

Please write no more than 300 words on the following topic:

**How have you put blended learning (i.e. combining online and classroom learning) or technology into practice to help your students prepare for an exam? How did you know this method was successful?**

### **Entry from Roberto Murakami**

I have recently done an experiment with two groups of CEF Level C2 students located in two different cities 80km apart. The aim of the experiment was to give them the opportunity to work collaboratively at a distance to create group conversations online using web-based tools that did not demand great expertise.

The students' task was to reflect on and discuss the topic of quality leisure time, and to fulfil it, they used VoiceThread, a collaborative, multimedia slide show that holds images, documents and videos, allowing its users to browse pages and leave comments using their voice, text, audio file, or video. To create their slides so as to start collecting and sharing ideas, other tools were used: Visuwords (graphical dictionary), Wordle (word cloud generator) and Bubbl.us (mind-map creator). They also used royalty-free image banks, digital cameras and webcams.

The Voicethreads were planned and discussed in class, and then later produced and uploaded at home. Having done that, the two groups engaged in online conversations, asking and answering questions, making and inviting comments, adding points, provoking, etc.

On setting up this project, my primary objective was to help them to prepare for the Cambridge CPE exam, so they were strenuously advised to plan their interventions very carefully in terms of content, discourse, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

To wrap things up, we had a feedback session, in which the students pointed out that they had greatly enjoyed the process of producing content to be shared with people remotely/online. By having been provided with great scope for authentic self-expression and sharing of ideas, they never lost sight of their audience during the process. This proved to be a great awareness-raising tool, and in linguistic terms, there was significant gain in their oral and written production afterwards.