

So far in the MLearning sessions I have been exploring the use of mobile devices largely for out-of-class learning, or learning on-the-move. I believe that this is the easiest and most accessible way to introduce MLearning to your teaching for the following reasons.

- Many institutions have rules prohibiting the use of mobile devices in the classroom; this makes it difficult for the English teacher to "buck the system".
- In class uses of mobile technology require learners to have the devices, at a ratio of at least 1 mobile device per two learners. While it's true that more and more learners will have such a device perhaps not all of them will.
- Problems could arise in class if some learners have higher performance devices than others. An activity requiring a quick web browse or application will look a lot better on a tablet computer than on a phone. Some devices may work more quickly than others too.

However, restricting mobile learning to outside the classroom does not mean that there needn't be a link to what goes on inside the classroom. In fact, it's even more important that this link be made clear to the learners. Just like traditional pen and paper homework, MLearning work will be seen to have more value if the link to classwork is visible.

This can be done in two broad ways:

1. Making the link from class to outside class.

Starting something in a lesson and then following it up after the lesson using mobile devices.

2. Making the link from outside class to class.

Setting a task using mobile devices before a lesson and following this up in the lesson.

Let's look at an example of how this could be done. Imagine a course unit about buildings (I am thinking of this, because there is a great unit on highly controversial buildings in the upcoming Global Advanced coursebook!). Here are some suggestions of how you could harness MLearning before or after the lesson

MAKING THE LINK BEFORE THE LESSON

Ask students to take photos using their phones or digital camera on the way to class of different buildings. They must be prepared to talk about them in class.

Ask students to find an app that gives information about buildings in their town, especially famous buildings. This can be in their own language. They must be prepared to show it to others in class.

LESSON TOPIC – Highly controversial buildings

MAKING THE LINK AFTER THE LESSON

Ask students to find more information about one of the buildings in the class, or more information about the architect behind them.

Ask students to prepare a slideshow of other particularly ugly (or beautiful) buildings around where they live.

These are just some suggestions. Of course there are others, and in Global we tried to cover a variety of situations. See our next article below.