

VoiceThread – Faculty Guide

Should your students need additional support, please refer them to the “VoiceThread – Student Guide” document.

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What is VoiceThread?

[VoiceThread](#) is a collaborative online tool that allows people to post media such as images, documents, and video and comment on that media using webcam, microphone, text, or uploaded audio (MP3/WAV). This allows for an asynchronous group discussion, analysis, or presentation around the shared media.

VoiceThread can be used to:

- Collaboratively produce group presentations
- Share videos, images, and documents and solicit feedback, questions, and/or analysis
- Gather perspectives on an idea or concept

- Build a sense of community and social presence in an online class
- Simulate cases, debates, and other situations
- Practice skills or work through a case
- Introduce class participants

In the example below, students discussed a slide. The icons on the left indicate classmate and instructor feedback and questions.

The screenshot shows a VoiceThread interface. On the left, there is a video player showing a slide titled "Terminology continued". The slide content is as follows:

- **Filariform larva**
 - Third stage larva: infective
 - Morphology: long slender esophagus
- **Microfilaria**
 - Embryo stage of filarial parasite, usually in the blood or tissue of definitive host.
- **Rhabditiform larva**
 - first stage larva, non-infective
 - Has an hourglass shaped esophagus

On the left side of the interface, there is a list of participants: AB, RB, AT, and KG. On the right side, there is a list of questions. The video player shows a timestamp of 0:26 / 3:15.

Browse the [VoiceThread Library](#) to see example projects.

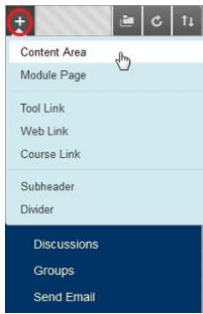
If you decide to use VoiceThread for a course activity or assignment, we suggest using it for a smaller ungraded activity earlier in the semester to help everyone become familiar with it. For example, before a class debate, you could use Voice Thread to provide lectures, or the class could use it to introduce themselves.

Link to VoiceThread in a Blackboard Course

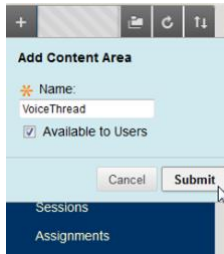
VoiceThread (VT) is fully supported in all major browsers. Keep your browsers up to date.

GW has a campus license to VoiceThread, allowing faculty and students to share VoiceThreads in class without requiring a separate account. Following a link from Blackboard (Bb) will take you directly into VoiceThread. In Bb Original courses, we suggest adding VoiceThread to your course as a main menu item, so students can access the link from anywhere in the course.

- Go to the + sign to add a main menu item and select "Content Area" (see below).



- Name it “VoiceThread” and choose whether to make it available or unavailable to students. Click “Submit.”

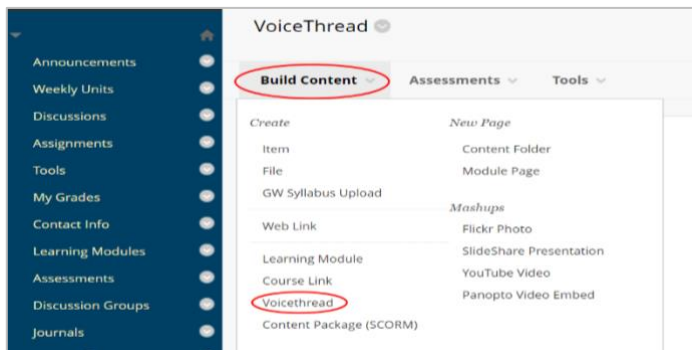


- Click on your new “VoiceThread” item in the main menu. The page will be blank.

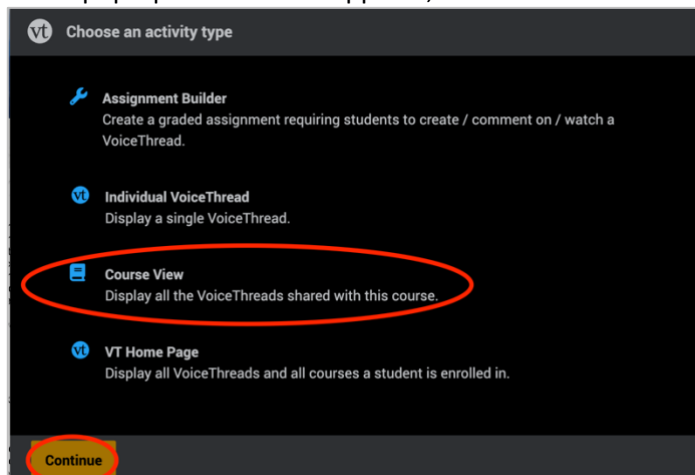
Create a Main Link to VT – The “Course View”

Every time you create a VT link, you will need to choose the view you would like students to see when they click on the link. For this main menu link, we recommend you choose Course View, which displays a list of all the VTs shared with the course.

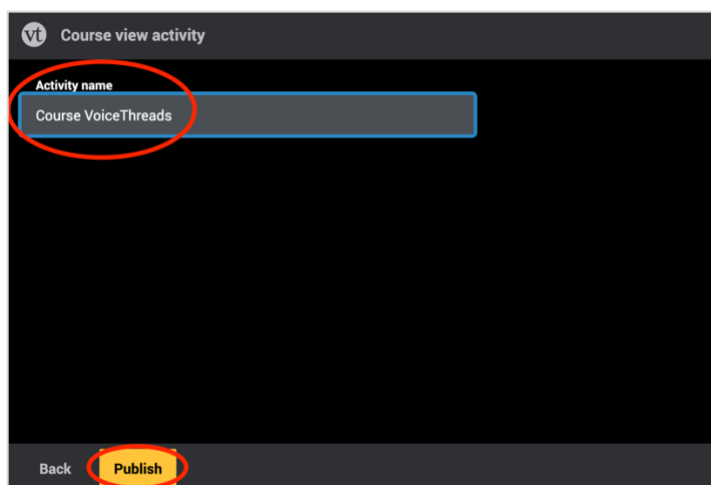
- Click the “Build Content” tab
- Select “VoiceThread”



- In the pop-up window that appears, choose Course View.



Once you click Course View, you will be asked to name the activity. This is the title that will show up for the item in Bb. You could call it something like “Course VoiceThreads” since that is what students will see when they click on this link. Then Click “Publish.”



Description for Students

Refresh the course and add instructions for your students in the description of this item. Explain what VoiceThread is and how you will be using it in the course.

Below is some generic text you are welcome to adapt:

What is VoiceThread?

VoiceThread (VT) is an online tool that allows us to converse using video, text, and/or voice in response to images, documents, and videos. This allows for a group discussion, analysis, or presentation around the shared media.

Using VoiceThread for Students:

<https://impact.smhs.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaskib836/files/2022-03/VoiceThreadStudentGuide.pdf>

Troubleshooting:

<https://wp.voicethread.com/howto-category/troubleshooting/>

Click on the item you just created and you will see the Course View which includes any VT assignments in the course (See Assignment Builder section below) followed by VoiceThreads shared with the course directly from the Course View.

Add a Link to VT - Anywhere in your Course

You can add a VT link anywhere in a BB course, such as in your Weekly Sessions, under Assignments, etc. Use the same method as above, (click the “Build Content” tab, select “VoiceThread”) and choose from the view types available:

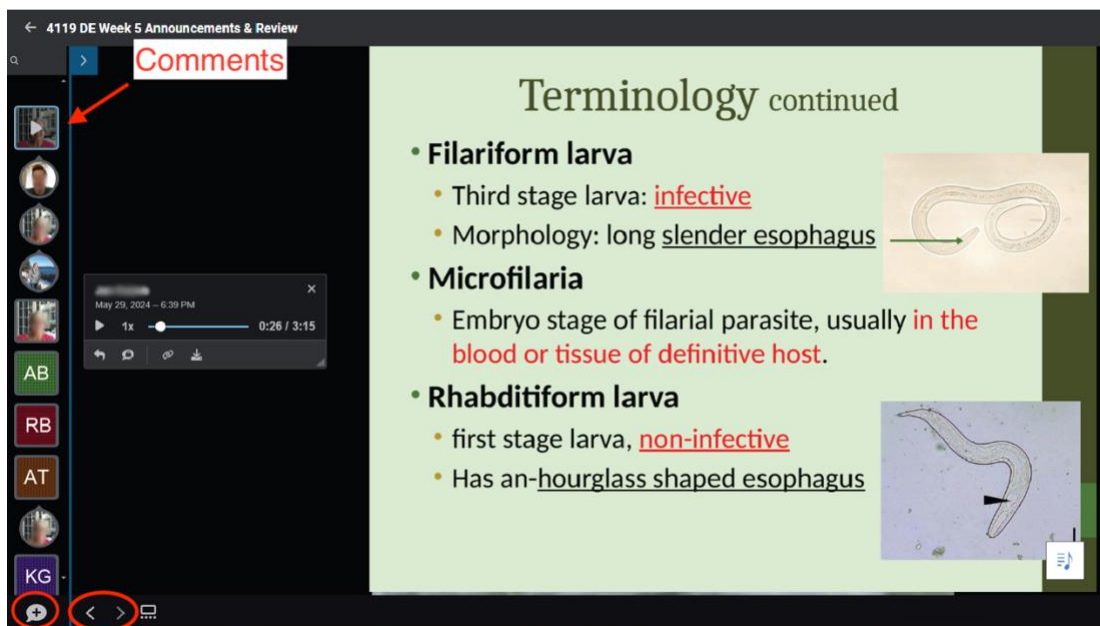
- “Assignment Builder” is explained below
- “Individual VoiceThread” will create a link to a VT that already exists
- “Course View” links to lists of assignments and VTs as explained above
- “VT Home Page” view is explained below.

VoiceThread Links in Copied Courses

It's important for instructors to check VT links after a course has been copied. If the link is broken, the VT will need to be recreated. Feel free to ask the IMPACT team for assistance.

Listen to a VoiceThread

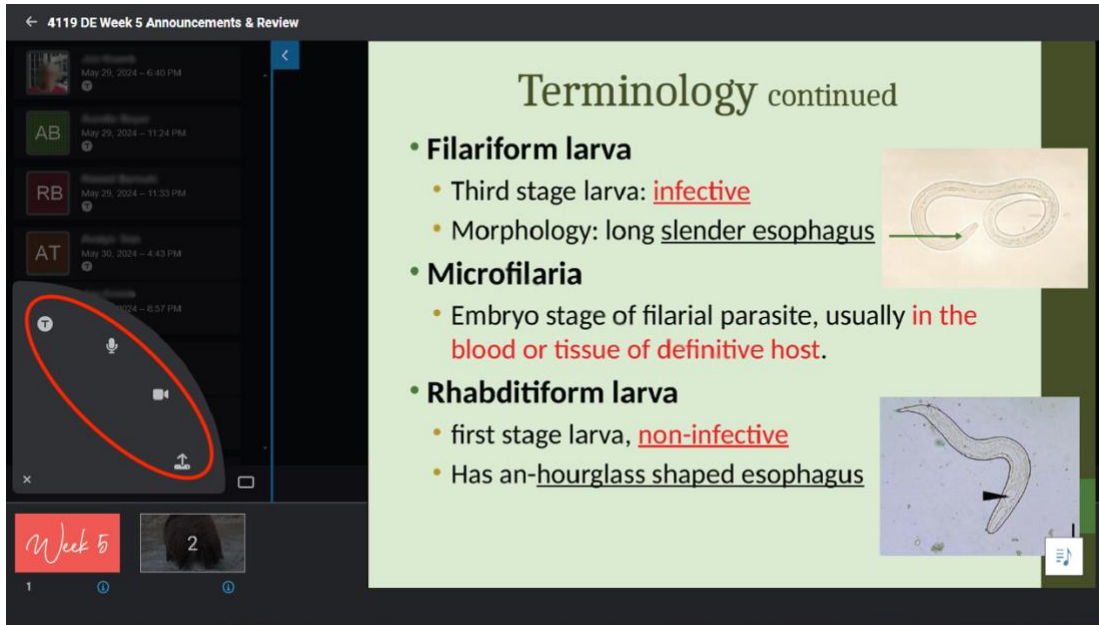
Click to open a VoiceThread. The comments, represented by icons/avatars, play in the order in which they were created. If the item in the presentation is a video, the video will play through without the comments first. Click on an icon to jump to that user's comment. Use the arrows at the bottom left to navigate forward or back through the presentation, (see below).



Comment on a VoiceThread

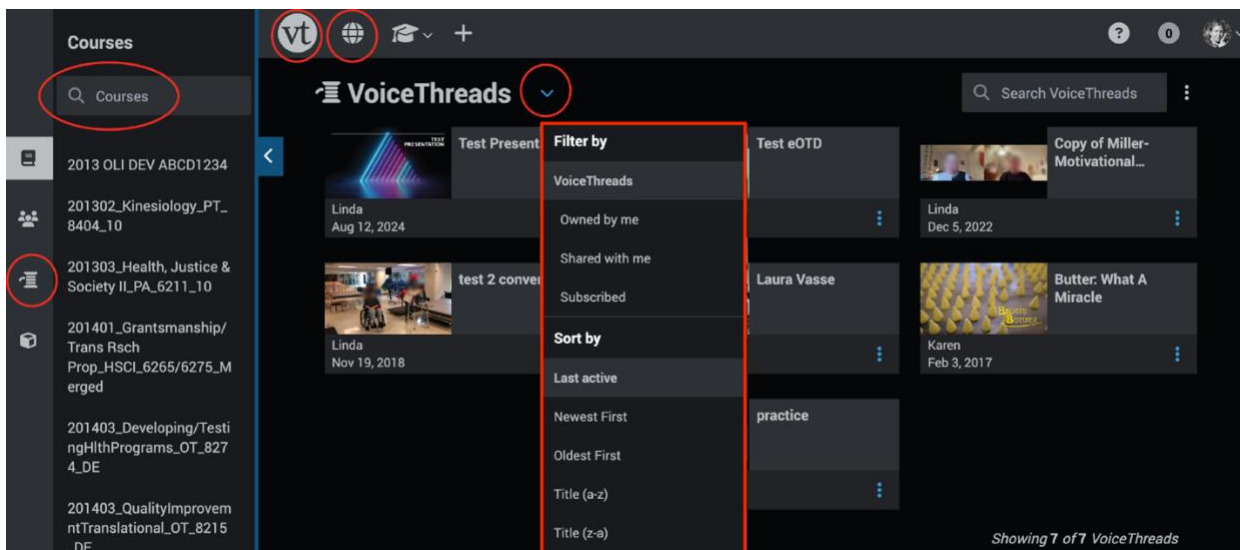
To make a comment, click on the comment icon (a talk bubble with a plus sign) in the lower left of the presentation window (see above).

The commenting options will appear and allow you to comment: by text, microphone, webcam, or uploading a file (see below). If commenting by microphone or webcam, your browser may prompt you to grant VT permission to access your camera and/or microphone. VT is most effective and engaging when comments are made by webcam or microphone. We strongly suggest that you require students to comment by video or voice and model this by doing it yourself. To delete a comment, click on its icon to open it and click the trash icon.



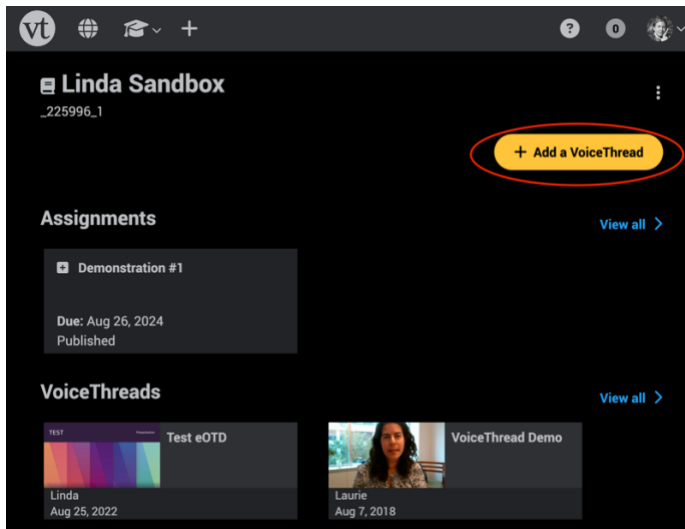
VoiceThread Home Page

The VT Home page is the main administrative view for your VT account. It can be reached in Course View by clicking on the globe icon in the upper left corner. From there, you can search and navigate to all the VTs in all of your courses. Click on the VT icon to the left of the globe to see the VTs you own and those that have been shared with you. Filter using the down arrow to the right of "VoiceThreads."



Creating and Sharing a New VoiceThread

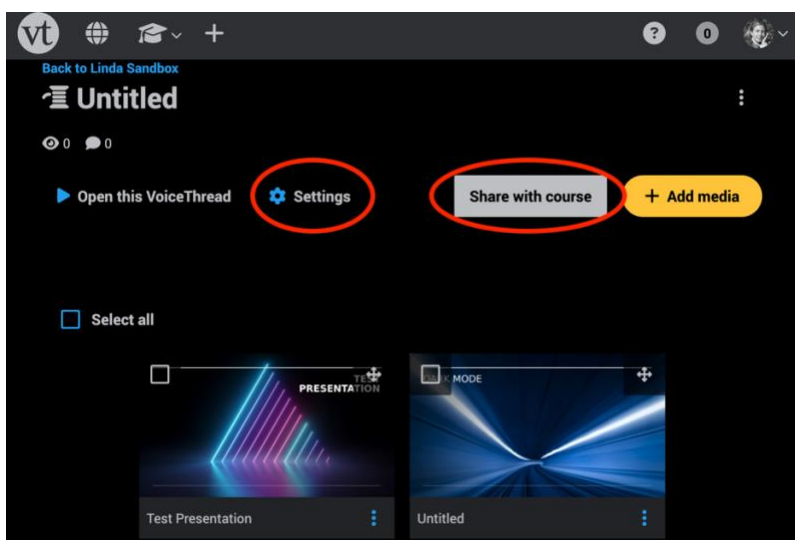
Ideally, VoiceThreads should be created from within the “Course View,” so that they are more easily shared with the course. Those with access to that course can then view and comment. Click on the yellow “+ Add a VoiceThread” button in the upper right to create a new VT. Here you can select an existing VT to share with the course or choose to create a new VT.



Once this button is clicked, you will be asked from where you would like to add media. You can upload photos, graphics, non-narrated slides, pdfs, videos, start recording a webcam video, and more. From here you can open your VT and add narration and comments using VT’s comment feature shown above.

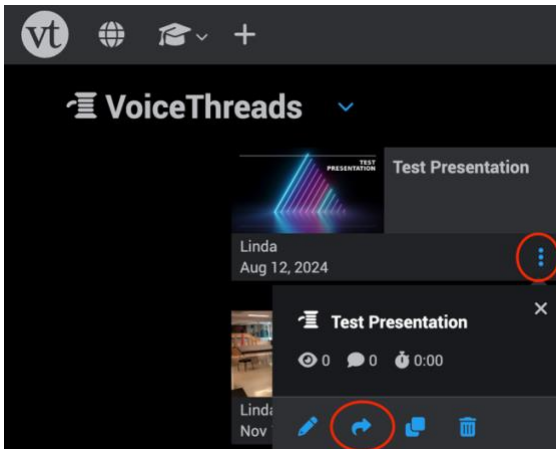
When you have finished, check the settings for your VT by clicking on the gear icon. Scroll to see all of the default settings, which you may change. However, it is not recommended to check “Enable Comment Moderation.” Then click “Save.”

Then click the “Share with Course” button and you will be prompted to give the VT a title. Your VT will not be visible to others until you click “Share with Course.”



Change the Sharing Settings

You can always change the sharing settings of a VT from the “VT Home” page by clicking on the three-dot menu on the VT thumbnail and then clicking the share button (an arrow icon, see below).

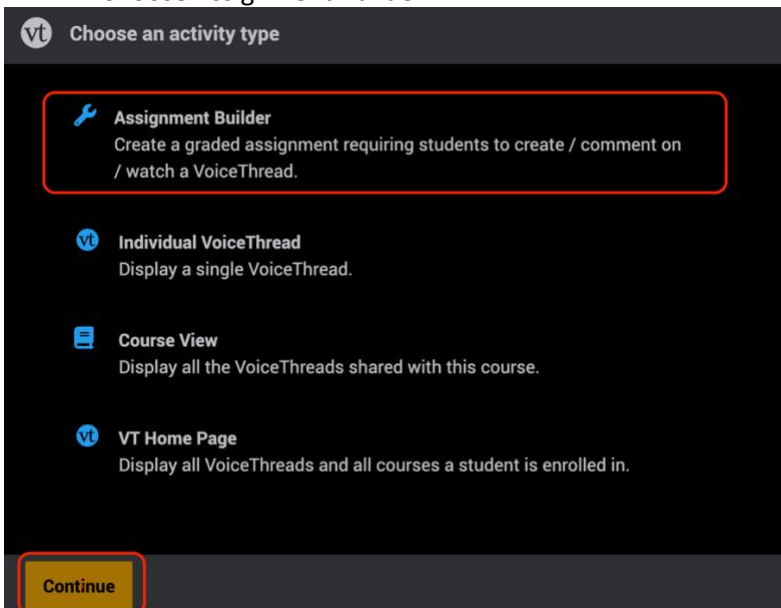


Assignment Builder

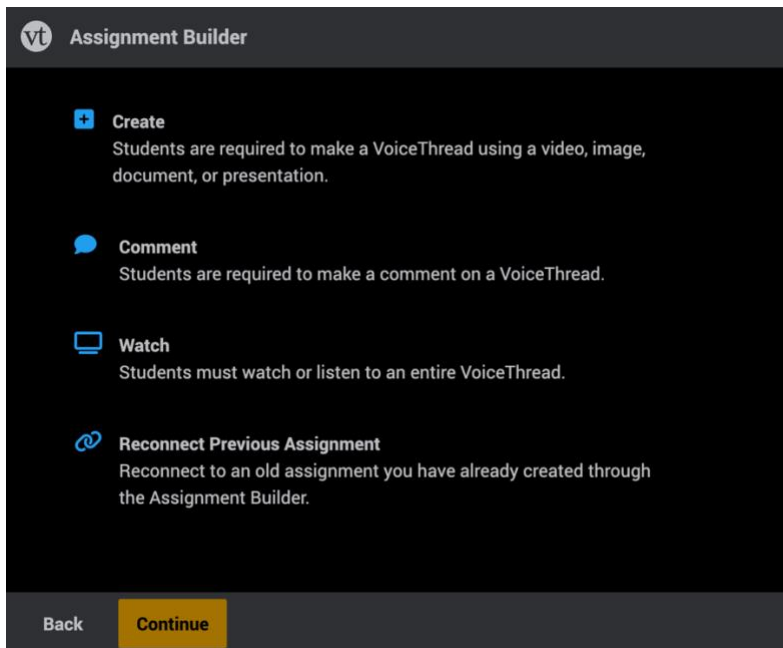
VoiceThread assignments can facilitate grading, but it has some limitations. The Assignment Builder is intended primarily for when instructors want students to submit individual VTs for grading and not necessarily share them with the class for discussion. When used, it creates a grading panel where instructors can see which students have submitted a VT or not, send reminders to those who have not, and enter grades that are sent to the gradebook in Blackboard. However, it assumes that instructors are providing feedback to the student in the VT and only sends the numerical grade to Blackboard, not any feedback. It also does not allow for grading with a rubric.

The Assignment Builder must be set-up before students start submitting an assignment. To set it up:

- Navigate to where you would like to place your assignment.
- Create a new link to VT under “Build Content.”
- Choose Assignment Builder



Choose the type of assignment: Create, Comment, Watch, or Reconnect Previous Assignment. Create is most commonly used. For the Comment assignment, you can either create a VT or select an existing VT, on which the students will comment.



You will then be led through assignment settings. The defaults are generally recommended.

- You will want to set the requirements, either the number of “slides” or comments to include. This will depend on your assignment. For example, if students need only submit a webcam video of themselves, this would count as one “slide” but zero “comments” because their talking, if required, would be done in the video.
- You may want to disable Text as an option for commenting, to encourage students to be more socially present using video or audio comments.
- You may wish to add the “Student Gallery” which allows students to see others’ VTs before and after submitting their own.

vt Assignment Builder

Participation requirements

Number of comments students must record on their own VoiceThread Minimum ▾

Number of slides required Minimum ▾

Select which comment types will be allowed

☒ Microphone
☒ Webcam
☒ Upload
☒ Text

☐ Allow students to add slides to any VoiceThreads for this assignment
☒ Enable threaded commenting
☐ Enable comment moderation
☐ Don't allow commenters to delete their own comments
☐ Limit length of each comment to:
☐ When recording, automatically advance to next slide after.

Playback

☐ Start playing when opened
☐ When final comment on a slide has played, automatically advance to next slide after.

Permissions

☐ Allow download
☐ Allow export
☒ Allow students to make a copy

Open Student Gallery

☐ Allow students to see each other's submissions for this assignment

- Then you will be prompted to name your assignment and given space for instructions.
- Generally, a due date is recommended but not “start” and “close” as the appearance and disappearance of the assignment can be confusing.
- Remember to click “Publish.” It is especially important to remember if you return to change settings, click Publish again.

vt

Assignment Builder

Assignment name

Assignment #3

Assignment instructions

instructions show up here!

Example URL

Message shown to student after they submit

You have successfully submitted the assignment

☐ Student must complete a prior assignment before starting this one

Start date

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Time

12

:

00

AM

Due date

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

09/30/2024

Time

11

:

55

PM

Close date

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Time

12

:

00

AM

☒ Allow students to resubmit assignment

☒ Allow students to view assignment after submitting

Assessment

☒ Percentage

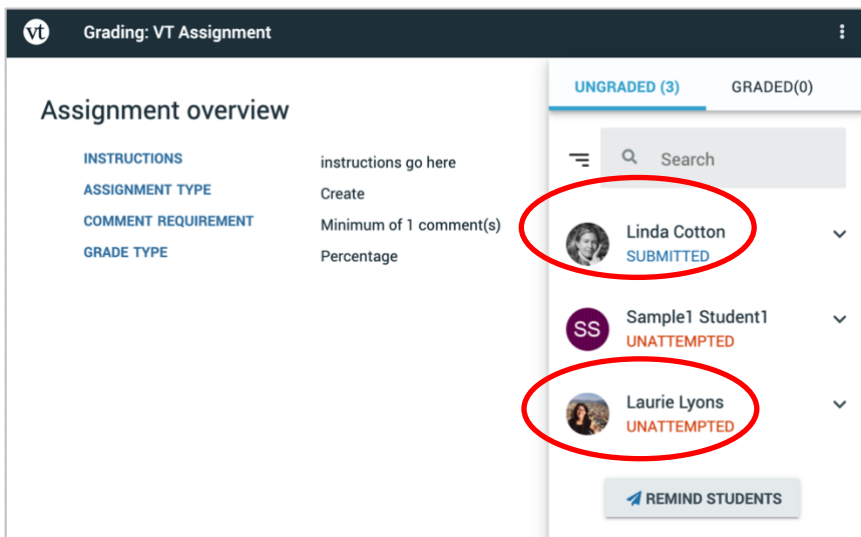
☐ Complete / Incomplete

☐ Points

Back

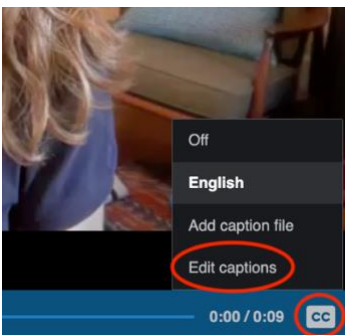
Publish

To grade submitted VTs or comments, click on the assignment link and you will see a list of who has submitted and not submitted.



Accessibility

Captions. New audio or video recordings are captioned automatically. To edit, click on the CC button and choose Edit or Manage Captions.



Alternative Text. On a completed slide, click the three-dot menu at the top right and click the “Edit slide” button (a pencil icon). Enter your text into the slide description field. It will be labeled differently for each type of slide:

- Image or document slide: “Slide description or text preview”
- Audio slide: “Audio Recap”
- Video slide: “Video Description”

Online Help

- ["How to" instructions and videos](#)
- [General Troubleshooting](#)

Need more assistance?

Should your students need additional support, please refer them to the “VoiceThread – Student Guide” document.

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