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**21st century tools for teaching and learning**

**Backchannels**

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| What is it? | * Micro-blogging tool or text chat tool * Synchronous / Real-time * Primarily text based |
| In what context? | * Alongside and in reaction to a spoken event, video, image, presentation, etc. * Question asking / Question answering * Communication forum * Shared space * Feedback tool |
| Why? | * Engages students who otherwise may not contribute * Evens the playing field for involvement * Can't be dominated by the loudest voice * Allows students to ask Q’s without waiting until the end * Allows teachers to answer Q’s on the fly without interrupting * Gives students the chance to answer Q’s from their peers * Allows teachers to see where the understanding or confusion may be happening as live events unfold * Demands engagement with the material to participate * Provides a record of the discussion or other interaction for reflection |
| Some free examples to try | [www.todaysmeet.com](http://www.todaysmeet.com)  [www.neatchat.com](http://www.neatchat.com)  [www.chatzy.com](http://www.chatzy.com)  [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)  <http://hootcourse.com/>  <http://micromobs.com/> |