

Teacher Guidelines

How to Prepare for Your Videoconference



The purpose of this document is to guide you through the different steps to prepare for your videoconference.

1. About the Videoconference

1.1. Videoconference Format

- Each videoconference lasts **between 30 and 45 minutes**.
- It consists in an interactive **Q&A interview** between a class and a speaker (it is not a lecture).
- Therefore, students need to have **studied the topic of the interview prior to it**; the videoconference can be integrated into teachers' planning as a case study within a disciplinary or interdisciplinary context.
- Teachers need to prepare their students to have productive conversations with their speaker; for this reason, we ask you to **have your students draft a list of questions**, which will be asked during the interview (cf. par. 4.2.1.).
- Speakers have the possibility to **share documents on screen**; this option is left to their discretion and can't be requested by teachers.

1.2. Participating Students

- Each videoconference is organized between a speaker and **one class only**, which makes it possible for students to participate in a way that is truly interactive; moreover, it allows the speaker to adapt to the specific needs of the class.

- Note that it is possible for teachers within the same school to combine their classes to participate in a videoconference.
- The number of participants for each videoconference is limited to **50 students**. However, if possible, we recommend to keep that number below **30 students** to allow all of them to be active during the interview.

2. Videoconferencing Material

2.1. Videoconferencing Equipment

- You will need the following equipment:
 - **Computer** (desktop, laptop, or tablet) with **camera** and **microphone**. Check if these are built in to your device; if not, you will need to connect it to an external webcam and/or microphone.
 - **Video projection equipment** (projector w/ projector screen, interactive whiteboard, or television). Check to make sure you know how to connect your device to the projection equipment.
 - **Speakers**. Check if these are built in to the projection equipment; if not, you will need to connect external speakers to the projection equipment or to your device.
 - **Internet connection** (wireless or Ethernet). Check to make sure your school's **wireless** network is properly working or you know how to connect your device to the Internet via an **Ethernet** jack.
- Please take the time to contact your school's **technology staff** about your future videoconference; they will be able to help you with the technical aspect of its preparation.
- We also recommend that you make arrangements so that someone from your school's **technology staff** can join you **10 minutes before the videoconference start time** in case some technical fix is needed.

2.2. Videoconferencing Applications

- Videoconference interviews are conducted via **Skype** or **Google Hangouts**; you have the option to use either one you prefer. That means you need to already have an account with [Skype](#) or [Gmail](#)—or set up one. Please take the time to contact your school's **technology staff** to make sure there is no school firewall that might block live video streaming via your videoconferencing application.

3. Administrative & Privacy Considerations

3.1. Administrative Considerations

- Depending on schools, **digital speakers** may be treated like outside guest experts that are invited into the classroom. In this case, you might have to follow some procedure before the videoconference so that speakers are allowed to present in front of your students. We recommend that you check with your school's **administrative staff** in this regard.

3.2. Student/Teacher Privacy Policy

- Videoconferences are not recorded; they remain confidential and hence ensure student data privacy.
- All data that teachers provide via our online booking form is encrypted by **SSL protocol** to secure authentication and protect privacy.
- The information we ask is to help us prepare your videoconference and remain confidential. We share with your speaker the following information: teacher's and school's names, subject, grade level, number of participants, language(s) which students will use/practice during the videoconference. We don't share your email address.

4. Preparing for Your Videoconference

4.1. Preparing Your Lesson Plan

- We encourage you to refer to the **resources** we provide on every **speaker's profile page** on uptoglobal.co (speaker's description, link to its website, and list of possible learning goals); they can help you build your lesson plan.

4.2. Preparing Your Students

4.2.1. How to Prepare Your Students to Participate Actively

- Prior to the videoconference, make sure to plan enough time—at the very least **one hour**—to prepare your students.

- Please note that students need to have **studied the topic of the interview prior to it**; the videoconference can be integrated into teachers' planning as a **case study** within a disciplinary or interdisciplinary context.

-  **IMPORTANT: You need to prepare your students to have active and productive conversations with their speaker; for this reason, we ask you to have them draft a list of questions, which will be asked during the interview. You will email us this list at least five days before the videoconference, and we'll forward it to your speaker so that he/she can better prepare to answer students' questions.**

- When planning how students will prepare the interview, you might want to consider the following elements:
 - What kinds of questions students will ask?
 - Will students do a **research** on the topic and/or the speaker before drafting their questions?
 - Will students prepare their questions at home, in class, or both?
 - Will students work individually, in small groups, or as a whole group to prepare the interview?
 - How will students or groups of students **take turns** during the interview?
 - How will students **take notes** during the interview?
 - What kinds of tasks students may have to complete after the interview?
 - How will students **report** on what they have learned? (cf. par. 4.2.3.)
- We recommend that you prepare **handouts** that help students think through the topic of the interview before the videoconference.
- Keep in mind that the quality of your videoconference—just like any learning experience—is dependent on how your students have been prepared for it.

4.2.2. Discussing Appropriate Behavior

- Discuss **appropriate behavior** during the videoconference with your students. Younger students should be aware of how a two-way connection works, that is, understand that each side can see and hear the other.
- As your speaker may be from a different country, it is very important to remind students of the importance of **respect for other cultures** and to discuss with them how to behave accordingly.

4.2.3. How Students Can Report on What They Have Learned

- Different learning activities can be designed to have students report on what they have learned:
 - Students can write an article for their **school's newspaper or blog**, based on the information collected during the interview.
 - They can create a **display board** or a **video** to report on their interview to the rest of the school community.
 - They can organize a **special event** at school in connection with **international observances** or **commemorative days** (Climate Week, World Food Day, International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition...).
 - Etc.
- If you wish to stay in contact with your speaker, with a view to organizing a long-term project and/or partnership, we can also help you with this.

5. What to Expect – Step-by-Step Guidelines

5.1. After Your Videoconference Booking Request

5.1.1. A Few Days after Your Booking Request

- Shortly after requesting to book a videoconference—and providing your preferred time slots—, you will receive a **confirmation email** from Up to Global with:
 - The exact **date and time of the videoconference**, which your speaker has selected according to the time slots you provided and his/her own preference (considering **the videoconference is scheduled within one to two months after the booking request**)
 - Contact details of your speaker: his/her **full name** and his/her **username** on the videoconferencing platform you selected (either Skype or Google Hangouts)



IMPORTANT: We encourage you to keep carefully this email until the day of the videoconference.

- We encourage you to contact your school's **technology staff** about your future videoconference so that they can help you with the technical aspect of its preparation (cf. par. 2.2.1.).

5.1.2. One Week before the Videoconference

- You will receive an **email reminder** from Up to Global about your videoconference date and time.
- During the week prior to the videoconference, make sure to plan enough time—at the very least **one hour**—to prepare your students for the interview—including time to **help students draft their list of questions** (cf. § 4.2.1).
- Please remember to email us this list **at least five days before the videoconference** so that we can forward it to your speaker and help him/her get better prepared to answer students' questions.

5.1.3. 24 Hours before the Videoconference

- You will receive a second **email reminder** from Up to Global.

5.2. On the Day of the Videoconference

5.2.1. Before Starting the Videoconference

- If needed, place the external webcam—or your device with built-in camera—somewhere in the room so that the speaker can see all of your students during the videoconference.
- You might need to **adjust the lighting** in the room so that your students can see the screen with as little reflection as possible. On the other side, it shouldn't be too dark; if not, the speaker won't be able to see your students!
- Get in touch with your speaker **10 minutes before the videoconference start time** via your selected platform (either Skype or Google Hangouts) to **test the video connection** and troubleshoot any problems that may occur. We recommend that you make arrangements so that someone from your school's **technology staff** can be with you at that moment in case some technical fix is needed.
- When the videoconference starts, introduce your class to the speaker.

5.2.1. During the Videoconference

- Please start the interview by inviting—or having a student invite—the speaker to **introduce himself/herself** and, if relevant, **present his/her organization** (5 minutes maximum).
- Be prepared to **maintain order** and manage your students.
- Help to **facilitate the interview** by calling on students who have questions or answers.
- If needed, remind your students that they need to **speak slowly and loudly** so that the speaker can hear them.
- If possible, direct the external webcam—or your device with built-in camera—toward the student who is speaking, or ask him/her to move closer to the camera.

5.3. A Few Days after Your Videoconference

- You will receive a **follow-up email** from Up to Global, asking you to **evaluate your videoconference** under the following criteria: technical aspect, students' interest, and learning outcomes. We encourage you to take the time to provide your feedback as it will help us improve your service. Note that all evaluations are for our internal use only and are kept completely confidential (we don't share them with your speaker).

6. If You Need to Change the Date or Cancel

- If needed, it is possible to change the date or cancel your videoconference. However, since our speakers volunteer their time to participate in our program, we encourage you to let us know as early as possible out of respect for them.