Your Guide to Enriching Lives, One Video at a Time
Lesson Plan

The Wonderful World of YouTube Learning
- **YouTube**: Where the World Goes for Video and Learning
- **The Evolution of YouTube Learning**

Getting Started & Standing Out
- Choosing What to Teach the World
- Finding Your Audience
- Discovering Your Niche
- Formats for Learning Videos
- How to Gain (and Keep) Your Audience’s Trust

How to Engage & Grow Your YouTube Audience
- The ABCs of Growth
- Beyond the ABCs: More Tools to Grow Your Channel
- A World of Opportunity: How (and Why) to Make Your Content Go Global
- Your Learning Content Study Guide

YOUTUBE LEARNING: THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF YOUTUBE LEARNING
The Wonderful World Of YouTube Learning
YouTube Is Where The World Comes For Video...

1.9B
1.9 billion people use YouTube every single month.

400
Over 400 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute.

1B
People around the world watch a billion hours of YouTube’s incredible content every day.

95%
Localized versions of YouTube are now live in 91 countries around the world, covering 95% of all internet traffic.
EXTRAORDINARY CLASSROOM

YouTube is an extraordinary classroom where anyone with passion and knowledge can create learning videos ranging from the academic to the practical. And it’s waiting for teachers like you.

LIFELONG LEARNING

YouTube fuels lifelong (and life-changing) learning: In the past year, Watch Time increased 38% on learning videos covering professional skills such as writing resumes, job interviews, and career planning.

70% OF MILLENNIALS

Last year, 70% of Millennial YouTube users watched YouTube to learn something new or learn more about something they were interested in.

1 MILLION+

Every day, more than 1 million learning videos are shared across YouTube.

...And Where The World Comes To Learn

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In a burst of innovation, creators ushered in the viral arrival of “YouTube Edutainment”: standalone videos tackling topics like “What Is Gravity?” in a single, delightful sitting.

Educational YouTube videos are almost as old as YouTube itself. Early learning videos were simple, often made with webcams or inexpensive camcorders.

Channels are engaging audiences with lessons that span multiple videos and encourage viewers to keep coming back. Topics range from academic subjects to professional skills for new careers.
Getting Started & Standing Out
Choosing What To Teach The World

Curious about what to teach?
Teach what makes you curious.

Creating your learning channel begins with choosing its topic. To do so, ask yourself: **What subject delights and inspires you? What’s your expertise, or your fascination?**

YouTube is a huge place, where utilizing a few key principles and tactics can help almost any topic succeed.

Let’s look at putting those principles and tactics into practice.

“Especially in the beginning, worry less about how many people watch what you make and more about how many people love what you make.”

*John Green*
Finding Your Audience

To Build An Audience For Your Content, Build Your Content For An Audience.

High Level of Pre-Existing Interest

Low Level of Content Competition

Your Audience Awaits
If You Teach It, Will They Come?

Here’s How To Find Out...

“Is There A High Level Of Pre-Existing Interest?”

Google Trends analyzes a percentage of Google searches to determine how many searches were done for specific terms over a certain period of time. The more consistent the popularity, the more likely an audience exists for your content.

“Is There A Low Level Of Content Competition?”

YouTube Search can gauge how much content competition exists for your topic.

“How Big Is The Audience Awaiting This Content?”

Google Keyword Planner allows you to search for keywords and see how they might perform. “Search popularity” can help give you a sense of how many times relevant keywords are used each month.
With tools like Trends, Keyword Planner, and YouTube Search, you can see what the world is searching for and how much competition already exists for your niche.

Extraordinary things happen in the sweet spot: In just over 2 years, Lessons from the Screenplay has reached more than 865,000 subscribers and 24 million lifetime views. And it’s doing more than just entertaining viewers: It’s providing an education for people aspiring to a screenwriting career.

“My audience tends to be young adults interested in filmmaking.... Back in school, I often overlooked the storytelling fundamentals that make for a good story. With my channel, I try to highlight the importance of these fundamentals.”

- Michael Tucker, Channel Founder

Question To Consider: If your preferred topic is in an overcrowded space, what unique angle or value can set you apart?
With your channel subject in mind, what's the best way to choose the specific content you’ll make?

Learning channels often take one of two paths with their topics: a “zoomed-in,” specialty look at a particular niche, or a “zoomed-out,” more generalized approach.

Our most recent data is clear: One approach is more likely to help channels “break out” and create a thriving, engaging experience.

Case Study

General Or Niche?

Which Channel Would You Predict Performed More Strongly?

CHANNEL #1: HOW TO ADULT

- CONTENT FOCUS: Everything you need to know about adulthood that school never taught you.

CHANNEL #2: THE FINANCIAL DIET

- CONTENT FOCUS: Accessible financial advice and insights for the Millennial Generation.
While both *How to Adult* and *The Financial Diet* are engaging and well-made channels—and both were produced by the same company, Hank Green and John Green’s Complexly—*The Financial Diet*’s growth outpaced *How to Adult*’s for three main reasons.

1. With a specific niche, viewers knew what TFD had to offer them, driving subscriptions.
2. The channel’s focus encouraged repeat viewership.
3. TFD’s clear brand elevated its standing and shareability as a financial authority.

*The Financial Diet*’s strong and consistent audience engagement drove more recommendations on the platform, triggering growth that significantly exceeded *How to Adult*’s performance.
What Video Formats Work For Learning Content?


- **ANIMATION**
- **HOW-TO**
- **LECTURE**
- **VIDEO ESSAY**
- **HOMEWORK HELP**

**Bonus Tip:**
Every format has advantages & obstacles. As you choose, be sure to consider...

- What are your natural strengths?
- What can your budget of time and finances sustain?
Format Pros & Cons: Animation

**PROS**
- Allows visuals that would otherwise be impossible.
- Highly versatile, inviting format that can cover many topics and tones.

**CONS**
- Requires very specific artistic and technical skills.
- Often extremely time-consuming and labor-intensive to produce.
Format Pros & Cons: Homework Help

**PROS**

- Encourages repeat viewership, especially for series/playlists that dive progressively deeper into topics.
- Can cover subjects that are broadly appealing to viewers (like World History), as well as subjects aimed more specifically to students (like Chemistry).

**CONS**

- Risks losing audience interest if video and host aren’t highly engaging.
- Requires relatively high time investment (research, etc.).
Format Pros & Cons: How-To’s

PROS

- Among the most popular type of YouTube searches.
- Viewers don’t necessarily expect a traditionally-schooled expert—only an accurate source of information.

CONS

- May lead to viewers who watch only a single video without subscribing.
- Without proper niche research and execution, can be difficult to rank high in search results.
Format Pros & Cons: Lecture

PROS
- Lecture videos are among the most popular YouTube learning content, and often shared cross-platform.
- Similarly, lecture videos have anecdotally been among the most impactful on viewers’ lives.

CONS
- With the format so closely associated with major established brands, it could be difficult to grow a new competing channel/brand.
- Often requires academic credentials and invitation to major speaking events.
Format Pros & Cons: Video Essay

**PROS**
- Since it does not focus on an on-camera host, video essays allow for stylistic, mixed-media experimentation.
- Viewers of this format seem receptive to creators covering a wider variety of topics, as long as the thoughtfulness and style remain consistent.

**CONS**
- Since many video essays examine (and show) cultural or artistic moments and ideas, there may be a greater danger of copyright issues.
- Like animation, extremely post-production heavy.
Gaining & Keeping Audience Trust
As a learning creator, your audience’s trust is your most precious asset.

To Keep That Trust, Be Sure To...

1. **Highlight Your Credentials**
   - In her video descriptions, channel banner, and channel description, Kati Morton mentions her certification as a licensed therapist and mental health professional.

2. **Cite Your Sources**
   - The Healthcare Triage often cites multiple authoritative sources, displaying them onscreen and including links in video descriptions.
   - A study was published in the Journal of Sleep Research that took 50 college students and compared their performance on math effort tasks after a night of normal and deprived sleep. It should come as no surprise that the sleep deprived kids were more likely to show less effort in selecting tasks.
   - The study was conducted in 2003.

3. **Maintain Your Credibility**
   - Nobody’s perfect, and audiences are receptive to corrections. If you make a mistake or if new information renders your video inaccurate, sincerely apologize and correct your error, whether in a new video or by using YouTube tools like cards.
Engaging & Growing Your Audience
YouTube Tools + Learning = 

YouTube’s amazing community and wealth of tools make it a perfect home for Learning Content.

“The ABCs of Growth”
Analytics

Demographics & Playback Locations in YouTube Analytics can strengthen your content strategy. For example, they can guide you to make videos for engaged viewers in other countries, as well as help you determine the time of day to upload your videos when your primary viewers are most likely to be on YouTube.

External Traffic Sources displays the origin of your off-platform traffic, which can also inform your strategy. Proactively cultivate outside traffic sources: Online communities dedicated to your channel’s focus can be terrific sources of early viewers and encouragement.
As her channel description shares, Oprah Winfrey called Marie “a thought leader for the next generation.” Yet Marie’s videos begin by showcasing her fun, relatable personality. Studies suggest we learn better when we can relate to those who teach us.

Marie’s channel banner communicates her content focus, and suggests a sense of lightheartedness not always associated with business education.

Finally, Marie’s value proposition and personality are consistent across her social media. Here, her Instagram shares insights into both her lessons and her life.
Key Point To Remember: YouTube is a social network driven by genuine and meaningful connections.

Connections: Three Examples You Can Try

Creator & Viewer
- Respond to comments frequently and thoughtfully.
- Like and pin your favorite comments.
- Appoint comment moderators and activate automated comment filters to minimize offensive comments.

Creator & Creator
- Don’t be an island. Engage with other creators by leaving sincere YouTube comments and reaching out on other platforms.
- Utilize collaborations. Making “collabs” with other creators isn’t just a great way to grow your audience; it’s also a chance to connect with folks who understand what being a learning creator means.

Viewer & Viewer
- Be the change. Especially as viewership increases, creators become leaders who set the tone for their community. By setting an example of enthusiasm for learning and kindness toward others, you encourage viewers to engage with each other using those same values.
Playlists

Organize videos to optimize learning.

Learning creators like Rachel’s English and aBookUtopia use playlists to guide viewers through their curriculum and/or related videos. This seamless, step-by-step experience helps increase Watch Time and drive multisession viewing.
End Screens

End screens are clickable elements that appear in the last 5-20 seconds of a video.

- **Consider pairing with verbal calls-to-action** for added impact.

- **Don’t overwhelm audiences.** Choose the 2-3 most important links, buttons, etc., for each end screen.

- **Check your “end screens” reports** in YouTube Analytics to understand which ones perform best and optimize accordingly.
Educational content might not be the first thing that comes to mind when you hear “live streaming,” but it can a powerful resource for learning creators.

- **Live streaming facilitates personal interaction** with viewers, strengthening their connection to creators.
- **In between “regular” videos, live streaming can keep subscribers engaged.** Consider making Q&A streams a regular part of your schedule—you can even call them “Office Hours” for your “students.”
- **Live streaming allows you to teach lessons in real-time, answering viewer questions as they come up.** For example, *The Coding Train* regularly livestreams coding lessons.
End Screens:
Like live streaming, your channel’s Community tab is a great way to keep subscribers engaged between videos. It also has the power to add unique value to your viewers’ lives.

- **Share relevant information that doesn’t naturally fit into videos.** For instance, 100 Days utilized the Community tab to share details on diet and exercise routines mentioned in their videos.

- **Use the community tab to strengthen what your viewers have learned.** English with Lucy makes quiz videos and then engages with viewers in the Community tab about their scores.
To help continue creating great content, consider utilizing Channel Memberships, a way for viewers to support your channel financially. In exchange for a monthly payment, members receive perks such as custom emojis and exclusive live streams, and more. Here are some tips to make the most out of memberships.

- **Promote your memberships.** Creators who make announcement videos tend to gain more members. Also, continue spreading the word at the end of each video, just like you’d remind viewers to comment, like, and subscribe.

- **Keep it manageable.** A great perk doesn’t cost you much, but is exciting to members because they can’t get it anywhere else. Make sure the perks are also scalable: the time required to deliver them should remain the same, even as your number of members grows.
Beyond The ABCs: Make Your Content Go Global

Community Translations

Enable community contributions to allow your fans to translate subtitles to different languages for you.

Did You Know?
YouTube’s international audience grows every second, and 50% of YouTube traffic originates outside of the uploader’s country. For learning creators, it’s truly a world of opportunity.

Content With No Language Barrier

Experiment with content that is visually self-explanatory and understandable without audio. For instance, Primitive Technology creates language-agnostic content and adds closed captions of key points in 17 different languages.

Two Ideas To Try...

- Turn on or off community contributions for all of the videos you’ve uploaded. This will also turn on this feature by default for new videos.
- You can turn this feature on or off for an individual video at any time from its settings page.

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YOUTUBE LEARNING: ENGAGING & GROWING YOUR AUDIENCE
Your Learning Content Study Guide

Thank you so much for being part of our incredible learning creator community. We’re working on some amazing new projects we think will help learning creators grow their impact and audience to even greater heights. Stay tuned.

1. Choose a Channel Topic You Love
2. Use Data to Discover Your Niche
3. Find a Format That Fits
4. Earn and Keep Your Viewers’ Trust
5. Utilize YouTube Tools to Make Your Channel Even More Awesome
Class Dismissed