

# TOOC14 Icebreakers

Create a slide for your activity. Put your name on it, and present your icebreaker activity in that slide. Then comment on, or participate in, some other people's activities.

Quick intro to Google presentations: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yicr2\\_mZaeo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yicr2_mZaeo)

Use the notes area to add more background information if you need to.

Asya Madhloom

**MapQuest.**



I teach many online classes include a variety of students from different cultures and locations around the world. In this activity, each student is to:

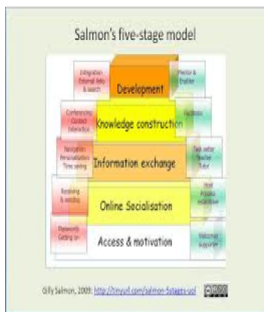

1. Identify their location (where they live at the moment they take the course)
2. How far is it from .....- (use a mapping site from the internet, ie. [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com))
3. Identify one interesting highlight of that location



# INSPIRATIONAL ONLINE EDUCATOR

Charlotte Steer 16/03/14

Write about an online educator who inspires you, then post in the discussion board. I chose Gilly Salmon.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Who is it?</b>   | Gilly Salmon   |
| <b>What did s/he contribute?</b><br> | <p>Her book, and now her online course in online learning and teaching, "Carpe Diem" run through Swinburne University, Australia</p> <p><b>ABOUT GILLY SALMON:</b><br/> <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilly_Salmon">Gilly Salmon - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia</a> en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilly_Salmon</p> <p><b>ABOUT HER BOOK:</b><br/>           Salmon, G. (2011). E-moderating: The key to teaching and learning online (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.<br/> <a href="http://www.gillysalmon.com/books-and-chapters.html">http://www.gillysalmon.com/books-and-chapters.html</a></p> <p><b>ABOUT HER MOOC:</b><br/> <a href="https://www.coursesites.com/s/_SwinCDMOOC">Course: SwinCDMOOC: Carpe Diem - Learning Design</a><br/> <a href="https://www.coursesites.com/s/_SwinCDMOOC">https://www.coursesites.com/s/_SwinCDMOOC</a></p>  |
| <b>Why did s/he contribute?</b>   | She was one of the first people to teach distance and online, at the Open University in Britain.   |
| <b>How do you contribute?</b>   | I am using Salmon's framework to inform and improve my teaching, students' learning, and student support.  |

The introductory exercise should lead to a learning outcome. This exercise will lead to shared resources on the topic of the course.

Other examples posted earlier in this course are not as obviously useful, but can still be harnessed: eg shelfie might lead to a discussion of "what books do you have on the topic of the course?" ; the desk picture might lead to a discussion of personality types and learning styles, the difficulty of making reliable inferences and the ease of making mistaken assumptions, the impossibility of replicating online the wealth of information received in a F2F learning environment - is this an advantage or a disadvantage of online learning etc.

Best wishes, charlotte

# Javid Ahmad

*Ice-breaking Activity Instructions:*

## **Welcome to the course!**

You are a community of learners from a diverse range of backgrounds taking this MOOC together. To help you get to know one another please post up to **100** words in the '**Icebreaking Activity**' discussion forum describing a recent location you have visited and **why** you thought it was good or bad. Please add an image or video link or two to help get your thoughts and feelings across. Then post a comment to two or more other discussion posts.



# Introduce yourself in colours



Try this - Personality Diversity Indicator on [www.equilibra.com](http://www.equilibra.com)

It will take you only 15 mins to find out your “true” colours!

Then share the finds through your profile settings. (You can even add them to your email signature.)

By knowing your colours and others’ on the course it will make easier to connect, especially in group-work activities.

Anastasia Stepanova



# Introduce yourself by using Prezi.com

Use Prezi to create a short presentation about yourself. Think of what the others would like to know about you. Do not forget to mention your hobbies and interest, and if possible, include some pictures. Share your presentation via the discussion board and comment on each other's work.

<https://prezi.com>

Kristyna Bicikova



# “I am a ‘dog’” Icebreaker by Claire Gibbs

## Task 1:

Think of your favourite animal and write it down.

Task 2: Write a word describing yourself or things you like to do for each of the letters. You may expand upon these if you wish.

## My answers:



**D** - Day-dreamer (Pisces)

**O** - Organised (*I really love a list*)

**G** - Game (usually for anything fun).

We are always using different ice-breakers when I teach the Good Clinical Practice for Research Course - we're quite good at sharing other ideas but I'm not sure we've been challenged with specifically making up our own so this has been fun. Our course is dictated generally by the National Institute for Health Research therefore has set slides etc. We like to swap it around a bit to keep people on their toes so if the room is getting quiet, we will move people around and re-set ice-breakers. It usually works!

# college course by melissa taylor

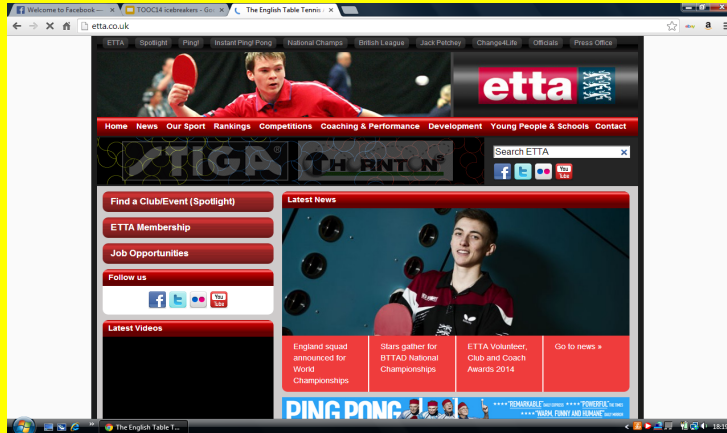
You are in the right place, if you worry tell a member of staff.

Go on the course induction page on the website that you are on.

This website address means a lot to me because i have played table tennis for about 3 years(<http://etta.co.uk/>).

After you have read my slide you need to tell a college member of staff what your problem is? and why the

problem is happening to you. I am trying to find out what each person's favourite websites are.



When you want to talk face to face to someone you will need to login every other day when a discussion has popped up in full flow. You can also set expectations about tutors and tutor workloads are often high on online courses. One of the great advantages of online working is that contributions from students and tutors can become more equal. When you are doing a online course, you have to try to get used to it and it gives you some socialising with others, you get technical training before you start the course.

# Music/Book Shuffle By Jaye Totney

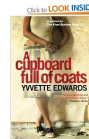
Ask participants to share their taste in music and/or books by randomly selecting from their iPod, iPhone, Android, Kindle, Kobo, Nook etc. **Discover** and **share** common interests.

**Me**

Music by Adele - "Adele" Vinehouse from the album Lioness: Hidden Treasures, track 9 Wake Up Alone



Book by Yvette Edwards titled A Cupboard Full of Coats (10/10)



**You**

Music and/or Book



## Adrian Judd: Members' Problems.

*This is an ice-breaker to use with trainee shop stewards from a major British Trade Union. This activity is designed to use the chat facility in Moodle. The sheep to the left is called Corey. He has few problems that worry him.*

Step One: Think of a problem that a member has faced in their work. What was the issue? How long did it last? How did it get resolved? Was the union involved?

Step Two: (In Pairs). Use the chat facility in Moodle to talk to a fellow learner. Take it in turns sharing the problem that you identified, try not to interrupt them, except to ask questions of clarification.

Step three: Go to the Moodle Forum -Members' Problems' and summarise what your partner said in the chat session. This way you can introduce them and the problem they shared with the group.

Interesting using this google online software - a first for me.

Before diving in to the content, lets take some time to learn a little bit more about each other. To get us started, Orla has posted a short video introducing herself, explaining the meaning of her name, what language it comes from and how her parents choose the name.

Don't worry, you don't have to post a video - text is fine, but do let us know more about your first name. What language does it come from? What does it mean? Is there a special reason why your parents selected it? What nicknames do you have and why?

Your module facilitator will be checking in on Thursday 15th April at noon to add her information. She will also post her reflections on what she has learned from the posts, so please try to have made an entry by 11:00 am on that date if at all possible.



**Orla explains her name**

If you need any technical help, please contact Orla - details available from course menu > Contacts tab

Adapted for online communication forum in Blackboard Learn e.g. discussion forum or blog - see original idea at [http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/docs/integrated\\_faculty\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/docs/integrated_faculty_toolkit.pdf) In our programmes we have many different nationalities who may or may not have previously participated in an online learning community. This is one activity which has been successful for us - posting something like above.


After students have shared, facilitator reflection posted on the different ethnicities, cultures etc that have been shared. Useful activity for identifying where there may be language difficulties; shyness in participation; writing difficulties; time management if they don't post in time; ability to use Blackboard tools to complete activity. Can make appropriate interventions with directions to specific support resources for various needs.

We use a video of me as students tend to require a lot of technological support initially and it seems to help them feel more comfortable about contacting me rather than suffering in silence. We don't ask them to create a video as most are really focused on their programme content and (don't want to engage with something like YouTube video recording at this stage) as well as offering a degree of online socialisation, the text based activity requires them to use the tool in Blackboard that they will use to engage in later online activities.

# What's on your desk? (Liz Lovegrove)

My desk is here: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ejlovegrove/9122665475/>

This activity shares a bit of personal information, but isn't too intrusive, so can be a gentle start to getting to know each other in the online environment.

- Anyone else want to share their desks?
- [Here's my desk](#) (Greg)
- And here's [mine](#) (Becka)
- [Here's my one](#) - complete with last week's scribbling (Martin)
- [Another one](#) - (Irmgard) 3x for this icebreaker: 
- [in a meeting](#) (Heli) Does anyone know the man speaking?
- [Mine](#) hopefully the link will work. It's organised mess, I promise. (Lucy W.)
- [This is not my desk](#): (and I found how to link to pics on twitter :D) (Maria P)



# Share your Blog!

Joana Amorim

Probably many of us, students in an online course, have a blog. Why not share it?

Here is mine: <http://conversas-de-cha.blogspot.co.uk/>

“Conversas de cha” means “chats for tea-time” or “talks of tea” (hard to translate actually) in Portuguese. Will you have a tea with me? :)

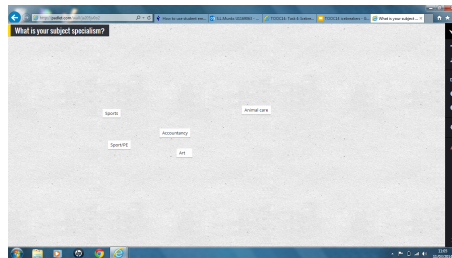
I think this is a suitable ice-breaker for an online course since people interact professionally on the course. This is a way of people interacting at a personal level. Negative aspects: It may be a bit intrusive, depending on the flavour of the blog and maybe not everyone has a blog.

# Online Text Wall: Sarah Munks

I sometimes use Padlet to find out what students expect from a session, or (when delivering to trainee teachers) what their subject specialism is.

It's free, fairly easy to use and can be a great way to embed use of technology in your teaching. Here's an example: <http://padlet.com/wall/ja205jv0o2>

Students simply double click anywhere on the page to post their comments. They can post anonymously or include their names. I leave it up to them.



## Share a Shelfie (Carrie Griffin)

This is similar to the desk icebreaker. I love the idea of initiating discussion based on books and reading and opening relationships around shared reading experiences. A Shelfie is a nice alternative to the Selfie, & can be a real window into personality. Here's my (current!) Shelfie - mixture of work and pleasure: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/119954616@N08/13041878405/lightbox/>  
Here's [Becka's shelfie](#) and [Kim's](#) and [Heli](#) and [Liz](#)

## Effective Ice-Breakers

Try to use innovative ways to enable participants to get to know about each other and try to be able to form effective learning teams. You may think that some of these suggestions are too light weight for adult groups. However, one or two of them, carefully chosen, will help establish group and to lead to more in-depth knowledge sharing and learning later on. The following suggestions all work.

### *Good things come in Threes.*

- 1) List your three favourite web sites.
- 2) List your three favourite activities.
- 3) List your three favourite people.

# Andy Harvey

What did you do at the weekend?

Me: I went for a cycle ride and met friends for a drink at Alexandra Palace:



You?

Went for a walk with the family round Cumnor, Farmoor and Bablockhythe - great to be out in the sun but very muddy!

# Nick Saunders

- If you could go anywhere in the world where would you go?
- Where would I go?

Whistler Mountain, Canada

- How about you?



# Duncan Greaves

What happened in history on your birth date?

Visit this site to find out and then share with us all:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/25/default.stm>



## 1983: US troops invade Grenada

American forces seize control of the Caribbean island of Grenada less than a week after a left-wing coup in which the prime minister, Maurice Bishop, was killed.



## 1964: President Kaunda takes power in Zambia

Zambia is the ninth African state to gain independence from the British crown.



## 1984: Europe grants emergency aid for Ethiopia

The EEC is donating £1.8 million to help combat the famine in Ethiopia.



## 1976: Queen opens National Theatre in London

The Queen has officially opened the National Theatre on the South Bank in London after years of delays.



## 2001: Crime rates lowest for 20 years

British Crime Survey reveals the chances of being a victim of crime are lowest for 20 years.

# If you were a food... What would you be?

- I'd be a veggie roast dinner as it contains many items and everything is different but it all works well together. Just like the different facets of my personality :)





## **What's outside your window or in front of you?**

This is just a way of letting people say a little about where they are when they're online. Not everyone is in an office.

You can expand it by asking about the weather and the time of day. It can be good for an international group to be reminded that it might very early or late for some people.

Me - I'm looking at our washing, a wooden fence, our neighbour's brick garage and a tree covered hill. Of course this can also be an image icebreaker similar to Greg's desk one.

Angela Rogers

# Ice-breaker Introduction

Who do you follow on social media and why?

I follow scientists on Twitter as it helps me keep upto date, plus Very British Problems because it makes me laugh!

Dona Foster

Most students are on some sort of social media platform and they can make this personal or not.

# Martin King



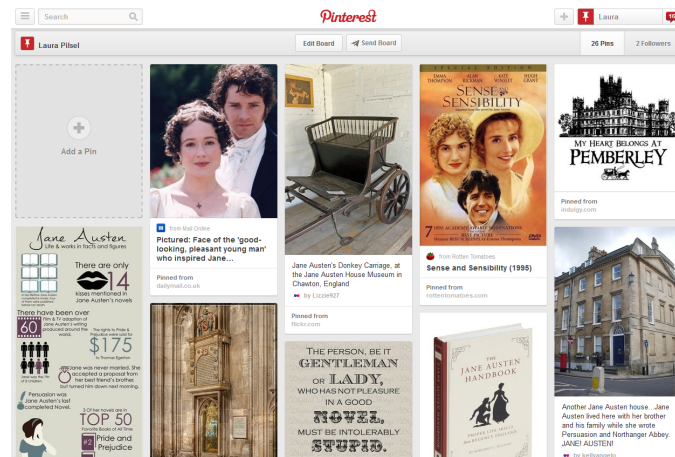
What was the first record you bought?

This was mine - much to my parents' horror

## [The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle](#)

- This is quick and non-exclusive - you can do it with books and DVDs too
- It is personal without being intrusive
- It allows people to use the communication tool early on, and reveals any issues with enrolment, usability etc.
- Participants could use VLE Fora, Twitter, a blog, or Google Doc like this - and meet others who have the same approach

# Using Pinterest, compile a board of your favourite books or authors.



by Laura Pilsel

# Hazel Rothera

What would your desert island luxury be,  
and why?...



(image by elvis\_payne from Flickr Commons)

[Note for non-UK participants: this refers to the popular Radio 4 show “Desert Island Discs” where participants get to choose not only 10 pieces of music they would take if they had to be stranded on a desert island, but also one luxury item.]

I think mine would be a solar-chargeable laptop, preferably with built-in e-book reader - I'd want to be able to read **and** write!

# Tracey Madden

The finest chefs have assembled to cook you your favourite food. The only question is... what's it to be?

- Works for all ages, cultures and backgrounds
- Quick to get started - no real research needed or accounts to open
- Interesting when you have a diverse student base who may suggest foods others have never heard of (which can spark conversation)
- Can build on this by requesting links to image or recipe sites

## Simon Llewellyn



Create a short introduction using YouTube (or a service like it - either video or audio) and post it to a forum. The introduction should list some accomplishments and what they want to achieve from the course.



# Fact or fiction?

Ask everyone to write on a piece of paper 3 things about themselves which may not be known to the others in the group. Two are true and one is not. Taking turns they read out the three 'facts' about themselves and the rest of the group votes which are true and false.

[http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40\\_icebreakers\\_for\\_small\\_groups.pdf](http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf) [date accessed 10/3/14]

slide by Sammy Davis



# Heli practicing icebreaking



Have you ever been jumping from an ice sheet to another? In which age?  
I have no experience myself, just asking.

# Kim Shahabudin

If you were a pizza, what flavour would you be?  
And why?



<http://www.pizzahut.co.uk/restaurants/news/cheeseburger-pizza-crust/>

Rationale:

1. Inclusive as doesn't need any pre-existing tech skills
2. What student isn't thinking about pizza?

# Kirsteen Macdonald

1. Tell us a little about yourself?
2. Why have you enrolled on this course?
3. What do you hope to get from the experience?

Perhaps these questions sound a tad dull and clinical but I think we have to be mindful of the context and audience. I think some of the 'favourite x,y,z' questions would not suit some of the online distance education programmes we support that attract professionals working across the globe in different specialist sectors (e.g. oil & gas industry). Certainly not at the start of the programme. For some students, it's business first and the conversation comes later. These 3 questions help students focus but also give the programme team some valuable information as they start to get a picture of the cohort. Instructions accompanying these questions would remind students to comment on the posts of at least 3 other students, to start the community building process...

... that said my desert island luxury would be my ipad with a battery that would never run out!, my first record was something by Abba, and I share my birthday with Matt Damon!

## **Alex Morley**

If you had a full day to yourself and could do anything, what would you do?

# **If you were a cake ...**

Question: if you were a cake, which cake would you be?

1. say which cake:
2. say why this cake
3. post a picture of the cake

(an all inclusive ice breaker based on the untested but highly likely hypothesis that everyone likes cake)

Darren Gash

# Its the journey not the arriving

George Roberts

All journeys are learning journeys.

Think of a recent journey you made.

You might do your journey to work, taking your kids to the park or a pilgrimage to Bhokara

Tell us about the journey, how you travelled, who you travelled with or met on the way.

What details did you notice about the journey?

What did you learn from your journey?

Tell us in words, images, audio, video and post your journey to a forum (or use the notes space below)



picture credit: George Roberts

This activity came to me this morning as I was travelling on the train to a conference. Although my train was on time the train before had been cancelled and there was a big festival near where I was going. Consequently the train was crowded. I had a seat and escaped into a book, looking up occasionally to see iPads, Kindles and phones. It was a sea of mobile devices in a plastic rainbow of colours. Practically none was black. Every device was somehow customised. I thought about the ubiquity of digital devices and how important they have become to our identity.

# The classic 'desert island question'

Lucy Warwick

My favourite ice breaker asks: if you were stuck on a desert island and could take one book, one album, and one luxury item (not a boat!), what would you take and why? This icebreaker allows you to reveal as little or as much as you like, and can help you to find common items of interest with others..

Mine would be: 'The Historian' by Elizabeth Kostova. (I love this book: history coming to life and solving mysteries.)

'Every Kingdom' by Ben Howard. (Nice relaxing music to listen to in the sun.)

The luxury item is always a difficult one...can I take more books? You can never have enough books, right?



## Online nerves?

I'm never sure about joining in an established discussion forum. What makes you nervous in online courses?



Sue Watling

Using Google Docs like this is pretty nerve wracking too!!



## **Your magic numbers. Kate Connery**

Choose 3 numbers and explain what they mean to you.

mine are: 4 - I have 4 children

6 - my birth date

23 - the number of my house

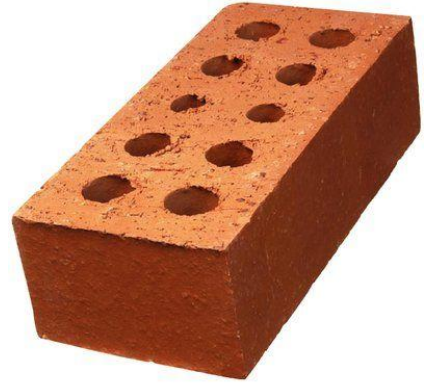
Inclusive, quick and not too intrusive.

# Brick 101 - Zaman Wong

Think of a use for a standard house brick. Your classmates will vote for the most inventive.

(Not intrusive, does not need images/  
software/creating another account, promotes creativity)

Zaman: Cheap candle holder for dinner parties, if you have a strong table.



**Jacqueline Nairn**

**CODE123**

## **Welcome & Introduction**

Our first activity is designed to welcome you to the placement module CODE123.

Simply post a description (or a photo) of the coffee break arrangements on your placement.

You might want to:

- indicate whether coffee breaks are a group activity, or a solo effort
- rate the coffee
- give a description of the goodies on offer

Your module coordinator, Jacqueline Nairn, enjoys an 'office-made' Starbucks in her red smartcafe mug. This is a solo activity and on a good day, when it's really needed, I'd rate this 9/10 and accompany this with a 'healthy' cereal bar.



**I am lucky enough to cycle along the Union canal to work.....**



Samantha  
Ilott

**Does anyone else have a nice journey to work?**

This is similar to the icebreaker which involves taking a photo out of your office window. It is good for online courses because there are often people who live in and commute to interesting places.

Kirsty Kiezebrink

# What kind of cat or dog are you?

Try these silly online “personality” test to find out what breed of [DOG](#) or [CAT](#) you are?

Do you agree is this “who” you are?

I am a GREAT DANE or A SIAMESE



You're so humble that you don't notice how much you stand out in a crowded room. You are extremely smart but are still approachable due to your warm demeanor. You'd probably make a great pediatrician or duchess of Cambridge.

**Well someone`s just a bit catty, aren`t they? You`re a talkative one. You love to gossip and voice your opinion. You have no problem telling people the truth. Some people hate you for it, but people who know you best love it!**



I like this variation of the if you were a ..... style questions as this uses preset questionnaire to generate the answer so maybe removes some of the pressure that people (or is it just me) may find when trying to think of what type of chocolate bar best describes their personality etc by giving you the answer you can then simply decide how true you think it is

# James Cilia

**Tell us how you are going to spend your €620 grant!**

- You are the beneficiary of a €620 grant to spend 'online' on anything which is related to this study-unit.
- Post a message in the discussion board that tells us how you plan to spend your grant. **The message must be posted by Thursday morning and should not exceed the 300 word limit.**
- You are encouraged to comment on the postings submitted by your classmates. **All comments must be made by Sunday.**



The ice-breaker activity will be used for a study-unit where participants already know each other. They have followed other study-units together.

This activity is intended to encourage students to think about this study-unit and to see what ideas they have about additional resources they may need to help them during the study-unit.

**Liza**

ICEBREAKER

Welcome to the site.

On the discussion board -  
Introduce yourself and say 3 of your  
favourite places and if you wish why

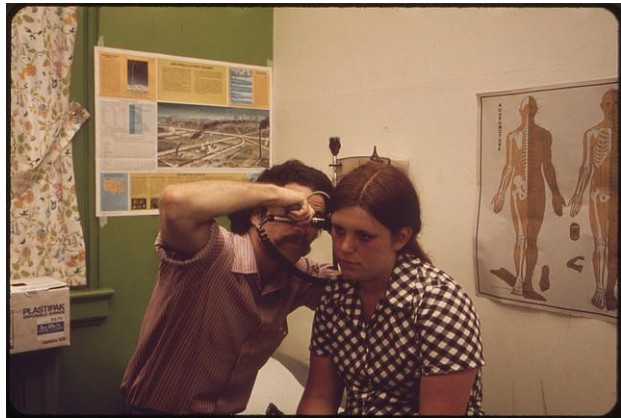


Hi all, I have spent a fair amount of time and thought regarding this icebreaker: I wanted to use word clouds and had my 'first play' with them but had trouble putting them on the slide. Which just reinforced to me what Jon from the podcast noted about keeping it simple to start with and I remembered how intrepid I had been several modules ago. For introductions I feel it is important to build in time to peruse the site and feel comfortable, not overwhelmed but equally have something that you have to do and to post. On the other side of the fence if someone has posted it helps inform me to a small degree how students are participating/accessing site.

for me: the pictures: Sydney - a great city and reminds me of 2 fantastic holidays. The alps - I love skiing. The Thames where I spend so much of my time walking the dogs! It is an area of peace and a chance to think (usually to plan my assignments)!

Sit quietly for one minute and listen.

Then tell us what you can hear.



<https://flic.kr/p/6Bpi8f> Creative Commons

Sally

I thought this might be a different way to ask people to think about their environment and share something about where they are and what that is like



## Release your inner pop star

I tried the 'proper' spelling of my name and now I'm contemplating how different my life would be if I was called Betty Belle.

I think the implications of this ice breaker can be intriguing!



### What's your Pop Star Name?

Irmgard Hueppe your Pop Star Name is Betty Belle

### What's your Pop Star Name?

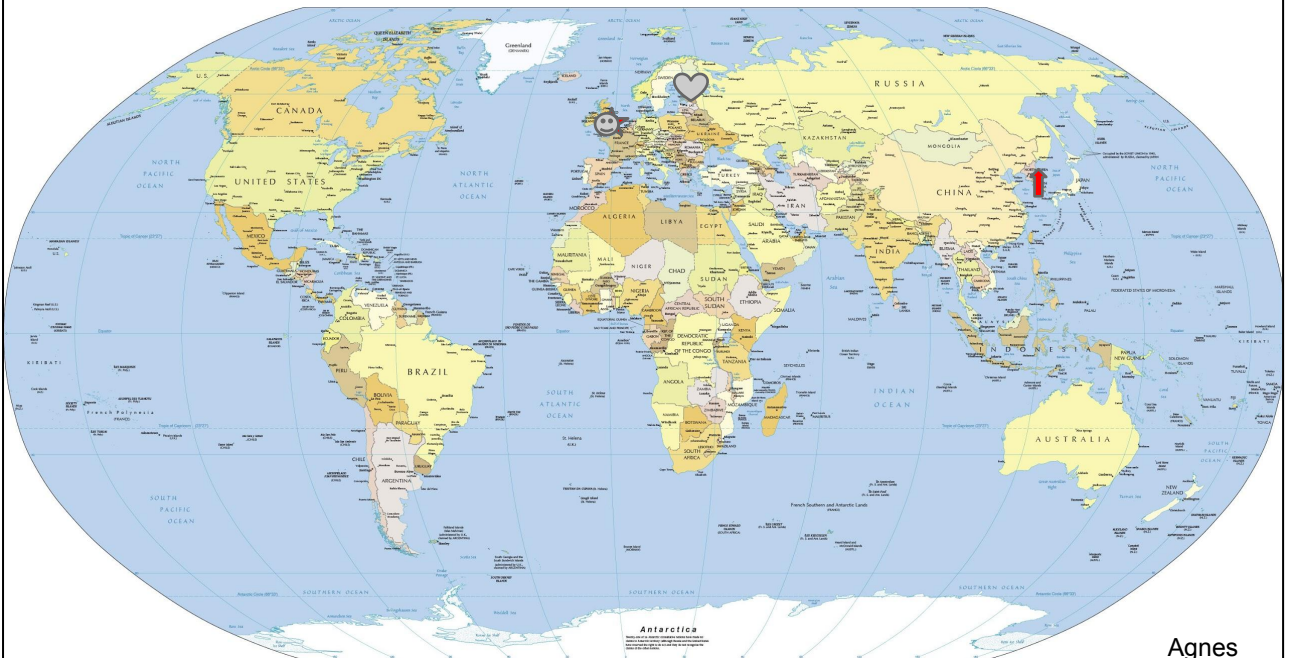
Rob Howe your Pop Star Name is Gabriel Costello



Go to [PopStar Name \(http://popstarname.com/\)](http://popstarname.com/) and type your name into the Name box on the lower left of the image (circled) - then click on the submit button - your new name is displayed above. Post a comment with your real name and your pop star name.

Rob Howe

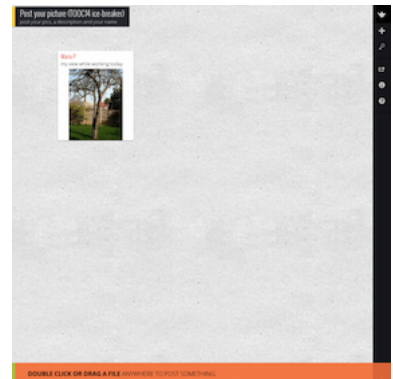
Please show on the map where you are coming from



# Post a favourite picture

I like the idea of images that say something about a person, and the idea of the padlet introduced by Sarah Munks (Thanks Sarah!). As an ice-breaker, I would like to create an online collage with favourite pictures and the ability to post likes by others (not sure how...ideas welcome)

1. Go to <http://padlet.com/wall/v7x8t4jry4> and post a pic, your name and a short description
2. My favourite pic today is the view of an apple tree in my garden  
- what is yours?



Maria Papaefthimiou

Participants should find it easy and quick to do the ice-breaker  
A picture is a thousand words and easy to find/take

# An interim synthesis

The following suggestions have been made by members to synthesise our understanding of good icebreakers:

Rob:

- At the right level for the course / module
- Be inclusive (Do you need particular technical skills to complete)
- Transfer between cultures
- Be accessible (I'm conscious that mine probably wouldn't be accessible to a screen reader)
- Be simple enough to give student confidence that they have completed level 1 of Gilly's 5 stage model
- Ideally be fun!

Sally

- starting to form relationships
- exploring ( perhaps managing) expectations - theirs of us and ours of them
- orientation to/exploring of the new environment
- information and/or procedures - but limited to those which are most immediately necessary to get going
- establishing course ethos

Zaman

- Get the user to feel at ease / socialize / start thinking
- Introduce them to the technology and course format
- Find out what they know already and what they expect

Marion:

- have a use at other points during the course

Liza

- Adaptable to student needs on the fly

**This is me!** (*actually it's only a bit like me.....*)

I've really enjoyed looking through all the resources and the examples fellow participants have created. I decided on a Voki which was easy enough to make. Not sure I'd use this in my practice - a bit too 'gimmicky' perhaps?

<http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=9535242&height=267&width=200>

## Collaborate playfully

I also enjoyed all your ideas, thank you for padlet (Sarah). I was recently introduced in <http://mural.ly> and I really liked it. It allows groups to work quite creatively.

So, I would ask my students to post their favourite design artefact (poster, book cover, typeface, signage, logo, etc.) and write a short comment, no more than two lines. Then, I would start a discussion.

Niki Sioki

## **I am an IT application or IT tool - how koolala is that?**

Choose an IT application or tool (e.g. ipad, iphone, laptop, tablet) Jing, gmail, Skype, Facebook, Linkedin etc. In no more than 2 slides please tell us

- who you are?
- what you do?
- how you work?
- how you can benefit customers?
- why we should use you?





Matt: I find that the colour of your environment speaks a lot about the context we share our views from. My colour would be Blue today, as it's a sunny day and I am working next to my window.