# Visual Classrooms

Student — Last update: 2016/07/18

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# Visual Classrooms

Visual Classrooms is a cloud-based discussion and collaboration platform designed to improve student engagement and support interactive learning and adaptive instruction in blended and online environments. Our web-based digital whiteboard encourages students to quickly capture, share, analyze, and improve their ideas together. The visually driven environment engages students of all learning styles, developing critical problem-solving, critical thinking, and teamwork skills.

Our tools combine the social learning pedagogies needed to transform teaching and learning with technologies that support a student-centered focus and an emphasis on peer interactivity and collaboration. Visual Classrooms provides continuous feedback and embedded analytics that help educators personalize learning and ensure that no one falls through the cracks.

For quick instructions on how to get started after creating an account, check out this PDF titled Creating Your First Activity. For more detailed information on all the features Visual Classrooms has to offer, continue reading this manual.

Accessing Visual Classrooms >>

# Accessing Visual Classrooms

Visual Classrooms is designed for use in both blended and online learning. All you need is an internet enabled device – a laptop, phone, tablet, or iPad.

There are two ways to access Visual Classrooms: directly from the Visual Classrooms website or through your institution's learning management system. We have included instructions for both options in the next sections of this manual.
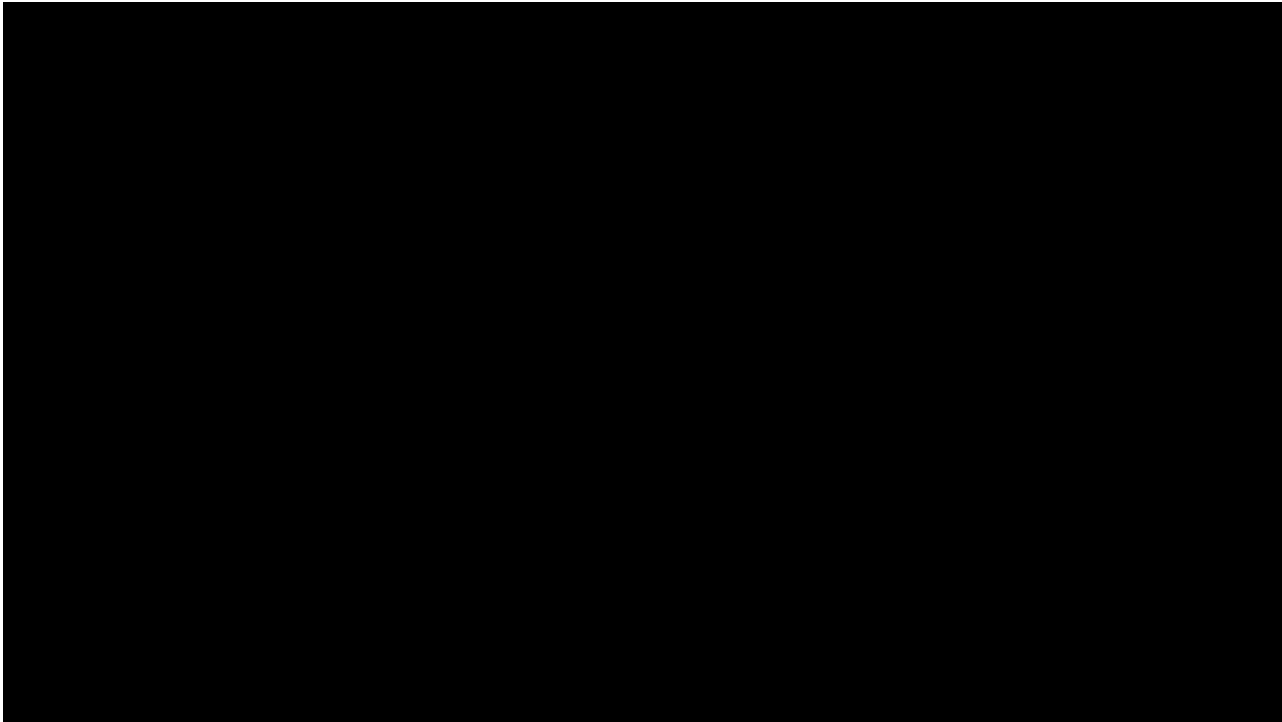
# Direct Access

Sign up for on our [website](#) for a **Student** Account.
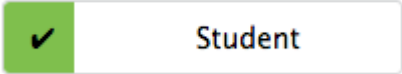


Student accounts require a subscription, as detailed on our pricing page. Many institutions will purchase student subscriptions in bulk and distribute an "Access Code" that allows students to join Visual Classrooms for free. Students can also purchase a one year subscription with a credit card.

Watch the following instructional video, or follow the guide below.

1. Select [✔ Student] and enter a valid email address.

2. Enter your first and last name, and select your school/organization from the dropdown menu.

3. Click the [Create Account] button.

4. You will receive an email with a temporary password.

5. Login with your email and temporary password.

At this point, you will have the option either to pay with a credit card, or enter an access code.

# Student License Fee

Students are required to purchase 1-year subscriptions to use Visual Classrooms Demo

## Pay With Credit Card

Student license cost for Umass is **$20**
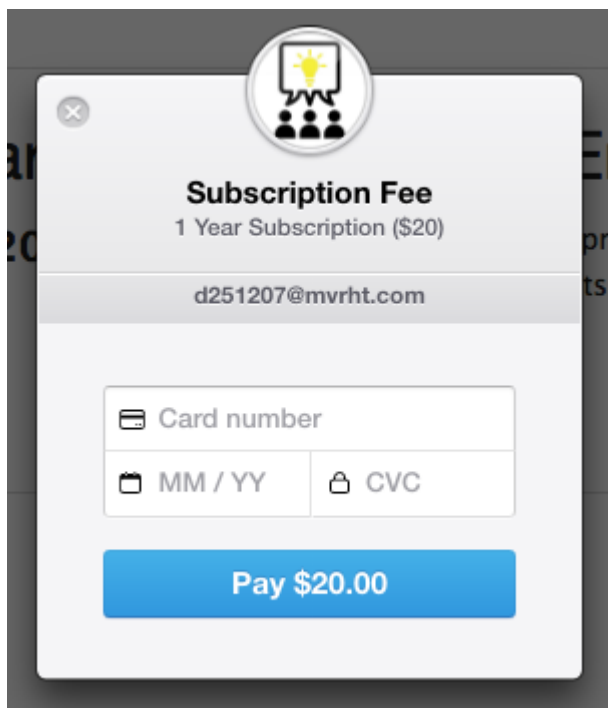
Pay $20 With Card

## Enter Access Code

Access codes provide free or reduced cost access and are given to students by their teacher or program administrator.

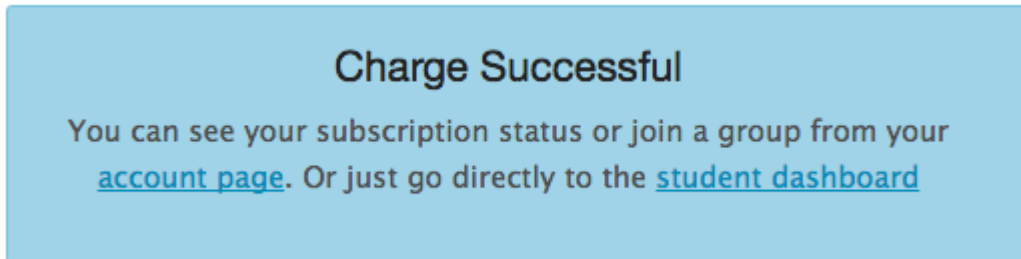Enter A Code

## Paying with a Credit Card

Pay $20 With Card

1. Select

2. Fill in your card details.

**Subscription Fee**
1 Year Subscription ($20)

d251207@mvrht.com

Card number

MM / YY        CVC

Pay $20.00

3. Click the **Pay $20.00** button.

4. You should see the following confirmation message.

**Charge Successful**

You can see your subscription status or join a group from your account page. Or just go directly to the student dashboard

## Entering Access Code

1. Select **Enter A Code**

2. Enter the code given to you by your teacher or institution.

**Enter Access Code**

Access codes provide free or reduced cost access and are given to students by their teacher or program administrator.

`12345`  **Validate Code**

3. Click the **Validate Code** button.

# Confirm Access Code Use

### Code
## 12345

### School
## Tufts Acadamy

### Contact Info

### Subscription Duration
## 36 Months
## 2016-07-15 until 2019-07-15

**Confirm Access Code Use**

By pressing confirm you acknowledge that you were given permission to redeem this code by your organization or teacher.
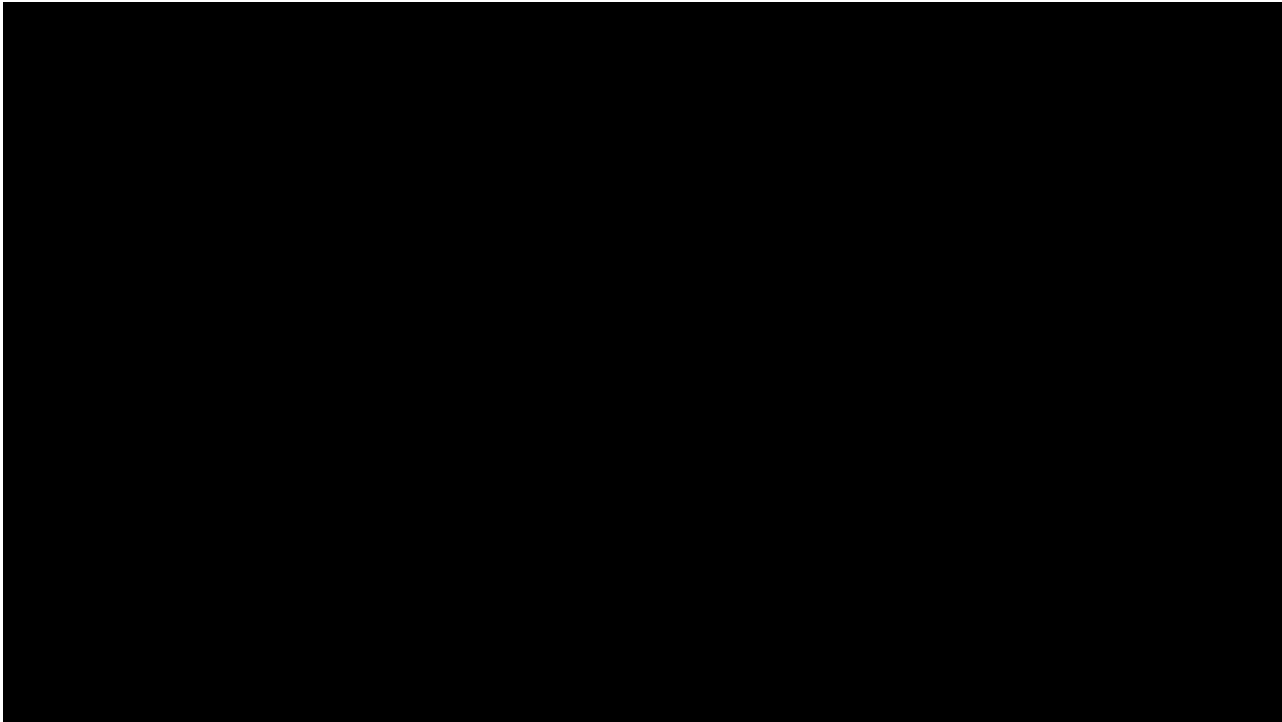
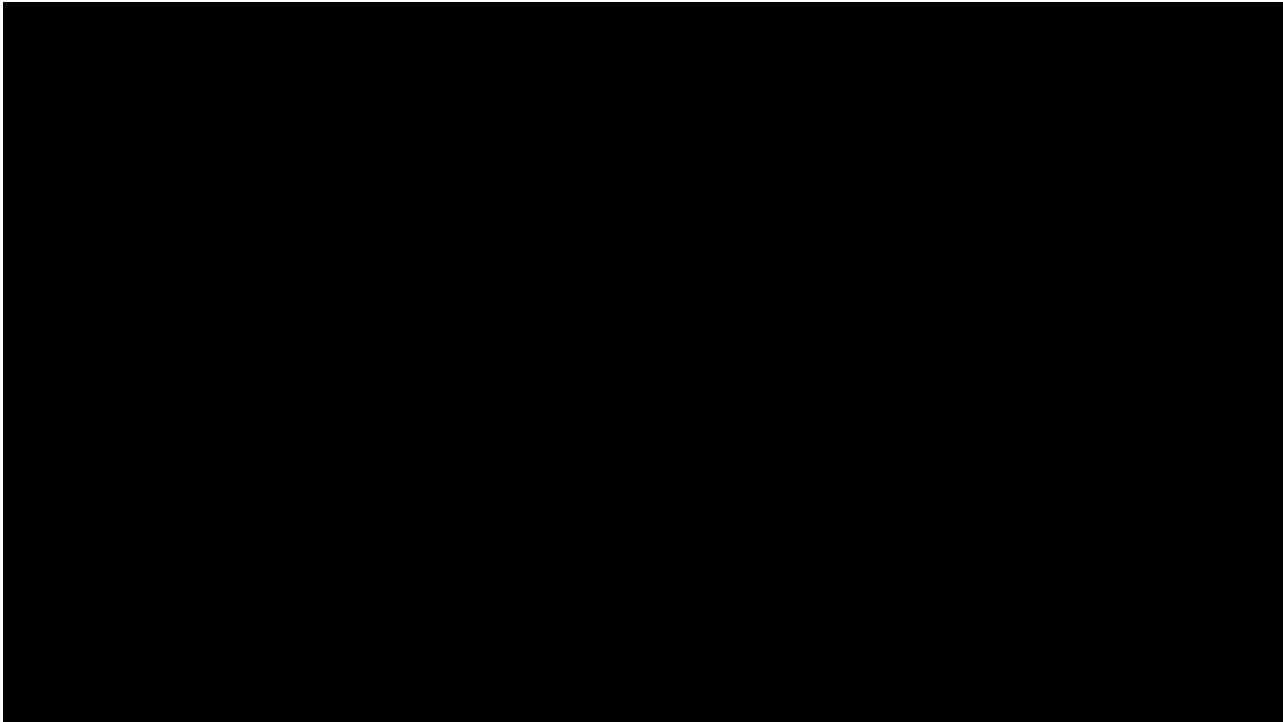**Confirm Access Code Use**

4. Select

# Access Through an LMS

**Getting Started With Visual Classrooms using Blackboard**

Watch the following video. Instructions for how to sign up as a student start at 1:26.



**Getting Started with Visual Classrooms using Canvas**

Instructions for using Visual Classrooms with Canvas can be found here. You can also watch the following short video.

# Using Visual Classrooms

Visual Classrooms offers a variety of collaborative learning activities.

The activity page provides an overview of the prompts for each Visual Classrooms session, as well as the notebook page, visual analytics pages, and a list view page. This page also contains a "sparkline" visualization that displays where the action is happening – the number of posts and responses to a prompt by both the teacher and the students.

Screen capture of activity page and various elements associated with that page.

# Participating in an Activity

Here's what a Visual Classrooms activity looks like:



Activities in Visual Classrooms are made up of a series of what we call "prompts". **Prompts** in an activity are instructions, questions or challenges posed by the teacher that can be responded to by individual students, groups of students, and the teacher.

You can select a prompt within a session by clicking on the blue underlined text in each box. In the example below, the blue underlined text would be **Introduction to Conservation of Energy**.

Selecting a prompt will take you to that particular prompt's page.



You can add a response to a prompt and collaborate with your peers by clicking the [New Idea] button. For a more in depth explanation of all the features you can use when writing your idea, see Creating a New Idea.

# Creating a New Idea

A "new idea" is like a post-it note where you can contribute your ideas. You can add a new idea in many different ways: typing text, uploading a file, taking a picture or making a video with a webcam, and creating a sketch with our sketch tool. Each of these are described in the sections that follow.

Everyone's ideas will be posted and visible on the Visual Classroom's collaboration space..

To add an idea in response to a prompt, click the  button.

The refresh button  at the top right of the page will retrieve the latest posts.

 Adding Text

 Importing a File

 Adding a Sketch

 Copy and Paste

 Using the Webcam

 [Adding Tags](#)

 [Additional Features](#)

[<< Participating in an Activity New Idea >>](#)                              [Adding Text to a](#)

# Adding Text to a New Idea

To add text to a new idea, simply click within the text box and begin typing.

# Uploading a File to a New Idea

Multiple files or images of any file type can be uploaded to your new idea.

1.  To upload a file, select the [icon] icon below the text box.

2.  Select the file that you would like to upload.

    You will then see the uploaded file at the bottom of the Add Idea box.

3.  Select the [Submit] button to post your file.

4.  Your file will then be visible on the Prompts Page.

# Using the Webcam

Here's how to use your computer's webcam to add a photo to a new idea.



1. To begin using the webcam, select the Webcam icon  under **Attach Media**.



2. Through your Adobe Flash Player, InterLACE will request access to your webcam. Selecting "Allow" will enable to use the webcam feature.



3. To capture your image, press the  button.



4. If you are satisfied with your captured image, select the  button.

5. After selecting to upload your image, you will see your image at the bottom of the Add Idea box.



6. Select the  button to post your new webcam image.

7. Your image will then be visible on the Prompts Page.

# Adding a Sketch to a New Idea

You can use the Sketch Tool tool create and add drawings or sketches.to your new idea.

1. To add a sketch, first select the sketch icon  below **Attach Media**.

   - If your teacher has not selected a background for the sketch, you will see a blank display.



   - If your teacher has selected a background image, you will see that image as the background of the display.



2. To add your sketch, click the  button.

3. Select the **Submit** button to post your sketch.

4. Your sketch will then be visible on the Prompts Page.

## Customizing Your Sketch

The sidebar on the bottom provides many options for creating and customize your sketch.



## Editing

Select the Undo icon **Undo** to delete your most recent addition to the display. Select the Redo icon

**Redo** to. Select the Clear icon **Clear** to erase the entire contents of the display.

<< Using the Webcam                                                Copy and Paste to a New Idea >>

# Copy and Paste to a New Idea

You can "copy and paste" an image or file into a New Idea. This feature will only work when using Google Chrome.

1. To copy and paste an image into your New Idea, first, select the [clipboard icon] under **Attach Media**. This will bring you to the Paste Display.

Copy an image to your clipboard and press Ctrl + v (or Command + v) anywhere on this page

Then use the mouse to select the area of the image to keep and press Crop

[Crop]    [Save]

2. Then, copy an image to your clipboard. To copy an image, right-click on the desired image and select "Copy Image".



3. Once there is an image copied to your clipboard, return to the Paste Display and paste the image. To paste an image, either press Ctrl + v (or Command + v) on your keyboard or select "Paste" under

"Edit" in the Chrome menu bar.

Copy an image to your clipboard and press Ctrl + v (or Command + v) anywhere on this page

Then use the mouse to select the area of the image to keep and press Crop

Crop        Save



4. To crop the pasted image, click anywhere on the image and select the area that you would like to crop.



5. When you are satisfied with your pasted image, select the [Save] button.

6. Select the **Submit** button to post your new pasted image.

7. Your image will then be visible on the Prompts Page.

<< Adding a Sketch to a New Idea

Adding a Video to a New Idea >>

# Adding a Video to a New Idea

Here's how to add a video to a new idea.

1. To begin making a video, select the Video icon  under **Attach Media**.

2. You will be able to see a **Live Feed** and **Preview**. When you are ready, click the

    button.

3. You can also  or 

4. If you are satisfied with your video, select the  button.

5. After selecting to upload your image, you will see your video at the bottom of the **Add Idea** box.

6. Select the  button to post your new video.

7. Your video will then be visible on the Prompts Page.

<< Copy and Paste to a New Idea                                          Collaborating >>

# Collaborating

1. [Responding To and Tagging Ideas](#)
2. [Highlighting and Comparing Ideas](#)
3. [Arranging Content](#)
4. [Organizing Ideas](#)

# Responding To and Tagging Ideas

## Responding To Ideas

1. To respond to the idea of a classmate or classmates, simply click the  button in the bottom right of the desired Idea Box.



2. You will then see the idea of your classmate or classmates at the top of a new idea box. You may respond with text, an uploaded file, a webcam image, a sketch, and/or a pasted image.

3. When you response is complete, select the  button.

4. Your response will then be visible on the Prompts page.

## Tagging Ideas

Knowledge Tags allow users to create and manage labels (or "tags") that categorize their ideas using simple keywords. Tags can be used in a variety of ways – conceptual knowledge tags describe procedures, lessons learned, and reflections that are related to the ideas being expressed. Tags can be used to answer multiple choice questions, express levels of understanding of other's ideas, and reference other's ideas. They also make it easier to find and track ideas. In InterLACE, users can choose from a list of pre-determined tags and also add their own.

John D, Ben H, Diana J

Frequency=0.39655
To find the frequency, we divided the number of cycles by the amount of time required to complete these cycles.

Period=2.5217
To find the period, we divided the time by the number of cycles completed in this amount of time.

08/14/2013

Conclusion (1)

Hypothesis
Evidence
Question
Conclusion

<< Collaborating                                                                  Highlighting and Comparing Ideas >>

# Highlighting and Comparing Ideas

The compare and highlight features – indicated by icons on the upper left hand corner of **New Idea** – allows users to enlarge one or two ideas to discuss.

## Highlighting Ideas

Here's how to highlight ideas.



1. To highlight an idea, simply select the ☰ icon in the top right corner of the Idea Box.



2. You can then choose from three different colors: orange, red, and purple. Select **Default** to set the idea back to normal.

## Comparing Ideas

Here you will see the process of comparing two ideas.

1. To compare two ideas, first select the ☰ icon in the top right corner of an idea, then the **Compare** button.



2. Do the same thing for the idea you would like to compare the first one to.

3. Your two idea will then be compared side-by-side.



We are going to use photo gates to measure the period. We will use string to change the length.

We are going to use a blue tooth accelerometer to measure the period of the pendulum.

Dorothy D, Elijah E, Fanny F

Andy A, Betty B, Chris C

Overlay

<< Responding To and Tagging Ideas                    Organizing Ideas >>

# Organizing Ideas

Users can individually and collaboratively organize and arrange ideas to express relationships and connections. They can save their arrangements and annotate the arrangement with an explanation.

## Rearranging the Layout of Ideas

Arrange

1.  Each box can be moved around by to create logical groupings or categorization of ideas. To do this, simply select the blue bar at the top of the New Idea Box that you would like to move and drag it to the desired location.

2.  Select the [icon] icon to save this arrangement for later use. Select the [icon] icon to return back to the original automatic arrangement.

## Display Options

Options

1.  Select the [icon] icon to see the Display Options.

2.  With the Display Options, you can customize the font size of the text, choose the number of columns in which the ideas are presented, show/hide responses, display/hide names, show/hide the highlighting options.

## Filter and Search



1. Select the  icon to display the Filter and Search Options

2. With Filter and Search, show/hide the ideas of specific groups and show/hide idea based on keywords.

<< Highlighting and Comparing Ideas                              Additional Features >>

# Additional Features

[Additional Features](#)

# Student Notebook

The "Notebook" feature allows users to create a private workspace that only they and their teacher can see.

1. To access your Notebook, select the          Icon on the Activity page.

2. Your Notebook will display all of the ideas that you have posted on the prompts in this activity.

3. Additionally, you can create a new idea in your Notebook and assign it to a prompt, where it will be posted. Unless this new idea is assigned to a prompt, it is only visible to you.

4. Teachers can view the notebooks created by all students in their classes.

# Student Visual Analytics

The Visual Analytics function provides visualizations of data about activity and interactions taking place in InterLACE. The visualizations are displayed in two ways. The first being an activity matrix, and the second, a word cloud.

## Activity Matrix

The activity matrix displays a prompt in each column and a group of members and/or an individual member in each row. The teacher will be displayed in a row as well. A green dot represents a new idea, a blue dot represents a response to an idea of someone else, and a yellow dot represents a response to your own idea.

# Word Cloud

The word cloud that displays frequently used words as larger and slightly faded in color. Words used less frequently are smaller and darker.



<< Student Notebook                    Student List View >>

# Student List View

The List View provides a list of posts by user/user group or prompt.



[<< Student Visual Analytics](#)

[Visual Classrooms Lingo >>](#)

# Visual Classrooms Lingo

**Visual Classrooms** is an innovative computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) environment to enable a broad range of collaborative knowledge construction activities. It provides a shared interactive electronic white board where users can post, visualize, build on, reorganize, and comment on their own and/or others' ideas as they work together to solve problems or create solutions or knowledge. It supports collaboration by making it easy for users to recognize conflicting ideas, argue their position, negotiate meaning, think critically, and reflect on their work.

## Using Visual Classrooms

- **Class Key**: Users need a "class key" which is a group password to join an activity.
  Join is the term used to indicate that users are entering an activity. You may join an activity as a single user, as a group, or you can rejoin as a member of an existing group.

- **New Idea**: In Visual Classrooms a "new idea" is like a post-it note that you can read or write down your ideas. You can add a new idea in many different ways – typing text, uploading a file, taking a picture with a webcam and making a sketch with our sketch tool. Each of these are described in the sections that follow. Everyone's ideas will be posted and visible on Visual Classrooms' public whiteboard.

- **Respond** allows users to respond to another user's new idea by adding a "sticky-note".

- **Comparing and highlighting**: The compare and highlight features – indicated by icons on the upper left hand corner of new idea – allows users to designate and enlarge one or two ideas to discuss.

- The **Notebook** is a private workspace where users can develop ideas before publishing them to the public Visual Classrooms' collaboration whiteboard. The only people who can view a notebook are the owner (either an individual or a group of users) and his/her teacher.

- The **List View** provides a list of posts by user/user group or prompt. This is available for both teachers and end users.

- **Knowledge Tags** allow users to create and manage labels (or "tags") that categorize their ideas using simple keywords. Tags can be used in a variety of ways – conceptual knowledge tags describe procedures, lessons learned, and reflections that are related to the ideas being expressed. Tags can be used to answer multiple choice questions, express levels of understanding of other's ideas, and

reference other's ideas. They also make it easier to find and track ideas. Users can choose from a list of pre-determined tags and also add their own.

- **Visual Analytics** is a page where teachers and students can see visualizations of data about activity and interactions taking place in Visual Classrooms. One visualization is a word cloud that displays frequently used words as larger and slightly faded in color. Words used less frequently are smaller and darker.

- **Organizing ideas**: Users can individually and collaboratively arrange ideas to express relationships and connections. They can save their arrangements and annotate the arrangement with an explanation.

## Creating Activities

- **Teacher Dashboard**: The Teacher Dashboard is where teachers can create and manage activities, assign them to one or more groups, and view usage reports.

- An **Activity** is a based assignment – homework, lab, in-class discussion, review, etc. It includes a series of prompts – which are questions or challenges.

- The **Activities Tab** is where teachers create and manage your activities. This page is where you can create new activities, edit them, activate them for one or more user groups (e.g. you may want to assign an activity to multiple groups/classes/sections), duplicate activities (in order to reuse an activity from a prior year), and archive them.

- The **Activity Page** provides users with an overview of the prompts for an activity, as well as the notebook page, visual analytics pages, and a list view page. This page also contains a sparkline visualization that displays the number of posts and responses to a prompt by both the teacher and the students.

- **Prompts** are questions or challenges posed by the teachers that make up an activity.

- **The Groups Tab** allows teachers to can add new groups of users and manage existing groups. This can be done in two different ways – by typing in the group and user names or by uploading an Excel file with a list of the users first and last names. The system includes an excel template to support this function.

- **Sessions** are activities that have been assigned to a group.

# Visual Classrooms on Mobile Devices

When using Visual Classrooms on mobile devices, there will be minor differences when adding or responding to an idea.

1. When adding text to an idea, the rich HTML editor is disabled.

2. The  and  buttons have identical functions, they will each access the Camera Roll. You can also take a picture or video.

3. The option to Copy/Paste an image is disabled.

4. When using small mobile devices (screen width <= 480 pixels), dragging/arranging is disabled.

# Visual Classrooms Use Cases