commenting earlier is it's difficult to use, don't like discussing. They like answering questions or asking a question but discussion is another thing. But discussion seems to be one of the things that they say it was good at the time. So it was fantastic. The feedback, the tool is useful for all aspects of learning and should be implemented for all sources, so they not only wanted it for their primary sources analysis, but also for secondary sources analysis which I haven't done so far because I had little scruples with copyrights etcetera.

OK, so that's 2020. What's happening now? So in year one I have integrated it as a class work and it's synchronous. Because the students don't do it and asynchronously, they don't engage with it. I post often the Talis Elevate material. Weeks in advance I have tried that. They don't do it because I forget if I do it then week before they don't do it because they don't have time. And you too, I literally, as I said, used it as a one hour seminar in the one hour seminar, alongside with other things. And it went really very quick. So, the work with the primary sources was not sufficient to prepare the students well for the essay on primary sources. So they were quite weak, so I thought, well, they're enforced that by doing more time during the lecture on primary source analysis with Tallis asynchronously asynchronously. But the problem is that they don't prepare asynchronously and you're the class. Their engagement is very limited and they refuse to participate. So that is what I get with Talis elevate, sheets with no comments all the time.

Jamie Wood: Just to check does everyone know what Talis Elevate is?

Anna-Rich Abad: It's very simple. You'll get it once. Talis Elevate is an interface where you can post a fragment of a primary source or a text, and students can collaborate in annotating it together so they see each other's comment. You can intervene or not depending if you want to be more prescriptive, more directional or not. And yeah, as I said, it is very visual, it helps us students especially, I did it and I didn't explain that either because mediaeval sources are very. Symbolically loaded. They are very religious in tone and I wanted the students to go beyond the saying. Ohh it religious in tone, so therefore it's very religious in content. It's written by a monk, obviously its religious and then going on superficial analysis on religiosity, which is not when you're talking about Cathars for example, and heretics in the Middle Ages and things like that. So one thing then to move on a little bit on the literal interpretation of what they are reading. And it did work in the first couple of years in that sense, and students were having this kind of chance. But like I say in, in, in now I find that engagement is much less.

And now I I have the feeling that it's become more insular, asking students about why is it not working well. One of the things that why is not working during the team, the time that I applied to the tool and during coverage that was. Just before covid that was attached to marking and assessment. So it was part of the participation mark, as you have here in Lincoln. During covid we ditched all participation marks in Nottingham on grounds of EDI and on grounds of problems with student accessibility to Internet resources etcetera, etcetera. The other thing that I was saying is that Students have lost their sociability skills, I think, and it happened during Covid and they are not that keen on sharing. As you were saying earlier, so what they appreciated (and I haven't done a formal survey on this, but these are from conversations with students) they don't like sharing. So I started seeing that there were more private

comments. You can see that students annotate privately, but they don't want to share those comments with their pairs or with their teacher.

And that wasn't the only problem and obviously all the EDI problems are mental health crisis where we can't go into asking students to participate directly so thank you for participating in one way. And acquire the level of academic competence that I wanted by having a little bit more deep reading. So the problem is perpetuated in my year to module alongside with the lack of engagement and also conversation with the student is I don't engage because I don't know how, but I don't dare to ask. So there's this. I don't want to show myself as incompetent in front of anybody else.

Reaching out is very important. But very, very compelling. Obviously the lack of class engagement online is reflected in back of class engagement residentially. Okay so you don't see the students that are not take that as students have come to class, the students that participate online and students that you see face to face as well. All their problems, digital poverty, screen fatigue. I suffer from madcap how? How can what students do suffer from that? And on the other problem is they don't know how sometimes I explain how talis works. I explain how outlet works, but if it's attached to Moodle, I still have to tell them where they find in Moodle the link to the public and the the tally. Some students don't know it and I have it's the same student. Sometimes I have to repeat it so it's lack of retention and not not for interest is that I think it's overwhelmed there. The amount of information that they receive on online follow this link. You can go to the library website, use their resources. But what resources? What do I find them? They are lost in a labyrinth of online resources. And the easier that we think that we make it.

For them, or I feel they the the simpler questions they ask me back. So what do I do now? I've been lovely, trapping my own kind of device and forgive me for the candidates for being so candid, done about this. But one of the things that I think it has to be embedded in the assessment, but not only for some actively it has to be more questions that we ask has to be more linked to the exercises that we make them do on talis or on pallet.

So that that's my first thought for my design of my module. So no more why are use this? What do I want them to do and what I want them from response. So change the assessment obviously incentive and support staff to use digital technology. We're just talking about that. Michaela where we like. I know a little bit about digital technologies, but most of the stuff in my department and I have quite a large department are not even interested in using digital then there are technologies and the ones who use it use it in very limited.

Right. So how do we support people to support our students to use that? So the university has is working on the digital students capacities. And I don't know how they are implemented because this stuff is not helping. So that's one thing and one thing that I think is very, very important is to talk about restoring community or creating community. Students don't feel proper community, they don't feel. And this is one of the things that made me use.

Talis to start with because I wanted the students to have this sense that they were in the same place, even if it was online so they don't feel that in the classroom or they don't feel that in the digital space. So how to create a cosy, safe brain space where they can feel that it's not only about and perhaps this is a profile of different universities, but it's very kind of strategic. I want my 2:1, in my first class and I am going to do it despite my environment. So the community doesn't grow in the classroom, grows in the History Society. Why can't we create as they sense of community? So these are some of my ideas. I'm hoping that you'll help me to find solutions. So thank you for listening.

Jon Chandler, University College London

Jamie Wood: Okay thanks everyone. So our next speaker, we're just going to kind of work through the different talks and then we'll move on to discussion is John Chandler, who I am delighted to introduce. I've also been working with him for a few years. He's from the UCL History department.

John Chandler: So I've been working with Jamie and Anna on the digital reading project and I kind of thought I'd reflect a little bit on. I won't say anything about it because Jamie covered it. I kind of reflect on how I took some of the findings from that path project and tried to sort embed it into my teaching. It does, I think, build on what students were saying a little while ago about the kind of things they wished they'd had in the first year, because that's a lot of stuff that they had actually done.

I suppose for context, I'd say UCL. Big University, now the biggest campus university in England. We just overtook Manchester, say the area is the only one which has more students than us, which has dramatically changed it to our environment. And our Undergrad population in history we usually have around 200 to 300 students and quite a diverse population. Both kind of lots of international students from Europe, from America, from Asia, increasingly large population. Around 60% of our UK students go to private schools and you know 40% state schools of where they were doing grammar, good conversation, comprehensive or I'd say probably about 20% kind of local students from sort inner city, London. And often went to a really bad, poorly funded school.

So we have Etonians. We have people from, you know, international schools and Singapore. We have people from kinda failing sort of comprehensive in Swiss cottage and it's quite challenging to teach this kind of group of 300 students kind of obvious range and it's quite challenging to teach the kind of skills that we've been discussing. And I'm going to discuss a little bit more about how do we actually engage these students with their reading. But the one thing they all have in common and the one thing that every one of them asks me every open day is how much reading do I have to do? How much reading am I going to have to do in my history degree and?

Normally that's done with a sense of maybe some trepidation. I think it's also trying to figure out how many clubs they can join and how much time they'll have outside of work. And I always struggle to answer that question because to an extent, it's how much reading do you want to do at university? I mean, I think our official answer is that for every module they do, they're supposed to spend. If you're a full time student, full time undergrad, I think it's 8 hours per module. So if you have, because that's your, we do, they do four modules.

What is that was looking terrified that their full time students. There's going to be spending 35 hours in their degree. They 4 modules, that's what say 8 hours per module, 2 hours in the classroom, six hours outside of it. On the module that includes all the reading, they're gonna be doing as well as the essay writing, I didn't need our survey to tell me that the official answer was bonkers. So she is kind of obsessed with how much reading they can be doing. I think the first years who come to us, I think, (and there is no underlying research to this and this is kind of like my gut feeling). I think some of our surveys did start to reveal this. I think there's three issues that they have with their reading: volume, the amount that we're setting them.

And for all of the modules, I think is too much with vast that required reading, we're giving them or whether that's the sort and the further reading list. And they struggle to navigate the volume. They struggle with language and I don't mean just the international students have sometimes issues with

reading in their second language. But I think all of our students, whether they're first, second, third language is English, struggle with the complexity of the kind of reading we're setting them. And I think that's largely because.

They've come from an environment in school where they've only ever read stuff that is written for them. They've only ever written stuff which is been designed and authored to student audience, and they read textbooks. They've read kind of novels written for kind of young adults as they started moving to adult fiction. That's something else. I'll touch on that in a second, but the kind of the academic writing maybe been reading is entirely written for undergrad students, and then at university, certainly in history, we very quickly depart from that.

We maybe will set them a kind of textbook kind of overview of what history is and in year one, but other than that they are reading journal articles which are written by academics to other academics, they're really monographs or academic books which are written by academics for other academics. And we're kind of assigning them these kind of things without actually having a conversation about what the step up that is from the kind of work they do at school.

And then the third thing I think they're dealing with is the kind of critical analysis component and this is where I think the fictional example we touched upon earlier is actually quite helpful because you guys were saying I can't with this. What's your name? Sorry. And sorry, were you the one who saying about? You know, if you're reading a book like a good fiction book, you can just pick it up and read it. And then like a journal article or chapter you don't wanna read is really hard. And I don't that's not. That's all of us. That's not just you like, that is everyone.

Like, yeah, I do. I do it in 18th century Britain and I could go and read a burner Cornwall novel, like a sharp novel. And I can sit on the beach and I'll read that like, you know, without a problem. If you make me read the latest monograph in my field latest editor collection, I'm not gonna wanna do that on the beach and I'm not gonna just kind of read through it straight away in one fell swoop. And I kind of have to force myself to do it. And some of these.

Academic books are really bad, like historians, so there are some historians hope to think I'm a good writer, but that you don't actually have to be a good writer to be an academic. You can be a terrible writer and you can be a brilliant academic and some of the major names in my field, awful writers, and you don't read it wasn't the most pivotal book in British history and published in the 90s, called English Society. Written by a guy called Jonathan Clarke. It's the worst book I've ever read. His writing is terrible, but it is the most important ones I've set. You know, you kind of apologised to students as you set a chapter from this book.

And all of these things, which we don't tell our undergrads by the way, I'm telling you back off the record, but don't tell undergrads afterwards. But so we kind of have this expectation, I think I certainly did and I think students do when you go to uni that you will history students, they will say I love reading. I love reading kind of cool with this kind of stuff. So I'm going to love reading it at uni, but actually they don't realise how difficult transition is going to be. They don't realise the kind of challenge that involves, and actually that this is maybe I'll be controversial.

The challenge is part of what they're here to learn, like if it was as easy as Bernard Cornwell, they could sit through and read. Then what are we teaching them? Like the essentially dealing with this incomprehensible text and trying to pick out what the authors argument is and what the significance of this and how do I build from this argument, is partly what history degree is about. So we've got to try and

find a way of engaging with that issue without just removing it completely. And This is why again, I I don't really agree with the idea of getting she's the workshop worksheets and kind of reading questions because I think the challenge is part of the problem and all of this could apply, certainly apply to when I went to uni when again age of photocopies and but I think this shift to online reading has.

Kind of exacerbated that. Certainly the volume issue has massively exacerbated that kind of you know, when we're at uni, it was kind of the question of how many photocopies could they afford to give us. And you know my reading lists would you know, the amount of reading due for an essay would be maybe five or six books, because that's all the library had on the topic. So I could just read all the books in the library on the topic I was reading about, which obviously is no longer the case. The students can read as much as they want on any given topic.

And as academics we've kind of added to this problem through you know, not not a bad way in a good way, especially in the pandemic we all like. We need to make a put so many resources in our reading list cause we want them to have so much accessible content we can put in all these books and all the online articles we can link to and we can put in these podcasts and maybe a video. And here's a good lecture I saw. And so we have these reading lists and if you're like me and anyone else, I work with our kind of Talis reading lists and now expanding ever onwards.

There's functions you can say ohh this is essential. This is optional. This is maybe required and most of my colleagues don't do that. I do that but even then its students like what's the difference between essential and optional and recommended? I don't know what these things mean how and then you know that kind of comes out of this question of how much am I actually supposed to read in this course. I think the language issue again I think that's been enhanced by a kind of problems with the online reading in the sense that actually this is more problem with academia generally and the fact that I think copy editing has got so bad that a lot of articles just don't receive any kind of editing and now resting increasingly kind of poorly and I think this issue to do with analysis is also kind of got.

Exacerbated by sort of the digital world to the extent that again keyword searching, we kind of talked about it, so easy to just find what you want and you're not kind of encouraged to spend time looking through and working through a text as those of us who had to deal with photocopies and physical books had to spend time actually looking and reading the book and discovering things. And that is kind of perhaps a kind of a problem. So I think all these kind of these three issues are existing problems that have been exacerbated by moving to digital reading and I think.

They come, you know, they they present. And I often think of myself as kind of an academic GP they present with students coming to say, how long am I supposed to spend on my reading? What am I supposed to take from this reading? You've set me this thing, but I don't know what I'm supposed to do with it. What's the purpose of reading at uni? And again it's really similar somethings you were saying about not knowing what to take out of a reading. And I guess those are the kind of questions which again I don't think it's new, but we're kind of trying to grapple with.

So what I've tried to do to address these in my teaching, and in particular I teach. And I'm a first year tutor lead, so I teach you these kind of gerund courses, writing history, making history in approaching history which I'm doing because none of my colleagues really want to do that job because everyone just wants to teach their subject area. But I think they are really, you know, crucial for students. And actually what came out of these, both my underlying thought about this, but then also quite significantly from our research where we found kind of.

Students telling us things like that we don't spend enough time on reading. They don't know they're looking for. They feel like that, overwhelmed by the amount that they have to do is was trying to actually build in some more kind of support when it comes to reading. And so and this to many of you sound like a small thing, but it was it could be quite a lot of work to manage, to negotiate, to get a whole week dedicated to reading in history like, that was a challenge in itself. So I have a whole week of this, these core, this core unit dedicated to this topic. And the idea is both is to kind of discuss these challenges and actually have this kind of conversation and to say to students this is normal cause I feel students spend most of their time panicking inside and in silence, that they're not doing enough work and they don't know how to engage with it. And reading. And if they're struggling with that, then they don't. They don't know who to ask. They don't want to tell their lecturer because we'll think they're stupid. And so having these kind of conversations and saying at the beginning, this is not, this is a challenge, that what you're doing is hard.

And then trying to provide some kind of some strategies with how to reading and talking about the different ways that they can approach texts. And I'm sure you've all kind of know what we're talking about. We think about whether it's how we just skim read or text, when you should get a text, when you should read in depth. But these are all things that I certainly was never actually taught. I don't have any of you ever actually taught. So kind of want to go and sit down with students and actually explain here these strategies and this is when you use it and to an extent that's experience but you have to kind of give students some of the tools to do that. And I also think and this is our thing which I've started doing this years also.

Again, and it's feels so much more. Graham was saying, like we still think of. I still think of reading and research in the printed form. Well, because that's what I was educated with, even if that was not that long ago. And that was still how I was educated. And that's still how I like to read if I have the choice. But we have to kind of do both. Like you have to give students (I wish I had one in as a prop) this is where a physical book looks like. Please go to the library and use them. They're great because you can flick through and there's an index which kind of points you to different pages. And you can look at the chapter and be like oh actually the next chapter looks quite good. I'm gonna read both and that has its advantages. But you've also got to teach them how to deal with e-books and not expect, and it's again builds very much in Luigi's talk, like, not expect them to know how to deal with an e-book cause at again they probably haven't done it at school. They probably still were given kind of a textbook from 20 years ago, and she's been passed down and had lots of ***** drawn on it, but they're gonna be given, you know, taking an e-book which they're gonna. You're gonna have to give to explain how they engage with that. You look whether that's how to use keyword searching, but how to use it in a responsible way. And then I think most crucially is how to actually make notes and so I think really the main issue is essentially trying to have a conversation with students to explain how do they actually engage with a text and what type of notes they're trying to make. From that I explain that it depends on the ultimate purpose of those notes. If it's making nitrous seminar discussion that would be slightly different. If it's making notes for a long essay that you want to write, and if it's making notes for a kind of the revision purposes of preparing for an exam, all these kind of things, so kind of having these kind of discussions with students about what their. That purpose is as well as what the purpose of the author of the text is. I think having built these kind of discussions in so this is the years, the first year I've kind of done this session, so it's early days when reflecting on how it went.

I would say the 60% of students who went to private school told me we did this in my school. This is a complete waste of time. Yeah. What's the score on the first survey for me? Zero, hated this class. Waste of time. And I'd say this. So the students who aren't in this category, the ones who either just did A-levels or even somewhere international students really appreciated it and were like this is I feel like you've given

me some of the tools to prepare. I know what I'm doing. They all appreciated, I think, having a conversation, at least about reading and it is something I found. Even the students who hated it and fell asleep in my lecture or didn't even kind of attend. And I feel like it has given like a year later, six months later, when the students actually realised, ohh I am struggling with reading now. I've gone through the first six months and at least now kind of I can kind of say I told you so. So let's go back to kind of the skills module that we did six months ago and revisit these kind of note taking techniques since these reading techniques, which I am kind of saying now as we reached kind of the end of first year students, you haven't done as well as they hoped. And kind of come back and say, OK, maybe the reason that I didn't get too very well in this essay is I just copied and pasted a load of stuff from this JSTOR article into a Word document and I didn't actually read or engage with them. And so it is definitely something that I'm going to be continuing with and it is going to be something that I'm gonna continue to thinking about how I how I do so as to encourage all of you who work with first years in particular an undergrad is generally to actually kind of think about how you use.

How you actually incorporate some kind of discussion about the text that you're using in a very kind of physical way into your classes? Leave it there. I've no idea how I'm going for time because I just kind of felt inspired by the moment, but hopefully that was good.

Jamie Wood: Thank you, Jon. That was that was great. You know, reinforcing some of that stuff around the need to be, you know, have upfront conversations with students, really about what it is we're doing and why we're doing it.

Martina Astrid Rodda, Content warnings in the online classroom

Jamie Wood: So, Martina Astrid Rodda is now going to speak from Oxford.

Martina Astrid Rodda: Hello everyone sorry I can not be there in person this was this is ironically due to the fact that I have too much offline teaching. Yes, let's see if this works. If you can all hear me, then we're good to go. I can also see my face, giant in front of myself and not mirrored. So, this is all very fun, but yeah, ironically, I can't be there because I have too much offline teaching, which is part of what I will be talking about today. But the topic that I am here to talk about is broadly speaking.

Content warnings in engaging with ancient texts online and to be extra on topic, I will start with a content warning. I am going to briefly discuss some ancient text that contain themes of sexual assault, the sexual abuse of children, and enslaved people and also suicide. I will be not be showing or reading any of this material, but I will describe potentially triggering content and sort of you know.

Where am I coming from? I am coming to the sock not just as a person who teaches and uses content warnings, but also as a person who needs and generally appreciates content warnings because there are topics that do in fact, this disrupt my learning and teaching to the point that I am unable to engage with this in a productive way. So I'm starting from the point of view that content warnings, broadly speaking, are a positive and a helpful tool for accessibility and equality in the classroom.

But also the flipside, the ways in which we use them can open, obviously issues. So obviously content warnings can look the same, but can operate differently in different environments. That's obviously a clear difference between me giving a content warning at the beginning of this paper versus at the beginning of a class or lecture when my students. We are broadening the same position of power. My students are not

in the same position of power as me. There is also a difference between giving a content warning in the context.

Broadly, the next hour or in my case, the next 5 minutes will engage with some difficult topics versus we are studying some texts with an eye to language and then suddenly a difficult topic crops up in a context that overall is not meant to be upsetting or problematic. There is a difference in how prepared the students are going to be to take on this upsetting content, and is also difference in the level of care that as teachers, we can convey in terms of not just briefly mentioning. Ohh yeah, I know that the sentence contains something upsetting moving on. And my general sense is that we're significantly better equipped to handle content warnings with general scope rather than specific scope. In the example I keep coming back with, back to, is my teaching of what are the language set texts for the first and second year of the classics course here at Oxford, and you don't really need to know anything about the classics course here at Oxford- ever- in your life.

But it was just specifically to understand my paper, but just to give you a sort of a sample of the texts that we use we use two of (unknown) speeches, let's just one which contains an extensive section discussing whether adultery or rape is worse. To be fair, he does say that rape is a pretty bad thing, but this is all framed through sort of the lens of the legitimacy of marriage and property values. (unknown) 3 is entirely about our relationship, quote unquote, in which two adult men of citizens status sexually pursue and enslaved boy. The boy's reaction is sort of mentioned very casually in passing by the speaker, but it makes it very clear that this relationship is not consensual. And then you know, this is not to mention things like Caesars, the Bello Gallico, which obviously resonate very uncomfortably with justifications of colonialism. And also not to mention the myriad of examples that we use that can sort of offhandedly mentioned things like murder and suicide and so on, and we all know that ancient text contained values that are different from ours. We all know that they often describe things like sexual violence or misuse of power. The problem is that when you're teaching them exclusively as a language set text, we often pretend that the content doesn't matter and it does not affect our learning environment. So if I am teaching the Bello Gallico 1. I end up in the weird and difficult difficult position of having to say look, this sentence has a really interesting analogical construction of verbs of doubting and not engage with the fact that the thing that is being doubted is whether a person died by suicide or not, which is a topic that I find triggering, never mind my students. And given a content warning for this doesn't really get as fast as issue, not least because the reason why we use content warnings in the 1st place is actually to promote engagement. We want to ensure that students are in the right frame of mind to engage meaningfully with the challenging content, with the challenging topic, we don't want them to be put off to have to leave the space we're in.

So how do we teach these language stacks at Oxford? What we do is prepared reading classes, some lectures, some individual prep, and some college support. And I'm not gonna talk about the college support side because that's highly individual. And I also do want to say that I am going to talk about normative practises. So these are things that I have found to be. Either the only option or the expectation, especially when teaching as a PhD student, PhD students often give quite a lot of the language instruction in Oxford teaching as a person who is precariously employed, often on a 0 hour contract and essentially does not have the option of redesigning the way I do my teaching, at least not without potentially incurring some conflict with sort of people in a higher position of power. There are better practises around, but they're not often structurally endorsed. So if we are running a reading class or teaching a language lecture.

What can students do when they are confronted with triggering content? A suggestion that I have often seen is that students might want to take a short break, leave the room. Not listen for a little bit. Obviously,

all of this relies on some significant assumptions about the students mind and body, that they can in fact stand up and leave the room that they're willing to do so and not themselves, as someone who is struggling with this content. But also we get back to, we get back to the general problem that by using content warnings to allow students to disengage, we're not actually using them in the way they're meant to be used. We are in practise excluding the vulnerable student from part of their learning rather than making sure that they can engage with it comfortably and save it. So back to my Caesar example, a student who finds the discussions of suicide triggering still needs to learn about verbal constructions, because that sentence might in fact come up in an exam and they may be asked to comment on that specific construction.

So how can online teaching of these texts help us address some of these things? My general, my one general thought in this paper is that content warnings work significantly better in asynchronous exchanges. You can content, warn text and audio in detail and also across medially. Both sort of visually and in audio and subtitles and so on, but also, crucially, students who engage in asynchronous learning can take a range of measures that can be skipping a few minutes of a lecture, but also engaging with it in a different way. Reading the subtitles, if they do not want to hear certain thoughts being articulated. Making sure that there are in a safe and supportive environment and so on.

Online environments in themselves help, but if we're just using the online environment to to transport, what will be an in-person synchronous language, plus to an online synchronous language class. We're not really doing what we're meant to be doing. Sure, it's easier to mute and turn the camera off and disengage from a zoom class. Then it is to walk out of a room, but still we're sort of not affording students opportunity to engage and I wanted to put these thoughts forward. I know a lot of this sounds like I'm just talking about challenges and I'm just talking about negative things as opposed to better and best practices. The reason why I'm doing this is because it feels weird to be thinking about the online teaching of text in general, at a moment where many universities are actually rolling back even the most basic provisions for asynchronous learning.

Even just lecture copter or something that is often being sort of rolled back. So the thing that I wanted to highlight is how content warnings are just a an example of of of how when we rethink the structural aspects of what we do. In teaching then, we can also identify the barriers that were built into our starting point and hopefully manage to construct a learning space that does not contain those barriers. Thank you very much.

Jamie Wood: Thank you so much. I realise you probably couldn't hear the clapping, but there was clapping. It was great. Thank you so much. We'll move on to Cressida's paper now and then there will be some questions for you after that. Thank you so much.

Dr Cressida Ryan, Multi-modal workbooks for improving set text work

Jamie Wood: So our final speaker of this session is Doctor Cressida Ryan, who works at the University of Oxford. As you can see here, and is going to talk to us about multi modal workbooks and yes very much looking forward to this.

Cressida Ryan: Yes. And actually Martina and I are gonna be collaborating over some stuff, I think. So more on that to follow because I think it's a really important topic to be taking further. That's what I'm talking about today is just a small part of something that I was already doing before COVID came in. But COVID gave us the opportunity to say stuff the rule book, because it's not going to work anymore.

Let's just do what we think is good pedagogy and deal with the mess afterwards. At least that's the way you can get away with things at Oxford, where people shout at you later so I can get shouted at now and that's fine. You can edit that out of the recording.

So I'm in the Theology faculty, and that means I'm teaching the Bible, which carries very, very different kind of set text type problems because everyone thinks they know what it says. Start. So why am I teaching and read it? I noticed that trying to teach it, particularly I have 60 hours on my first years and 48 with my non first year beginners, which is nothing to teach them to read the Bible in. And the kind of problems I was getting and the kinds of ones I put on the screen. They think they know what it says. So what's the point? There are four and a half thousand different words. You can't learn 5 1/2 thousand different words. Probably ever, let alone in 60 hours.

It's not a set canon. It's an accidental cannon, etcetera. There's not a linguistic standard. It's written by non-native authors. There's not even decent Greek half the time and there is a huge number of problems with teaching the New Testaments as your core set text, which made me think about what can I do to use the integrated version, that of teaching that COVID brought us to improve the way I talked to students, to read their texts. So the introduction of the new plug-ins and the hybrid and online that came from pandemic. I started to develop a process of teaching set texts using multi modal workbooks which blend text recordings, videos, spreadsheets and digital activities.

How exactly we use these depends on the group, but having the suite of resources is allowed me to blend approaches to teaching which supports an overall attitude of student-centred learning. Reading rather than translating and maintaining as many principles of universal design for learning as possible in order to enable each student to learn to read a set text in an efficient and positive way, which makes it exciting and rewarding and not an effortful challenge with an examination in mind. So I've tried to link this to alternative forms of assessment in order to ensure an alignment between teaching methods, course ends assessment and that would be something to think about for.

So in this presentation I consider a few of the ways in which the works are put together, particularly digital activities, and improved my teaching set text with specific reference to the New Testament. But away I do think is generalizable to other texts. They take a basic standard format. First of all, I give vocabulary and I so just give me a vocabulary list. I asked them to ask some questions about the vocabulary. I then give them a tiered version of the text. Where I've rewritten the Bible into easy Greek and then apologise for any heresies the adaptive text and then a range of tasks and questions, and I'm going to briefly consider each of these elements, so vocabulary and standard vocalist house limited uses there are 5000 unique words and testament which is well beyond what I can expect them to learn, but there are only about 400 letters in the New Testament. So if I can teach them anything about how language works and about what a base level. So you need about 900 words to cover most of the New Testament. So if I can get that base level and about 900 in and skills on how to turn this 400 limiter into useful terms, then we are doing much better. So it's not about teaching them word based about teaching how to do things with the words they have learned.

But then what do we actually do with a vocabulary list? And one of the textbooks I use doesn't have any vocabulary. It was very irritating for me. So we I wrote to vocabs spreadsheet for it I thought well let's make use of this. Some morphological information and I'm still trying to decide what the best thing to put in there is there the limiter that it comes from and then the three major dictionary traditions that feed into New Testament reading and the idea is this enables students to filter by what they want to find out about a text. Are they interested in learning nouns today because they feel like doing some work on that, are they kind of student who wants to look at how different dictionaries have changed their understanding of

words? Because I'm writing a book on how pedagogical practises changed the way we thought translated into Latin and how he had to construct a new Latin vocabulary to not sound Catholic. This is got me thinking about how does the translation of the word demonstrate your ideology? So by putting in multiple dictionaries here they've got a chance to compare those.

So I'm trying to think about how you use a dynamic vocalist that is also partly co-created because it's way too much work for me to do. To improve students engagement with vocab and therefore give them more meaningful access to text. I'm also working on the basis that the unadapted Greek text is well beyond their basic linguistic level, but that they need to read as much Greek it as close to their level as possible. So I've been rewriting the New Testament into easier versions. I streamline complex clauses. Here's a basic example. It's not my best, but it's one. And yes, I think there's some typos. Sorry, this is still a work in progress. I streamline compact sources, exchange unfamiliar vocab, define pronouns, change awkward tenses or other structures, and more familiar forms, shorter sentences, etcetera. This leads to interpretatively slightly different readings, and I've sorted giving us from my students for this, but it does ground them in the text and give them a common starting point before we start working together, because everyone can understand the easy version, however hard they're finding the adaptive.

So given the rest of these straight forwards nature of the New Testament, on the whole, I've usually managed to do this to one level, but sometimes I've managed to do 2 effectively summarising the text into bullet points in Greek, read the bullet points in Greek, then read the next step up and read this, trying to use the principles of comprehensible input to upskill students to read the New Testament unadapted. And what this means is that preparation for class no longer means how long can you? How far can you get in translating Luke by yourself? The answer is it may me cry I didn't.

But how far have you managed to get in working out what this text might be trying to communicate? Now let's look at how that's working in Luke and deal with the stuff that's difficult together. And then the rest of the stuff that workbook involves is quite a long list of the of items. The font size had to go down to get them on the screen. I've tried to do as many different things as possible, that's included texture criticism for those who are really interested in the nitty gritty that's included diagrams you can look at, rhetorical structure we can think through text as a piece of rhetoric that's including images so we can think about reading in terms of images.

Rather than just words on a page allows us to use both pre reading strategies and consolidation strategies. That gives students lots of different ways thinking about this and a range of digital activities. So the kind of digital activities are done start up the videos I have read out all the text. And then I've done videos that comment on things like grandma and difficult clauses, comment on lexical stuff I think is interesting, including some corpus statistics comment on style, anything relevant, potential criticism, and any I've gone through ranges of commentaries so that we also learn work on how you use a commentary because I've made these videos into examples of how you use a commentary in order to inform a reading of text to then say students. Here's a bunch of commentaries now doing themselves.

We have sessions in class where we get a bunch of commentaries out and we try to work out how long it got to where I got. And these are all on YouTube. Anyone actually was looking at these two examples. I've managed to get the Greek ones - my face on them because the research suggests that have a real person there increased engagement not because I'm vain, but also by working with an assistant. We managed to get it timed so that words highlight as I speak to them. So that students are able to follow the text as I read it, and therefore even if they don't know much Greek, they can ground themselves and where they're at. Then this is what the what to just collect ones end up looking like, where you get different colour highlighters and different colour commentaries trying to show you the different kind of

things. And I'm thinking about and I am queen of over reading and if I can be queen of over reading and I can teach them to overhead in my style they can say you're over reading that and then you can hold me to it out and decide how far they wish to overread.

So that's been really helpful and you can tell I held open book exams and there was a spike in views. The videos in the middle of the exam session, which showed me really nicely how they were using these as well. At various points I've looked at the analytics also done, um, a range of digital activities that tried to get them thinking about how to use the text in different ways and think about text in different ways. Some of grammar. Some of these will gears towards the students who really don't cope with that at all. And the students you've never opened a Bible before and haven't read the New Testament. And some of these are geared towards my training priests who really do know the core theology, but a much more struggling with the Greek. So I'm trying to look at what's the sweetest stuff that we can do it means everyone gets something that enhances the Greek they do and also gives them all a starting point of we're doing something different. We don't all feel comfortable and in the same way. So I flatten out some of that difference of experience in the class that can make some people feel more nervous and I have examples of what I included, and I've just got a few to run through. I paraphrased sections of Luke and then said Okay read the Greek, and put these paraphrases into the right order.

So it's a basic kind. I have a six year old and a lot of this comes from watching her learn to read. How has she learns to read and what can I do need to transfer what is good about that process into teaching adults to learn to read the foreign language to how we blend first language reading acquisition and 2nd over reading acquisition. I've also learned that in Greek actually can they look? Can they see the discourse markers that would allow these sentences to hand together? They don't necessarily have to reread the whole thing, but we look at things like discourse analysis and how did texts do things, and can you use the discourse markers here. Like the kind used to go well, unless this is Mark. Yeah, it's not Mark. Then the kid's gonna mean it's not being in the sentence. So what? What's that drawing on from? Can I teach you to orientate themselves in a text? I've done some recordings which is just listen to this, listen to this again and again and again, and each time summarise how much you got out of it and tell me how many times you have to listen to it to worked out what you think it's trying to communicate. And this is using the letters of John which are much easier Greek, so different kinds of activities that can do with this.

And then I've done dictation texts because actually the process of reading includes subvocalization students are reading their hearing, a lot of them are struggling with long and short vowels in Greek, which can make quite a big difference to interpreting and reading texts. So by getting them to Tate and then transcribe things, I can see from the kinds of mistakes they're making, their dictation transcriptions, where in the reading process they're understanding is broken down, whether they're subvocalize or not, and how I can then help them learn their vocab better. Once done, they read better so dictate short dictation tops and admitted very long have been really useful and unpicking where students are struggling and what I can do to help.

And then for the geeks or what previous for people for being hard grammar as it was really important and the fact they do need to understand me verbs. Can you find me or me verbs in this passage, which is obviously not my favourite kind of task, but for some students is really helpful because it makes them feel secure that they're being examined on the set text. They really do understand what this annoying bit of free grammar is doing in this set text. So for some of them it helps them feel more secure.

So, in summary, and to conclude finishing, I've been scaffolding preparation much more so that students feel a lot less like they've gone unknown burden before class. As they work through the vocab, read the tiered version answers and comprehension questions. Class then becomes time to work on the text

together using an online whiteboard. In my case OneNote and annotate the text with comments as needed so they can sort of make more effectively. And instead of photographing whiteboard which is what used to happen.

We begin by working together and doing this collaboratively. But as confidence increases, we're able to chant the text by episode in more group work and in some cases this results in students working on translations of text putting on a collaborative documents analysed, which we then talk through in class, editing as appropriate.

In other cases it was working groups to produce translations and send me the record of our discussion about the how they achieved it. So I get to see their thinking process and then I marked their work partly on the depth and nature of that discussion and not on the process of what they produced.

And this whole approach has taken me into further conversations about how I assess what happens in my class classroom, and it's the digital tools I think have allowed it to be that flexible, and it's allowed students to feel they have more of an understanding about how much text works or text is trying to communicate how to work together as a group and where to take this onwards. I think for me, one of the greatest successes was there's an institute in Jerusalem who are crowdsourcing comments to me on the Bible, and they've allowed me to have access to that for my students.

And allow our students to use the kind of collaborative work we've done to input into their crowdsourced to collaborative commentary on the on the widow that is then going to be there and we are now trying to work out how to embed that within the assessment framework that Oxford so that they're genuine product and we have genuinely contributed to international projects that hasn't meaning, that allows greater understanding. The text becomes part of the course and demonstrates that they have learned to read and understand and not just reproduce a translation.

Thank you.