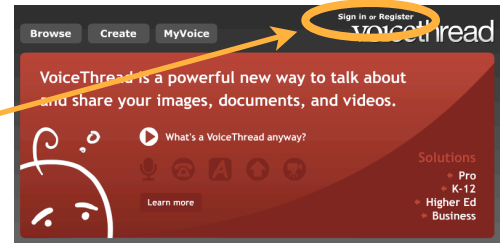


# An Educator's Guide to VoiceThread

A friendly introduction to using VoiceThread written by an educator with educators in mind. This guide will introduce you to the basic VoiceThread interface and take you through the simple steps involved with creating a VoiceThread.

## Getting Started

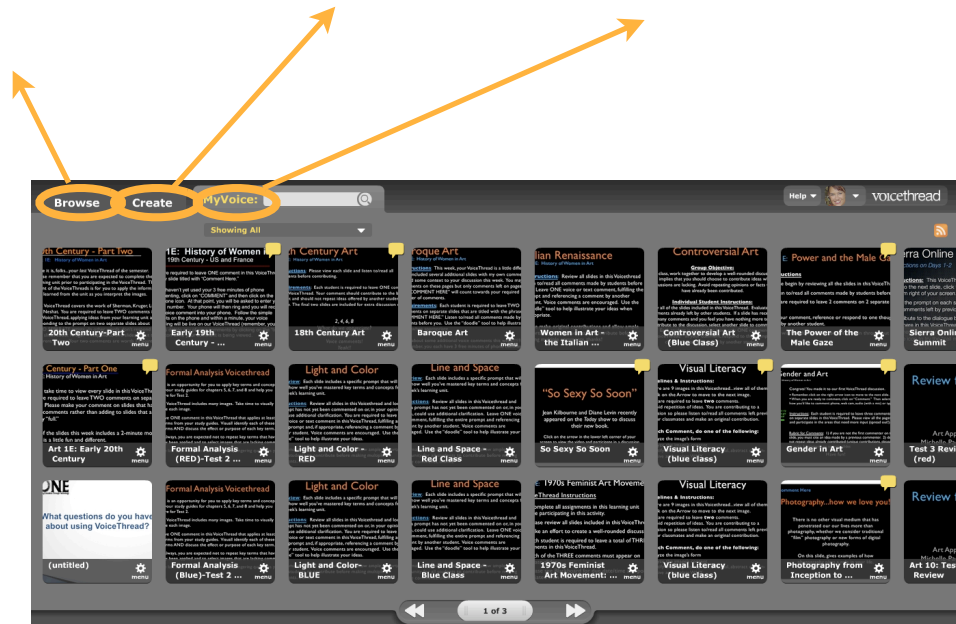
- ◆ Go to <http://www.voicethread.com>
- ◆ Click on "Sign In or Register"
- ◆ Sign in to an existing account or click Register if you're a new user.
- ◆ Once you are signed in to your account, you'll see the basic account navigation page. Notice the three important tabs at the top: **Browse**, **Create**, and **My Voice**.



**Browse:** Click on this tab to review all the VoiceThreads ever created that authors have chosen to place in "Browse." When you create your own VT, you will have the choice to place yours here or exclude it for more privacy.

**Create:** Click on this tab to create a new VoiceThread. After you've created a VoiceThread, it will appear in your MyVoice tab.

**MyVoice:** Click on this tab to view thumbnails of all the VoiceThreads you've created, you've been invited to and you've subscribed to. The small yellow quote bubble icon signals that the VoiceThread has unread comments.



# How to Create a VoiceThread

## - 3 Simple Steps

- ◆ Click on the Create Tab

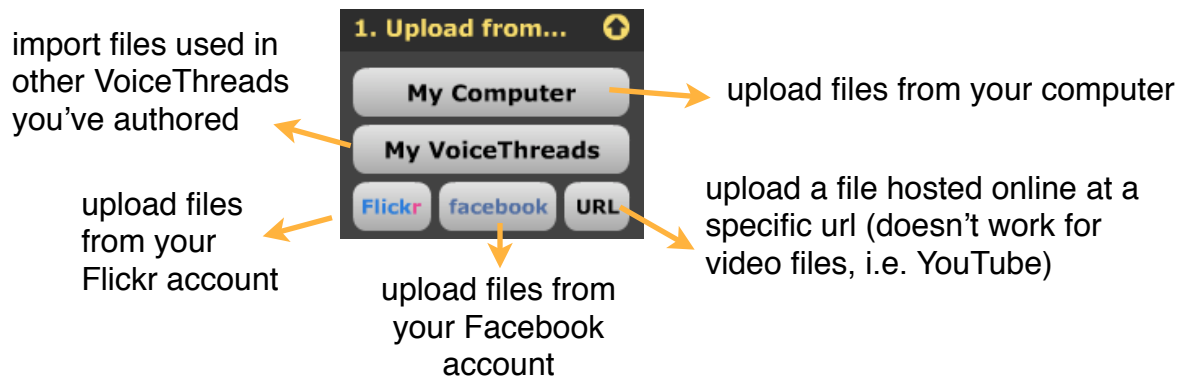


### 1 select your media - Powerpoint, images, documents, movie files, PDFs or Excel spreadsheets.

- ◆ Click here.




- ◆ Now select where you'll import your media from.



### 2 comment - Add your own comments to your slides in text, voice, or video format. You may delete your comments at any time.

- ◆ Click here.



Use the left and right arrow buttons to pan through your slides. When you are ready to comment on a slide, click on  to reveal your commenting options.



## The Comment Panel



Record a voice comment with your telephone (free accounts are limited to 3 free phone minutes - 1 hour can be purchased for \$10)

Record a video comment with your web cam

Record a voice comment with a microphone

Type a comment

Upload a pre-recorded .mp3 audio comment (PRO Accounts Only)

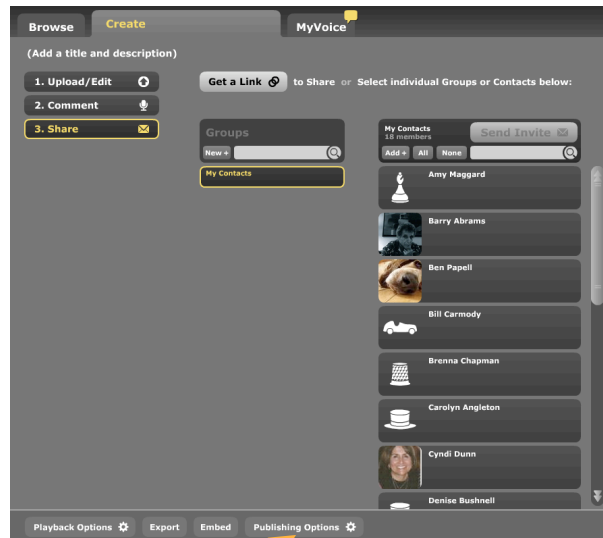
Click here to go to the next slide



3

**share** - Customize the viewing options, manage the distribution and get the link to your VoiceThread! This is the final step.

Click here. → **3. Share** 



1. **Click on Publishing Options.** This is a very important step to ensure your VoiceThread is viewable to users other than just you and to be sure you've made the appropriate choices with respect to student privacy.

### Publishing Options for this VoiceThread

#### Allow anyone to View?

Only you can view this VT

Only those you designate can view this VT.

#### Allow anyone to Comment?

No comments accepted.

Comments are accepted.

#### Moderate Comments?

Comments appear immediately

After each comment is made, you must approve it before it is visible to others.

#### Show on Browse page?

This VT will not appear in the "Browse" section on VoiceThread's homepage.

This VT is viewable in the "Browse" section on VoiceThread's homepage - public to the world!



## Suggested Publishing Options

**Publishing Options for this VoiceThread**

Allow anyone to View?

Allow anyone to Comment?

Moderate Comments?

Show on Browse page?

Everyone can view and comment on this VoiceThread. It will never show up on the Browse page or in search results. You are the only person who can edit this VoiceThread.

**save** **cancel**

The Publishing Options selected in this illustration are an excellent option for educators. This combination results in a VoiceThread that accepts comments but does not appear in the public Browse area of VoiceThread and is not found through web searches (i.e. Google).

Of course, you need to find a combination that works for your own needs but this is a great starting point.

**Tip!** Consider turning Comment Moderation on to use VoiceThread as an assessment tool for objective tests.

- ◆ **2. Get the Link to your VoiceThread.** Once you have copied the link to your clipboard, you can email it to students or link it on a website or into a course management system (Blackboard, Moodle, etc.). When they click on the link, they will be taken directly to the first page of your VoiceThread.

◆ Click on **Get a Link** 

◆ Click on **Copy the Link** 

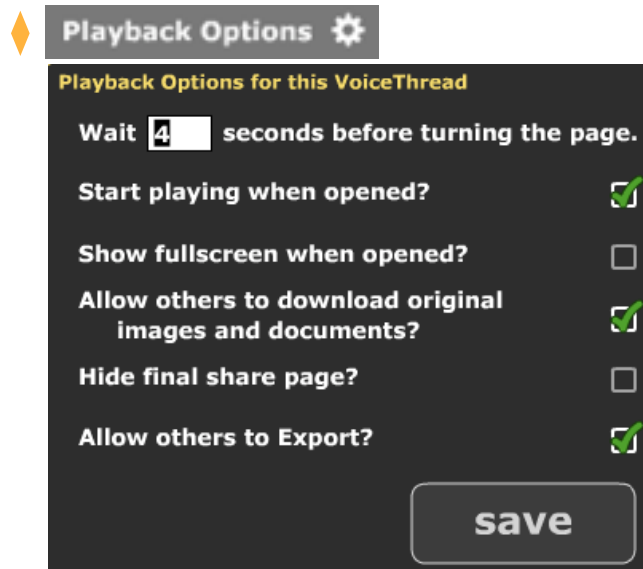
- ◆ The link to your VoiceThread is now copied to your computer's clipboard. You may now "paste" the link into an email, a website or your course management system. To paste, go to Edit (top toolbar) and select Paste or Control+V (on a pc) or Command+V (on a mac).



**More Share Options!** Check out a few of the other features available in the Share panel.



We've just explored the Publishing Options button but take some time to check out the Playback Options, Export and Embed features too.



In general, the default Playback Options (shown here) work well. However, if you are integrated copyrighted material into your VoiceThread, it's a good idea to deselect "Allow others to download original images and documents" and "Allow others to Export." This way you are preventing the copyrighted material from being "copied" by others.

### Export

So, you've created an amazing VoiceThread and you want to share it somewhere offline or you want to archive it. No problem! You have the option to Export your VoiceThread into a quicktime .mov file. There is a small fee for exports and if you have a PRO account, many are included at no additional cost. The movies include all comments and doodles!

## Embed

**Option 1** - If you are a user of one of these web services, click on an icon, log into your own account and embed this VT on your webpage.

**Option 2** - Click on the “Copy” button to copy this basic html embed code to your computer’s clipboard. Then paste the code into the html portion of your webpage or course management system (i.e. Blackboard, Moodle, etc.).


**Option 3** - Here is another place you can copy a link to your VoiceThread. Just click on the “Copy This” button to copy the url (web address) for your individual VoiceThread. This will automatically copy the url to your computer’s clipboard. Then you can paste it into an email or create a link to your VoiceThread in your Course Management System (i.e. Blackboard) or on a website.

The screenshot shows a window titled "Embed this VoiceThread" with a close button in the top right corner. It features a grid of social media sharing icons. Below the icons is a text area labeled "Embed code" containing HTML code for embedding a VoiceThread. A "Copy" button is located to the right of the code. At the bottom of the window, there is a text input field with the URL "http://voicethread.com/share/250639/" and a "Copy this" button. A large "done" button is centered at the bottom of the window. Orange arrows from the text on the left point to the social media icons, the "Copy" button, the URL field, and the "done" button.

Click here when you’re finished! If you haven’t given your VoiceThread a title yet, you’ll be prompted to after clicking “done.”



## How do I find the VoiceThread I just created?

To access your existing VoiceThreads, click on the **MyVoice** tab. Locate the thumbnail version of your VoiceThread. Notice the helpful  icon in the lower left corner. Click on it and explore these very helpful options!



The Menu icon reveals the following tools:

**Delete** this thread.

**Make a Copy** of this thread (very helpful!). Click for more options.

**Edit** returns you to Step 1 in the Create process (shuffle slides, add/delete slides, title slides, etc.)

**Share** returns you to Step 3 in the Create process.





## ***Commenting Tips for Voicethreaders***

The best Voicethreads are truly interactive—with users listening and responding to one another. They are super interesting digital conversations! Highly accomplished Voicethreaders are constantly thinking while interacting with a Voicethread presentation. They come to the conversation with an open mind, willing to reconsider their own positions—and willing to challenge the notions of others.

Voicethreading requires users to develop the skills that active thinkers bring to any learning experience. Some of the best tips about active thinking have been developed over time by teachers like Kelly Gallagher and Matt Copeland—who have each written books about reading and writing in middle and high schools. They've also been developed by an organization called Project CRISS—Creating Independence through Student Owned Strategies.

The following tips for Voicethreaders are adapted from the collective work of Gallagher, Copeland and Project CRISS:

To be an active Voicethreader, start by carefully working your way through a presentation. While viewing pictures and listening to the comments that have been added by other users, you should:

1. ***Gather Facts:*** Jot down things that are interesting and new to you
2. ***Make Connections:*** Relate and compare things you are viewing and hearing to things that you already know.
3. ***Ask Questions:*** What about the comments and presentation is confusing to you? What don't you understand? How will you find the answer? Remember that there will ALWAYS be questions in an active thinker's mind!
4. ***Give Opinions:*** Make judgments about what you are viewing and hearing. Do you agree? Do you disagree? Like? Dislike? Do you support or oppose anything that you have heard or seen? Why?

Use the following sentence starters to shape your thoughts and comments while viewing or participating in Voicethread presentations. Comments based on these kinds of statements make Voicethreads interactive and engaging.

- This reminds me of...
- This is similar to...
- I wonder...
- I realized...
- I noticed...

- You can relate this to...
- I'd like to know...
- I'm surprised that...
- If I were \_\_\_\_\_, I would \_\_\_\_\_
- If \_\_\_\_\_ then \_\_\_\_\_
- Although it seems...
- I'm not sure that...

While commenting, try to respond directly to other viewers. Begin by quoting some part of the comment that you are responding to help other listeners know what it is that has caught your attention. Then, explain your own thinking in a few short sentences. Elaboration is important when you're trying to make a point. Finally, finish your comment with a question that other listeners can reply to. Questions help to keep digital conversations going!

When responding to another viewer, don't be afraid to disagree with something that they have said. Challenging the thinking of another viewer will help them to reconsider their own thinking—and will force you to be able to explain yours! Just be sure to disagree agreeably—impolite people are rarely influential.

If your thinking gets challenged by another viewer in a Voicethread, don't be offended. Listen to your peers, consider their positions and decide whether or not you agree with them. You might discover that they've got good ideas you hadn't thought about. Either way, be sure to respond—let your challengers know how their ideas have influenced you.

Here's a sample comment from a Voicethread exploring landforms:

*I'm not sure that I agree with Darth Tater when he says that oceans are the best landform to live near. After all, oceans cannot be enjoyed year-round. In the winter, they're too cold to swim in.*

*To me, the best landform to live near would be one that could be used year-round. Can anyone think of landforms that are enjoyable in the spring, summer, winter and fall?*

Sources Cited:

Copeland, M (2005). *Socratic circles: Fostering critical and creative thinking in middle and high school*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Gallagher, K (2004). *Deeper reading: Comprehending Challenging Texts 4-12*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Shanta, C (Ed.). (2007). *Project CRISS training manual*. Kalispell, MT: Project CRISS.

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