What is a Moodle, anyway?

A simple, how-to guide for getting started

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What is a Moodle?

Moodle is a free Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or Course Management System (CMS) that allows educators to create online learning sites.

You can create a range of activities and resources that are accessible to students and teachers all over the world, as long as they have an internet connection, a username and a password.

Some of the features in Moodle include the ability to add:

- o Quizzes/Tests
- o Assignments
- o Chat forums
- o Games
- o Glossaries
- o Wikis
- o Embedded files, eg. videos, songs, Vokis

For more information visit: http://moodle.org/about/

Why should I use it?

Using a Moodle for either professional or classroom purposes has great potential. Naturally, however, there are positives and negatives for any learning tool.

POSITIVES

- o Students and colleagues can be anywhere in the world and collaborate on the same project.
- o By creating forums in the Moodle you can have multiple people contributing to the same topic, whilst still being able to moderate and monitor what's happening.
- o You can create online tests and assignments for your students to do, which are accessible from school or home.
- o Quizzes etc. are automatically marked and you can view results in various reports – saves the teacher valuable time!
- o You can set your Moodle up into topics or week by week tutorials/lessons.
- o Less reliance on book work and having to pick up books to mark.

NEGATIVES

- o Internet reliance can cause problems, particularly in schools.
- o Initial set up time is lengthy – on the other hand once created it you have a fantastic resource to build on.
- o Some editing functions are a little temperamental at times.

Registering and Logging In

Each Moodle environment has a specific website address and a different log in page. For example:

- The Clare HS Moodle address is: http://dlb.sa.edu.au/clhsmoodle/
- The DECD Teaching and Learning Services address is: http://dlb.sa.edu.au/tlsmoodle/

To log into a school Moodle, you would already need to have been given a username and a password by your IT manager. The DECD Teaching and Learning Services Moodle, however, allows you to create a new account.

To access the Languages Moodle go to: http://dlb.sa.edu.au/tlsmoodle; click on Languages; Click on Web 2.0 Tools for Languages Teaching; Click on Yorke & Mid North. If this is your first time to the site, fill out the **New Account** form.
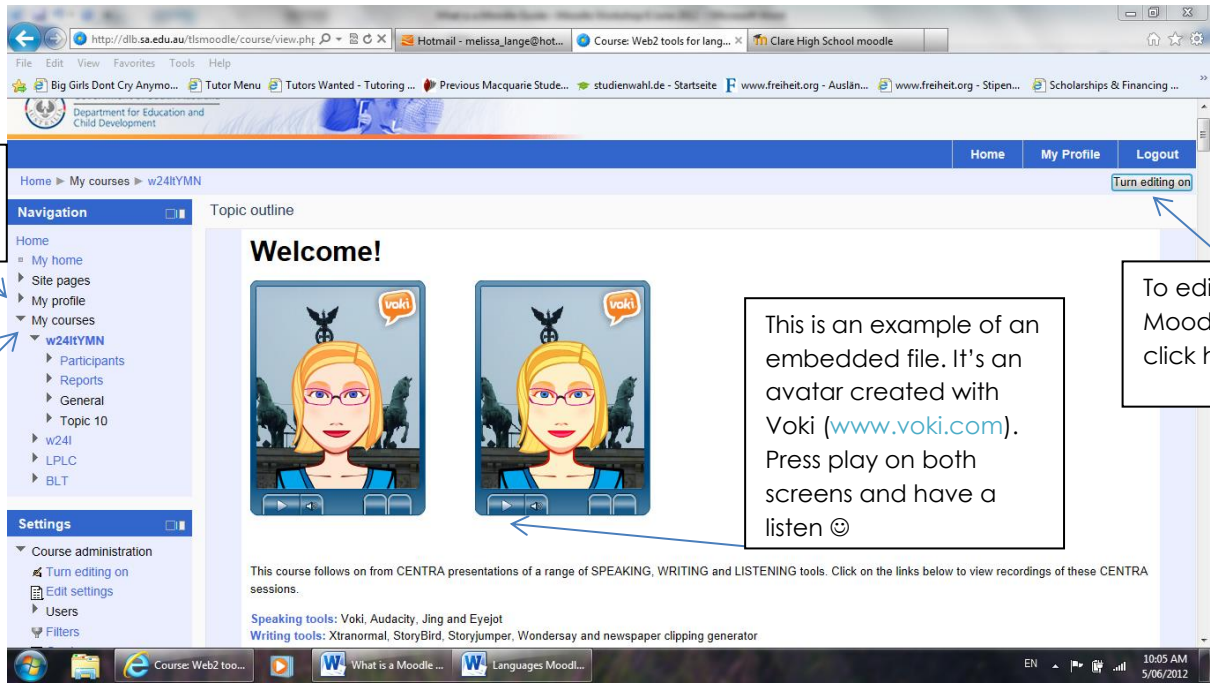

- ➢ Please use your school and not your personal email address
- ➢ Write down your username & password and save them somewhere safe!
- ➢ Within between 10-30 minutes you will receive a confirmation email
- ➢ Click on the link in the email
- ➢ This will prompt you for the enrolment key: **w24ItYMN**

Basic Navigation

Every Moodle environment looks a bit different, but the basic functions stay the same. Let's use two Moodles as examples: DECD Languages Moodle and the Clare HS German Moodle.
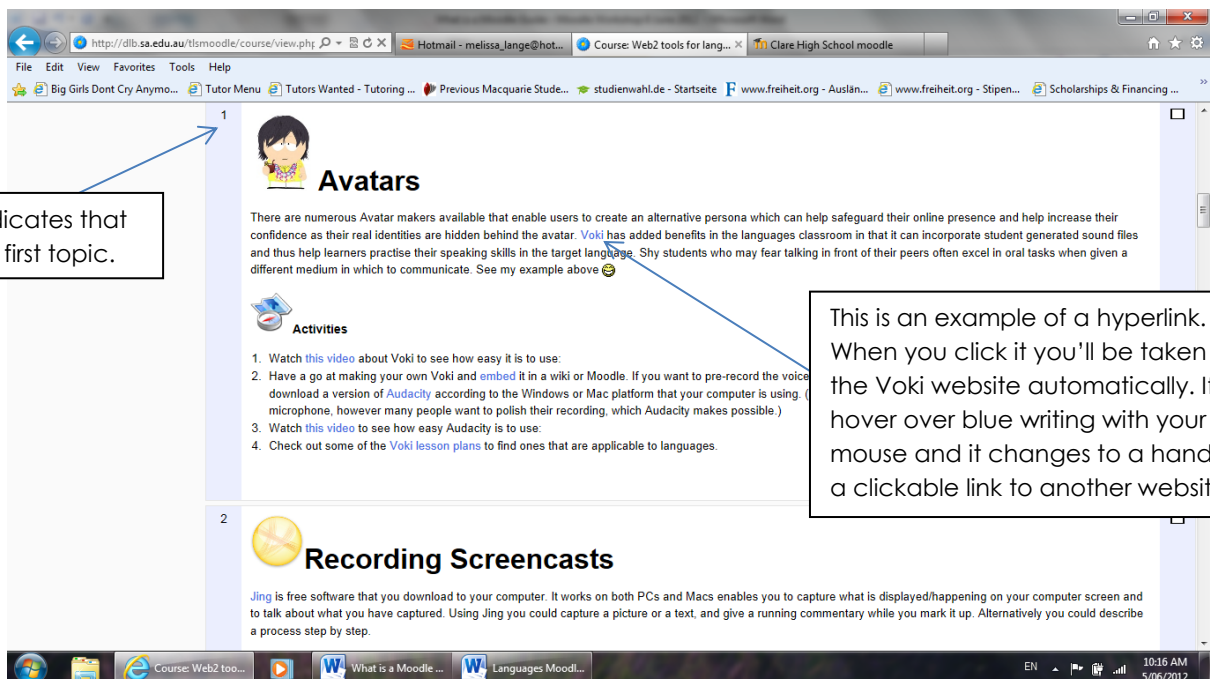
DECD LANGUAGES WEB 2.0 MOODLE

When you first log in you will open to a welcome screen for the Yorke & Mid North Language Teachers Moodle.

To edit your profile.

To see which courses you're enrolled in and change between them.

To edit your Moodle, simply click here.

This is an example of an embedded file. It's an avatar created with Voki (www.voki.com). Press play on both screens and have a listen ☺
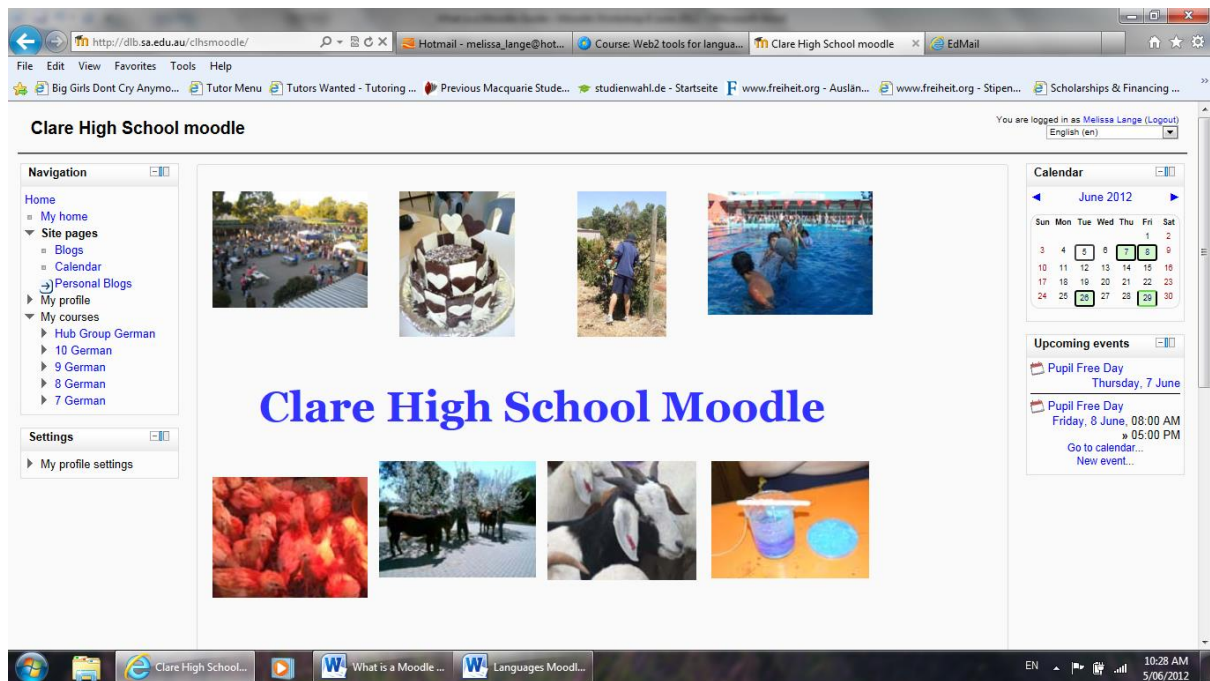
All Moodles feature the Navigation and Settings side bar, which enable you to control what you view and whether you're in editing mode or simply viewing the content.

As you scroll down the page you'll see that the Moodle is split up into different topics that include clickable links, indicated by the blue text.

This indicates that it's the first topic.

This is an example of a hyperlink. When you click it you'll be taken to the Voki website automatically. If you hover over blue writing with your mouse and it changes to a hand it's a clickable link to another website.

CLARE HIGH SCHOOL MOODLE

Here is an example of what a school Moodle home page looks like:

Again there are is a Navigation panel and a Settings panel on the left hand side. It also features a Calendar and Upcoming Events on the right hand side.

CLARE HIGH SCHOOL – YEAR 8 GERMAN MOODLE

This is an example of what a class Moodle could look like. (NB – this one is not finished and hasn't been used yet by students)

To view a list of people participating in your course and when they last accessed the page, click here.

This is your course heading.

You can add your own picture/image to personalise the page.

The icon with two faces indicates that this is a forum.

The icon with a globe indicates that it's a link to another website.

To view which resources or tasks are included in each week, click on the arrow or the date.

The icon with a red tick indicates that this is a quiz/test.

As previously mentioned, there are many different resources and activities that can be added to a Moodle and they each have a different icon next to them. For example, means that you need to upload an assignment.

WHAT DO THE BASIC ACTIVITY ICONS MEAN?

Submit an assignment.

Do a quiz or test.

Link is inactive.

Download a PDF.

Participate in a forum.

Link to another website.

Download a Word file.

Live chat with other members.

Basic Editing

Once you've turned your editing on, editing a Moodle is quite simple.

These icons control what you do with the resources that you add. See below for more details.

To add an activity, such as a quiz or game, click here.

To add a resource, such as a file, click here and upload it onto your Moodle.

To make a topic invisible to the participants (hide it from view), click on the eye.

To move a topic or week up or down, simply use the black arrows.

WHAT DO THE EDITING ICONS MEAN?

Move text to the right.

Edit including text.

Delete.

No groups are assigned.

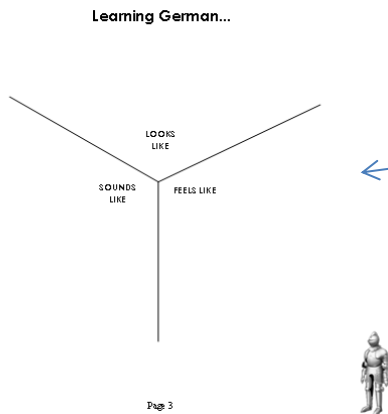Move up or down within the topic.

Create a copy.

Hide/make invisible.

Assign roles, eg. non-editing teacher.

Use in the Classroom – Example

There are many uses for Moodles within a classroom environment. This particular example from Year 8 German includes a variety or forum entries and tests to reduce the amount of reliance on students taking books home and then me having to pick up 25 books and mark them.

This is what one homework activity looks like in their workbooks:

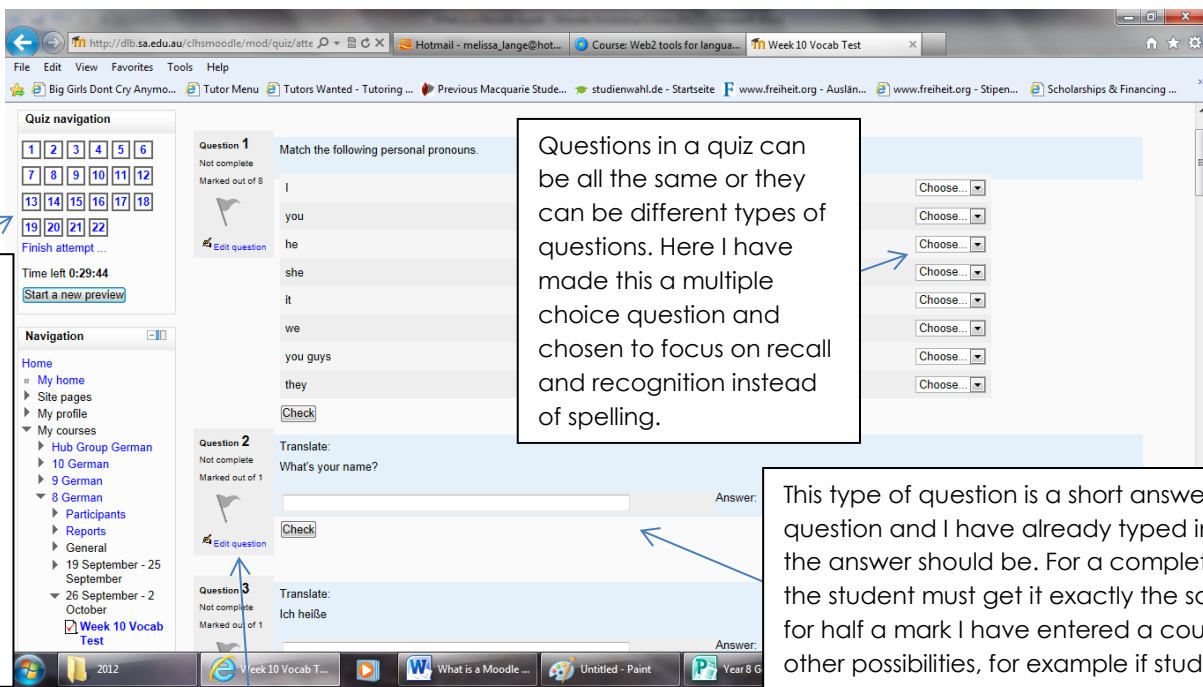Learning German...

LOOKS LIKE

SOUNDS LIKE   FEELS LIKE

Page 3

This is a simple Y-Chart exercise to get students thinking about their pre-conceptions with language learning and also to give me an idea of their attitudes towards learning German.

And here is an example of that same activity as a forum in the Moodle. Students are to reply to this message and answer the questions:

Learning German... add your post by the end of this week
by Melissa Lange - Monday, 22 August 2011, 09:59 PM

What do you think learning German is like?

- What does it look like?
- What does it feel like?
- What does it sound like?

Edit | Delete | Reply

Here is an example of a vocab test in the Moodle:

Quiz navigation

Questions in a quiz can be all the same or they can be different types of questions. Here I have made this a multiple choice question and chosen to focus on recall and recognition instead of spelling.

Here you can quickly navigate to particular questions, rather than scroll down through them.

Here you can edit your question.

This type of question is a short answer question and I have already typed in what the answer should be. For a complete mark the student must get it exactly the same, for half a mark I have entered a couple of other possibilities, for example if students forget a capital letter for a noun.

Other Useful Moodles

http://dlb.sa.edu.au/tlsmoodle/

Languages Moodle home page: