

Making the Most of XW1W for Middle School Educators

XW1W is a learning tool that you can use in your classroom to create a sense of community with classrooms from around the globe one week at a time--that's what **XW1W** means--**Across the World Once a Week**. It's purpose is to help create digital citizens through collaborative microblogging for cross-cultural understanding. Don't let the tech talk scare you off if you feel your tech skills are less than ideal; this is a once a week activity incorporating user-friendly websites and/or apps into lessons you may be doing already. If you are tech savvy, then you are going to have another tool to increase understanding and build digital literacy.

XW1W is a simple and social way for you and your class to learn more about students across the country, around the globe, just down the hall in your building, and even yourselves. This activity brings higher level thinking, data analysis, conversation and debate, writing, and digital skills together.

On the first day of the week, beginning the first week of October and running through the last week of May, a question will be both tweeted and posted on the TeachersFirst website. It may be something like

- "What is the greatest superpower and worst weakness?"
- "What is your favorite graphic novel?"
- "What is the calorie count of your favorite snack food?"

As the year progresses, the questions will get a bit more involved, but will NEVER be identifying. Your class can join at any time throughout the year, but the earlier your class begins to post an answer, the more your students will gain. As this will be a weekly activity it may be helpful to set up a template, possibly within the LMS if available, for the students to record the question, the class response, the class hypothesis, and the analysis and reflection for ease in record keeping and quarterly reflection.

A sample schedule may look like this:

Day 1: Discuss the question as a class as needed. Students will offer answers to the weekly question using a polling platform or by paper and pencil; the most common response will then be shared using the class's [Twitter \(TeachersFirst review\)](#) account. Twitter requires its users to be a minimum of 13 years old; in the event that all students within that class meet the age parameter, individual accounts could be created and utilized. When the week's answer is posted, it will be crucial to include **#XW1W-M** to signify that your response is to the Middle School level question. Responses may be created using [Canva \(TeachersFirst review\)](#) or [Pablo \(TeachersFirst review\)](#). (10 minutes)

Day 2: Predict responses by other classes and generate a hypothesis. Students will record their predictions and hypotheses in their journal or blog.(10-15 minutes)

Day 3: First, search [Twitter](#) using the “Latest” filter. (This could be teacher/whole class led initially or even as Center or small group activity. Students will become more comfortable searching for the responses and then compiling the results if age permits or within the group.)

Next, collect data and graph if applicable or construct a graphic organizer. A great place for additional professional planning can be found at [TeachersFirst Graphic Organizer Resources](#). Possible graphing options include:

- [MrOwl](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)) for fully sharable and digital organization
- [Graphic Organizers](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#))
- [Freeology](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#))
- [ReadWriteThink Webbing Tool](#) ([TeachersFirst parent site review](#))
- [Online Charts](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)) (20 minutes or more)

Day 4: Analyze results--discuss how the students' answer(s) differ or compare to that of others and is the hypothesis accurate? This is also a reflection activity of the hypothesis, data recording, and analysis. Blogging or journaling through the school's LMS (Learning Management System) is one recommendation for recording students' written analysis of the data and their predictions; another is microblogging using one of the resources listed. Consider these blogging applications:

- [Telegraph](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#))
- [Edublogs](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#))
- [QuadBlogging](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#))

If you are unfamiliar with blogging or would like to just learn more, visit [Blog Basics for the Classroom](#) (a comprehensive tutorial presented by TeachersFirst) or [The Blog Starter](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)). Teachers can add students and assign passwords; at the end of the term or school year, a portfolio of the students' work can be printed if needed. If this is not an option for your school/division, consider a Google Doc shareable file or wiki such as PBWorks. (20 minutes or more)

Note: Days 1 and 2 could be combined if needed, as well as Day 3's activity being completed outside of class.

As you facilitate the discussion of the analysis of the data, graphic organizers will be quite helpful. Graphs will often be a good tool to see trends. Spreadsheets are another great option.

ISTE Standards Addressed

The new definition of digital citizenship focuses on participation, active engagement, and becoming part of a community. This weekly activity can go a long way towards creating digital citizenship as students express disagreements respectfully once they take the time to read a post and reflect on the ideas of others. This activity addresses ISTE Student Standards:

1c--Students use technology to seek feedback that informs and improves their practice and to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways.

2b--Students engage in positive, safe, legal and ethical behavior when using technology, including social interactions online or when using networked devices.

3c--Students curate information from digital resources using a variety of tools and methods to create collections of artifacts that demonstrate meaningful connections or conclusions.

5b--Students collect data or identify relevant data sets, use digital tools to analyze them, and represent data in various ways to facilitate problem-solving and decision-making.

6c--Students communicate complex ideas clearly and effectively by creating or using a variety of digital objects such as visualizations, models or simulations.

7a--Students use digital tools to connect with learners from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, engaging with them in ways that broaden mutual understanding and learning.

Social Studies Standards Addressed

From the National Council for the Social Studies, National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: Chapter 2—The Themes of Social Studies at

<https://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands>:

1. Culture

Through experience, observation, and reflection, students will identify elements of culture as well as similarities and differences among cultural groups across time and place.

4. Individual Development and Identity

Personal identity is shaped by an individual's culture, by groups, by institutional influences, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual's own culture throughout her or his development.

8. Science, Technology, and Society

Science, and its practical application, technology, have had a major influence on social and cultural change, and on the ways people interact with the world.

English/Language Arts Standards Addressed

The scope of this activity also draws in ELA standards. The following standards can be found at <http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira>. The standards that most closely address this activity are:

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. Libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language Use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

Potential Rubric for Middle School Students Grades 6-8

This rubric reflects a student's work over a 9 week grading period, but could be adjusted to a 6 week grading period if necessary. The total points possible for this rubric is 100 points. It should be noted that the reflection and data analysis is more heavily weighted as the student must justify his/her opinion.

Assessment Area	Marginal	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
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Participated Answering the Question of the Week though Posting Polling Posts	Student offered a response to the question, posting for 5 or fewer weeks. Up to 15 Points	Student offered a response to the question, posting for 6 or 7 weeks. 20 Points	Student offered a response to the question, posting for 8 or more weeks. 25 Points
Journaling or Blogging to Predict Responses of Others	Student journaled to predict answers to the weekly question for 5 or fewer weeks. Up to 15 Points	Student journaled to predict answers to the weekly question for 6 or 7 weeks. 20 Points	Student journaled to predict answers to the weekly question for 8 or more weeks. 25 Points
Data Analysis and Written Reflection	Student journaled or blogged to reflect on and analyze answers to the weekly question for 5 or fewer weeks. Up to 30 Points	Student journaled or blogged to reflect on and analyze answers to the weekly question for 6 or 7 weeks. 40 Points	Student journaled or blogged to reflect on and analyze answers to the weekly question for 8 or more weeks. 50 Points

So let's get started. Here's what you will need:

- A class account through [Edublogs](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)), [QuadBlogging](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)), or something similar. If you are unfamiliar with blogging or would like to just learn more, visit [Blog Basics for the Classroom](#) (a comprehensive tutorial presented by TeachersFirst) or [The Blog Starter](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)) You will enter your students and create passwords. You will need to decide if blogs will remain private or if others in your class can make comments. (You may also need parental permission if a district-wide agreement has not been signed previously.)
- A polling platform account such as [GoSoapBox](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)), [Survey Planet](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)), [Mentimeter](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#)), and [Nearpod](#) ([TeachersFirst review](#))