

Discuss on Twitter

e-lang citizen team

Teacher Sheet

Tasks

Your students will be given the following task.

You want to explore and discuss a current topic on an issue that means a lot to you and that may or may not be controversial (climate change, poverty, food security, social inequity, mental health, cancel culture...).

On Twitter, you will (1) search for bloggers (Twitter accounts) who discuss topics that interest you, (2) select accounts to follow, (3) read and produce content as per the functions of Twitter, and (4) curate and share content with your peers.

Website

<https://twitter.com/>

Available in many languages.

In order to participate as a contributor, students will need to create an account. Anyone can read tweets without having an account, so long as the account is open to the public. Once an account has been created, participants may choose to have a public or private account. Discussions regarding the pros and cons about public and/or private accounts will be an important step in the overall task.

Further reading on using Twitter in education and/or language learning contexts:

- how to use Twitter: <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter#tweets>;
- how to participate in public conversations via Twitter: <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/twitter-rules>;
- glossary to better understand the various functionalities of Twitter: <https://help.twitter.com/en/resources/glossary>;
- article that discusses why signs form an important part of the language when interacting in social media contexts: <https://theconversation.com/why-emojis-and-hashtags-should-be-part-of-language-learning-123943>;

- a booklet published by Unesco on how to teach with twitter: <https://about.twitter.com/content/dam/about-twitter/en/tfg/download/teaching-learning-with-twitter-unesco.pdf>.

CEFR level - For B1 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacies

	Dimensions covered in task	(Potential) specific objectives
Digital citizenship	Ethical and responsible	Understand how language is used to influence readers, and the impact that producing content using social media tools may have on readers.
	Safe	Learn how to avoid and/or handle offensive behaviour.
Technological literacy		Learn to follow/unfollow accounts, block or mute followers, accept or decline follower requests, etc.

Main language activities

- Written reception: curating content, selecting specific topics, analysing content.
- Written production: producing content (new tweet, quote tweet or answer).
- Written interaction: liking, retweeting, answering, quote retweeting.

Plurilingual/Intercultural aspects

Participating in social media discourse will allow learners to:

- be exposed to multiple and new points of views and values (individual and/or collective);
- understand how cultural dimensions may affect our interpretation of what we read and write.

Reading and tweeting in one or more languages to compare how point of views might be expressed differently. If using a translation tool to read or produce content, participants can engage on a critical analysis of the tool (for those at a higher language competency level, B2 level and above).

Possible steps

This task can be carried out in several steps:

- Discuss the use of social media apps and assess who has experience with Twitter.
- Explain why Twitter was chosen for this task.
- Assist learners in setting up or reviewing their account, putting emphasis on the rules and regulations as well as important ethical behaviour. This in itself can constitute a task as it is an important feature in the learning process.
- Engage in a discussion with learners to help the group decide on topics that interest them on Twitter. These topics may be directly related to themes studied in class (e.g. cooking, travelling) if the objective of the activity is more focused on language development.
- Start tweeting with your students on a regular basis.
- Reflect on their practices, encouraging learners to assess their presence, the power of their interactions, and the influences that the task may have on their language development, cultural perceptions, or values.

Discuss on Twitter

e-lang citizen team

Student Sheet

Task

You want to explore and discuss a current topic on an issue that means a lot to you and that may or may not be controversial (climate change, poverty, food security, social inequity, mental health, cancel culture...).

On Twitter, you will (1) search for bloggers who discuss topics that interest you, (2) select accounts to follow, (3) read, and produce content as per the functionalities of Twitter, and (4) curate and share content with your peers.

Site

<https://twitter.com/>

Available in many languages.

In order to participate as a contributor, you will need to create an account. Anyone can read tweets without having an account, so long as the account is open to the public. Once creating an account, you may choose to have a public or private account. Make sure to reflect on the pros and cons about open and/or private accounts.

Here's a rephrased version for better readability:

Take some time to familiarize yourself with Twitter's rules and terms of use for discussing specific topics:

- how to use Twitter: <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter#tweets>;
- how to participate in public conversations via Twitter: <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/twitter-rules>;
- glossary to better understand the various functionalities of Twitter: <https://help.twitter.com/en/resources/glossary>.

CEFR level - For B1 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacies

While completing this task, you can:

- learn about the various functions of Twitter;
- learn how to participate in a safely;
- learn how to deal with disruptive behaviour;
- reflect on why you may/may not become an active participant on social media;
- learn how to be creative within the technical constraints of Twitter;
- reflect critically on the content produced on Twitter (points of views, values, facts, ...);
- reflect on the use of an automatic translation tool to help you produce more accurate content.

Inclusive dimensions (plurilingual / intercultural)

Reflect on the following aspects:

- When discussing a particular topic, did you notice different points of view related to particular contexts (such as participants from other countries, speaking different languages, etc.)?
- How are multiple views expressed in relation to the topic and the author(s) of the account? (e.g. discourse, hashtags, emoticons, gifs)
- Are points of view and values expressed in specific ways (such as polarising views, culturally motivated content, etc.)?
- Are you surprised by some of the ways in which ideas are expressed? Why?

Hints

Keep in mind who you are addressing

Take the time to read the rules and regulations of Twitter (see *Rules and Policies*: <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies>) and to understand how to protect yourself (see *A safer Twitter*: <https://help.twitter.com/en/resources/a-safer-twitter>).

Work on the language-related aspects

When reading tweets in the language(s) that you are studying, pay a particular attention to words and their context. Do you notice words or other forms of expression (emoticons, GIFs, hashtags, ...) that are often used to express an opinion, make a statement, or to answer someone else's tweet?

Depending on your level of competency, you may want to use an automatic translation tool (such as DeepL: <https://www.deepl.com/translator>) before posting a tweet or to help you understand a complex message. The more you produce and interact on the platform, the less you will need to depend on external tools. When microblogging, language accuracy does not need to be perfect; it is the power of the message that is more important.

When tweeting from your mobile device, remember to add languages to your keyboard settings so that when you produce content, the device will guide you in editing your language.

For you to think about

While completing the task, you can reflect on the following:

- Did you notice a change in the way you participated in Twitter (more/less producing over time; more/less interaction over time; regular/irregular participation; ...)? If so, how can you explain these changes?
- How did you set up your account (private, public)? Would you change it now?
- Did you have to mute or block accounts? Did you notice disruptive behaviour or language? How did you react?
- Did you use tools to help you with the language aspect? Did you notice a decrease or increase in your use of these tools over time?
- If you use other social media tools on a regular basis, how would you assess the efficacy of Twitter for the task in which you were involved? Would you prefer another platform? Which one and why?
- Are you planning on continuing to tweet? Why or why not? In which language(s)?