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How to Use the Hypothesis Social Annotation Tool to Improve Engagement and Outcomes

UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

What's Hypothesis?

- Web browser add-on that allows for commenting on (annotating) anything on the web, in public groups or private

- Can also be used in Blackboard (via LTI)

- Integrates with the grade center so that Hypothesis assignments can be graded

- ***Meets students where they are***
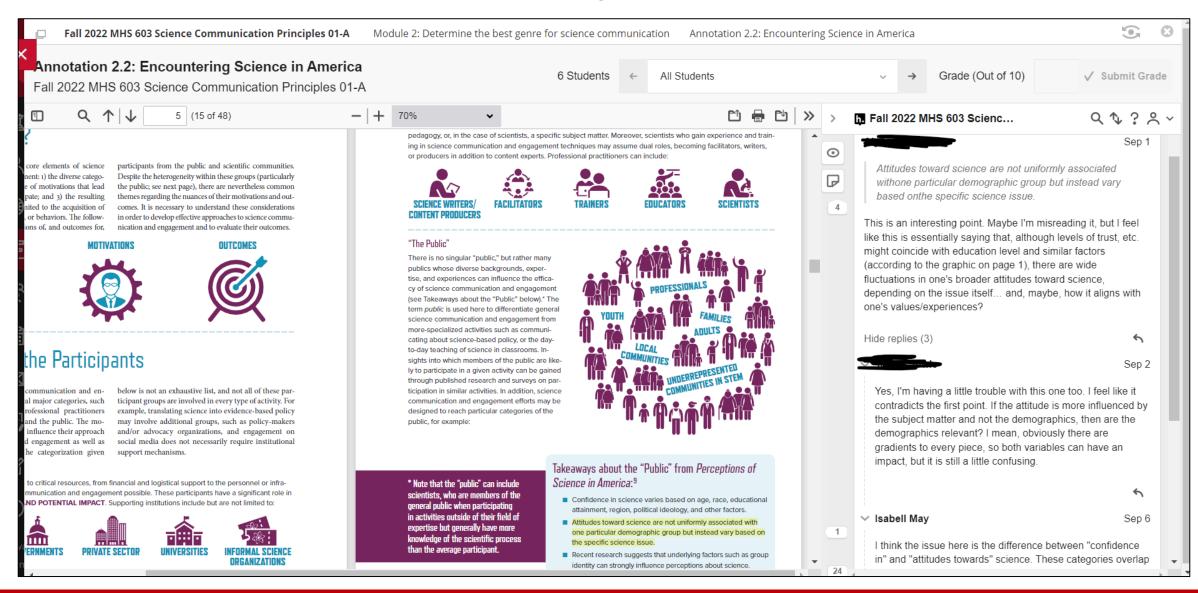
How Might You Use Hypothesis in a Class?

- Deepening group discussion on a reading, video, or other resource delivered online
    - Encouraging students to learn from one another's readings/interpretations of and thinking around resources in a more concrete way
    - Gain information about student comprehension, analysis, and synthesis of resources to better inform your teaching
- Engaging the class in group critiques and analyses of case studies, example assignments, etc.
- Encouraging peer review of student drafts
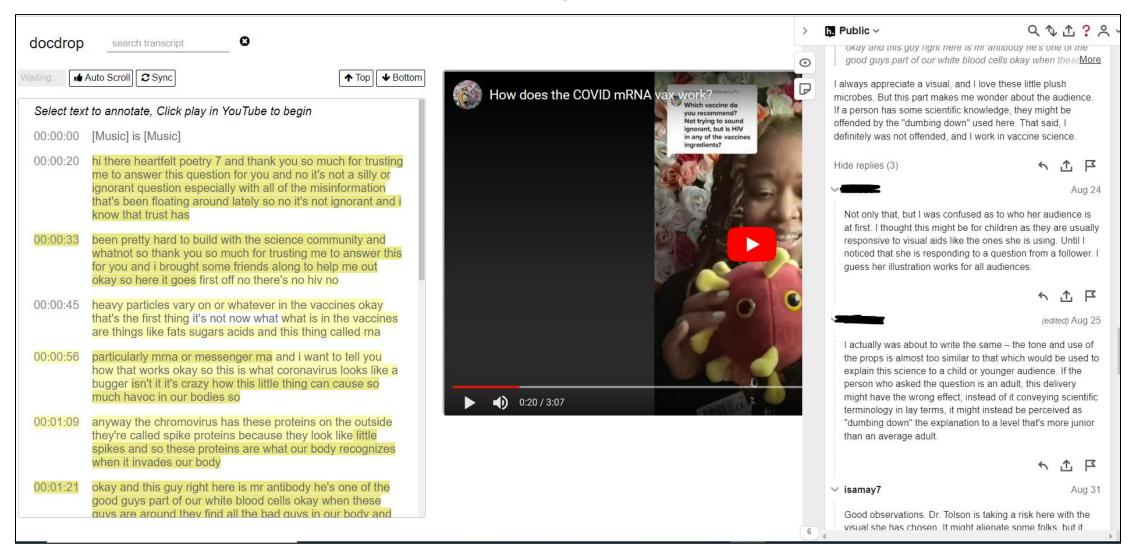- Other ideas from pp. 3-5 of the [UMSSW IDEA Team NTAGI Issue on Hypothesis](#)

What Other Uses Might There Be?

- Study tool for individuals or groups (promotes better retention for exams as well as for bringing thoughts and analysis to class discussion)

- Aid for keeping track of quotes, paraphrasing, citations, and such for projects, papers, lit reviews, etc.

- Annotating/asking questions about a syllabus or other activity/ assignment

- Work tool for giving feedback on anything undergoing development

What Does it Look Like? Example 1

What Does it Look Like? Example 2

Hypothesis Feedback:
MHS 603 – Science Communication Principles, Fall 2021-2022

- "I'm honestly excited for this question because I have to admit, when I first read about these annotation assignments, I kind of sighed and thought "well, okay, every course has some kind of discussion board." I wish every course used these instead of regular message boards where, inevitably, everyone signs on about three minutes before the deadline to make the same point five different ways! The annotations, instead, drove me to stay focused on what I was reading and, also, in cases where my peers had already read/marked annotations, it genuinely gave me additional perspectives and helped me recognize key points I may have otherwise glossed over. I honestly really appreciate the Hypothesis annotations and wish more professors used these!"

Hypothesis Feedback:
MHS 603 – Science Communication Principles, Fall 2021-2022, cont.

- "They do help with engaging with the reading material, but I can get so engulfed with completing the annotation assignment that I miss some of the key points in the reading."

- "I found it insightful when reading some of my peer's annotations, it helps me see how others are processing the same information we were given, and that we could provide feedback to other's annotations. It gave online learning that real classroom feeling."

- "It is interesting to read what others think. It has also shown me that we seem to share a number of things/values in common."

Hypothesis Feedback:
MHS 600 – Introduction to Library Research & Scholarly Writing, Fall 2022

- "I think they are very helpful especially in relating with the material, it is easier to remember things that stood out for you."

Hypothesis Feedback:
Writing Consultant Training, Fall 2022

- "Hypothesis was super easy to use and I loved that it was already in the content rather than having to open other channels. Responding to other consultants was difficult in this time frame, maybe if this was encouraged rather than required."

- "Hypothesis was easy to use and made the readings a fun, dynamic, and interactive experience. It enhanced my ability to understand and evaluate the texts through a critical lens. The major drawback that I encountered was that seeing other peoples' comments as I was reading the texts for the first time biased my reading of it. Maybe a strategy that we could use in the future is to hide the annotations, read the text, and then go back and look at what other people have written."

How Do You Implement Hypothesis?

- See pp. 6-8 of the [UMSSW IDEA Team NTAGI Issue on Hypothesis](#)

- [Hypothesis page on the IDEA Team Knowledgebase](#)

- [Hypothesis Knowledgebase](#)

- Hypothesis technical support email: support@hypothes.is

Other Helpful Resources

- Liquid Margins
- UMB Hypothesis Workshop Slides
- How to set up Hypothesis readings in BB
- How to grade Hypothesis annotations in BB
- Using Hypothesis with BB Course Files
- A student guide to Hypothesis in BB
- Using Hypothesis with small groups
- A student guide to Hypothesis in Blackboard

Other Helpful Resources, cont.

- Annotation etiquette for students
- An Illustrated Guide to Annotation Types
- Using images, links, and videos in annotations
- Partner-created Resources