Flipping the distance classroom
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Abstract
A "flipped classroom" assigns lecture learning for homework and uses in-person class time for hands-on practice with the instructor's support. It's an exciting model, but how can it work for distance students? Portland State University's Senior Inquiry program offers high school seniors a PSU Freshman Inquiry course at their schools for college credit. This lightning talk outlines how the Distance Learning Librarian at PSU used LibGuides, Google Docs, YouTube, and lots of friendly reminders to help teachers flip information literacy instruction for these distance students.

Slide 1 title	Hi, I'm Amy Hofer, the distance learning librarian at Portland State University. I'm going to talk about flipping information literacy instruction for distance high school students that are enrolled in a year-long PSU course exploring interdisciplinary themes for college credit.
Slide 2 backflip	A "flipped classroom" assigns lecture learning for homework and uses in-person class time for hands-on practice with the instructor's support. The main objective is to prioritize active learning in the classroom. You can make the homework active as well, of course.
Slide 3 carrot/stick	A common problem that librarians encounter with the flipped model: what if the students don't bother to do their homework? Then they won't be prepared to come in and participate in the activity. You have two options to handle this, a carrot and a stick, which I'll come back to in a minute.
Slide 4 SrINQ	The Senior Inquiry program is part of University Studies. I work closely with the program director and have some contact with the teachers. I don't have any direct contact with the students, so I depend on teachers to share links, handouts, and other teaching content that I create for them.
Slide 5 Guinea pig	So, my population of guinea pigs for flipped instruction was distance students that attend four different Portland high schools. All the students have to write a research paper. And all the students were invited to campus for one gigantic 300-person mixer. Here's what I planned for them.
Slide 6 Goldilocks	First, I wanted students to have a provisional research question before their visit to the PSU library. I used Google Docs to send their teachers a slideshow and script for my lesson on finding a great research topic (not too broad, not

	too narrow, but just right).
Slide 7 hourglass	I also sent a handout that guides students through exercises like trying to talk about their topic for a whole minute without stopping, which comes from Bill Badke. If you can't do that then you probably need more background information, and this is the perfect time to use Wikipedia.
Slide 8 libguide	Next, I wanted students to get practice with database searching either at home or in their classroom before they came to PSU. So I added a search tab to the Senior Inquiry libguide that embeds the videos and tutorials that they should do. As I mentioned, I rely on the teachers to share the link to the guide.
Slide 9 youtube	The search tab has a bunch of short how-tos, created by us and by other libraries. We make ours with Camtasia then upload them to a shared YouTube account for library instruction. We upload transcripts and youtube adds captions.
Slide 10 gots	The last thing on the tab is an interactive Guide on the Side tutorial. This open-source software was developed at University of Arizona and it directs students through a search in a live browser window with a frame of written instructions on the left.
Slide 11 scaffolding	Hopefully this provides some scaffolding to their search instruction. First they watch the demo, then they try it themselves with directions on the side. Then they do another worksheet that takes them through some basic moves in Academic Search Complete to modify a keyword search that's too broad.
Slide 12 bay to breakers	On the day of the library visit we did a research relay race. My goal was for them to leave with 2 relevant peer-reviewed articles that they could use for their paper. Part one of the relay race makes them find the answers to orientation questions. Part two walks them through the process of finding articles.
Slide 13 starting block	You know how three minutes ago I said the biggest problem is students who aren't prepared? Well in this case the biggest problem was students whose teachers had jumped the gun with the in-person activities. They had already done the assignment and were bored. They kept asking me what they were supposed to do.
Slide 14 laptops	Another school has almost no access to computer labs and so it turned out that none of their students were able to be as well prepared as the students from other schools. Unfortunately access to computers was a problem at PSU as well, with 3 or 4 students sharing each laptop in our classroom.

Slide 15 paper dolls	As you can imagine, the hundreds of high schoolers were exhausting for the librarians involved. I think the students were a bit overwhelmed too. The mixer approach may have made it a difficult environment for learning. On the other hand, I think it succeeded in building community across the different participating high schools.
Slide 16 mural	At the same time, I got feedback from one of the teachers that the students wished they had more library time and that the materials sent ahead were helpful in getting started. On balance, I think it was pretty successful.
Slide 17 spatula	Now that I know more about what the day was like, I think that I should have set my sights even lower and tried to do even less in the classroom. This bears out the concept of the flipped model. Could I have pushed even more of the content onto the libguide for students to work through ahead of time?
Slide 18 yearbook	In some ways, working with high schoolers is perfect for a flipped model. Their teachers are more likely to nag them to do the homework or even provide class time for it. The teachers understand breaking instruction into a sequence of small chunks and appreciate not having to prepare all the content themselves.
Slide 19 lightbulb	Yet, high schoolers are less likely to take full responsibility for their own learning. The carrots and sticks really need to be aimed at their teachers. Here the carrots were: getting to use shared materials that someone else created; getting students more involved with the university library; and ultimately seeing better research papers.
Slide 20	I wasn't in a position to use a stick with this group. That's a bit of a problem, especially when some kids show up underprepared compared to the rest of the classes. In the absence of a stick, the best I could do was try to persuade through tons of communication and reminders. Thanks for listening.