

VoiceThread User Guide [Staff] v4.0 July 2022

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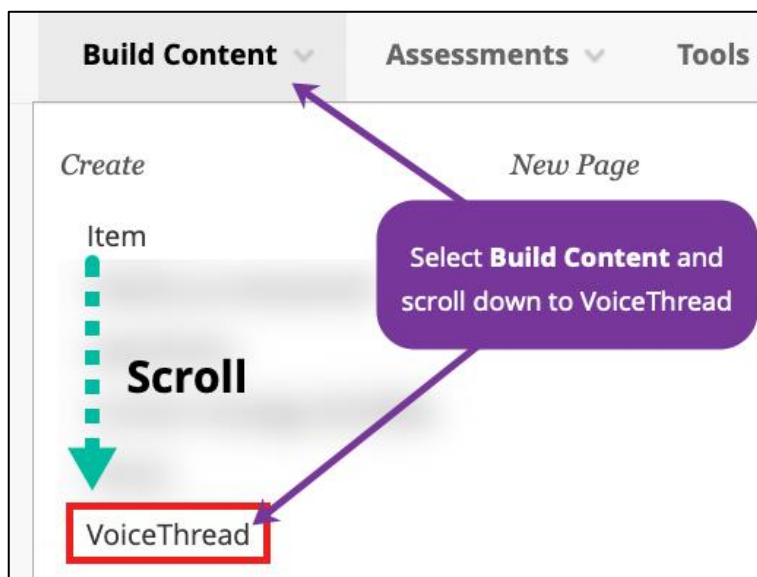
Set up a VoiceThread Link in Blackboard

This is a 2-step process:

1. Add the link
2. Tell the link what to do when clicked.

1. Add the link

In your Blackboard course, with **Edit Mode On**, select **VoiceThread** from the **Build Content** menu.



Give your VoiceThread a title and one-paragraph description.

[illegible]

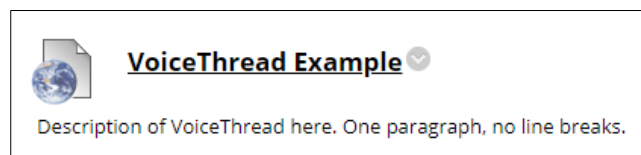
Before you press the Submit button, you need to decide whether you want your VoiceThread to be **graded or not**.

The default setting is No, i.e., **ungraded**. If this is what you want, go ahead and press the Submit button.



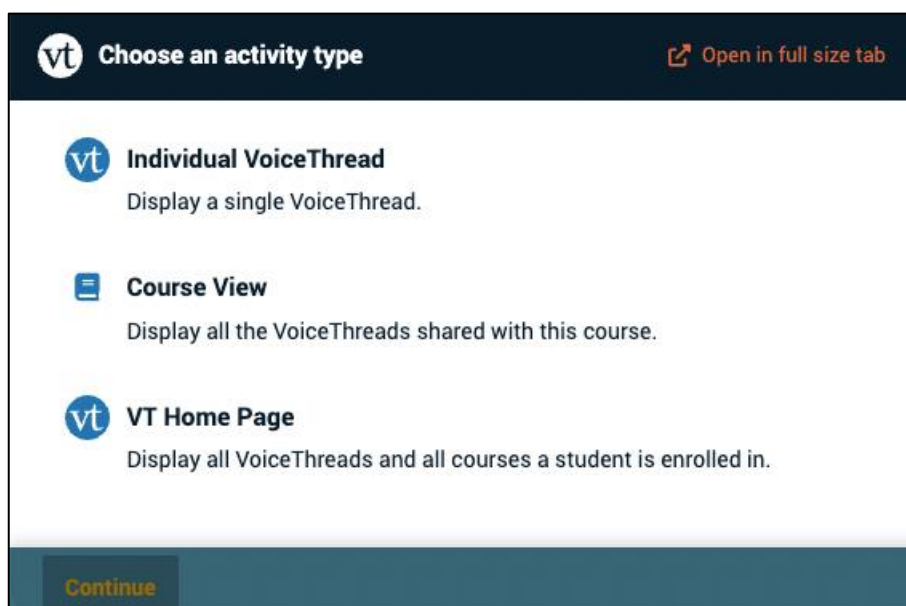
Press the **Submit** button.

Your VoiceThread link will appear in your Blackboard course.



Note: To set up a Graded Assignment please see [relevant section](#) later in this document.

2. Tell the link what to do when clicked



When you click on the VoiceThread link you have just set up, you will see the **VoiceThread Setup** page.

The 3 options are:

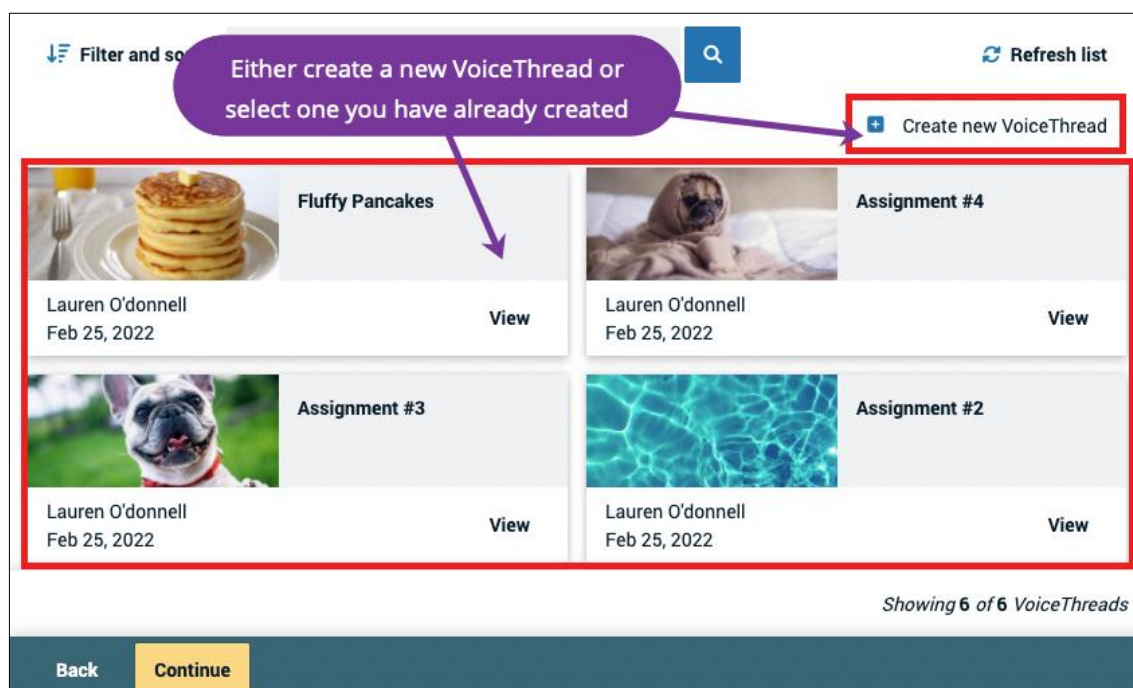
1. **Individual VT:** this opens one specific VoiceThread.
2. **Course View:** this displays all the VoiceThreads that have been shared with the Blackboard course where the link has been set up.

- Home:** the VoiceThread Home page displays all the VoiceThreads a user has created or that have been shared with them within all their Blackboard courses and VoiceThread Groups.

In the following example, we have selected the **Individual VT** option.

Create a New VoiceThread or Link to an Existing One (Ungraded)

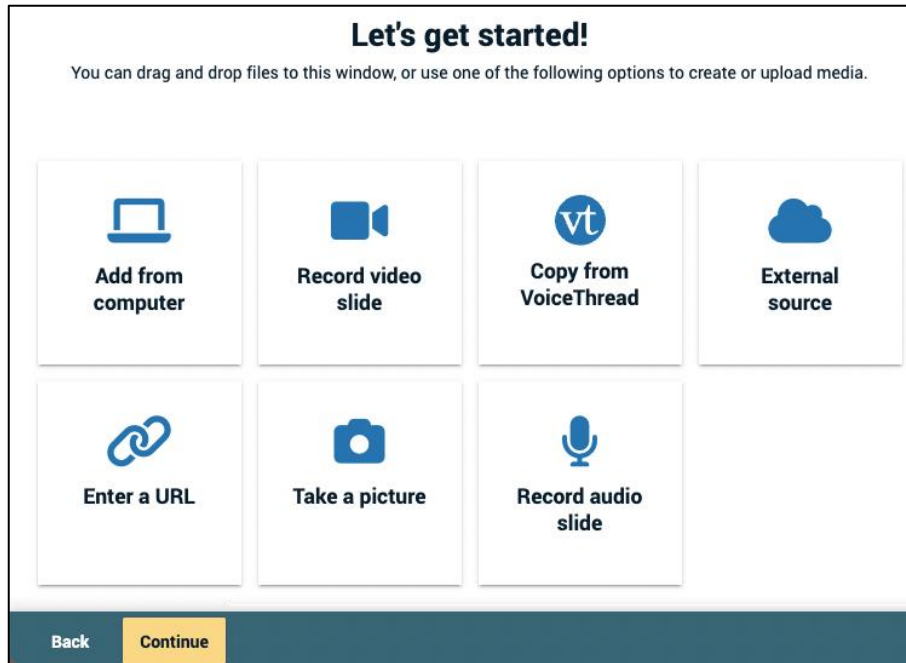
Having set up a link to an individual VoiceThread in the previous step and clicked on it, you can now either **create a new VoiceThread** or **link to one you have already created**.



To use a VoiceThread you have already created select the relevant VoiceThread and press **Continue**. On the next page you can add further slides or just select **Continue** to preview the VoiceThread. Once you are happy, select **Publish** and the VoiceThread will be linked. Your students will see the individual VoiceThread when they click on the link.

To create a new VoiceThread, click the **Create new VoiceThread** button above your existing VoiceThreads.

You'll then be directed to add media from a variety of sources.

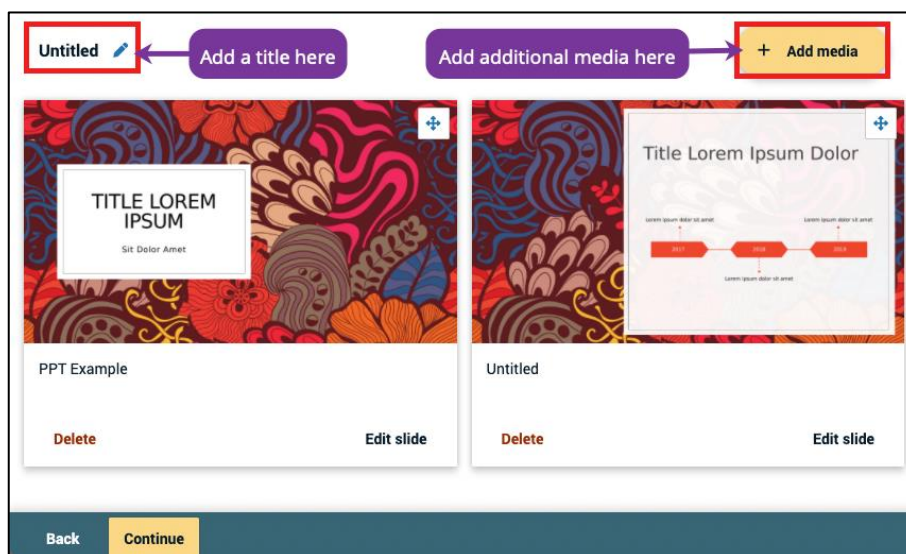


The permitted file types are:

- Images - JPEG, GIF, PNG, BMP, and SVG
- Audio - MP3 or WAV
- Video - MP4, WMV, MOV, AVI
- Documents - DOC, DOCX, PDF, XLS, XLSX, ODT, and ODS
- Presentations - PPT, PPTX, Keynote, ODP, and PDF

N.B. Maximum file size: 3GB

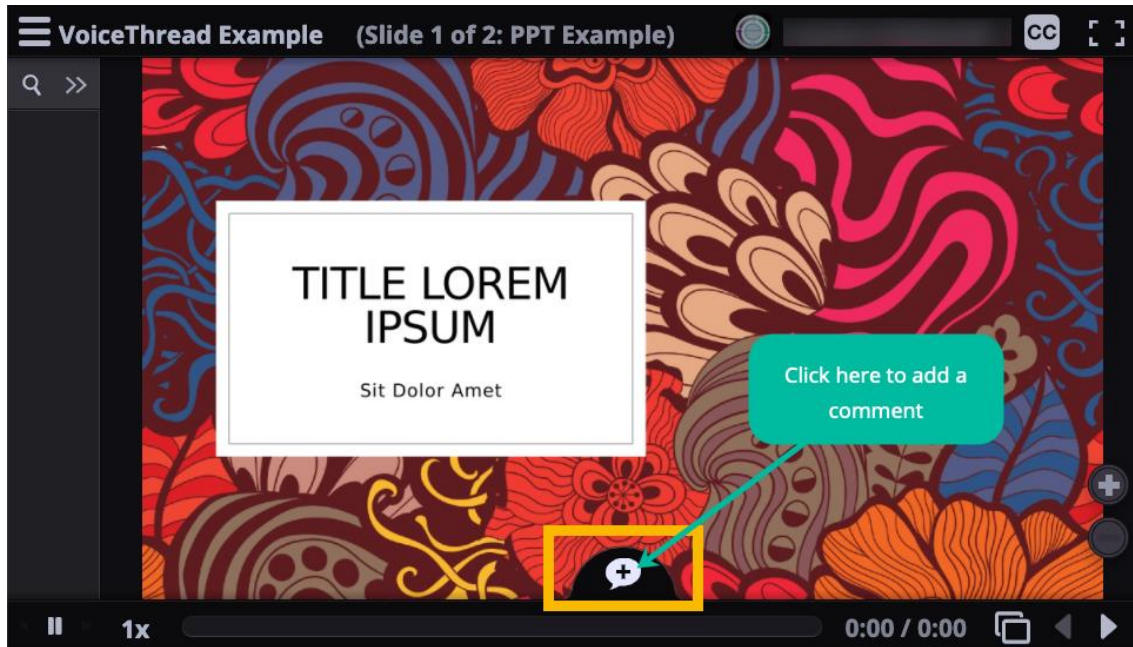
In this example, we have used the **Add from computer** option to upload a PowerPoint file. Once the file has been uploaded, it will be displayed like this:



You can also edit the title of the VoiceThread and add additional media in this view. Once you have added all your media select **Continue**.

Add Comments to your VoiceThread

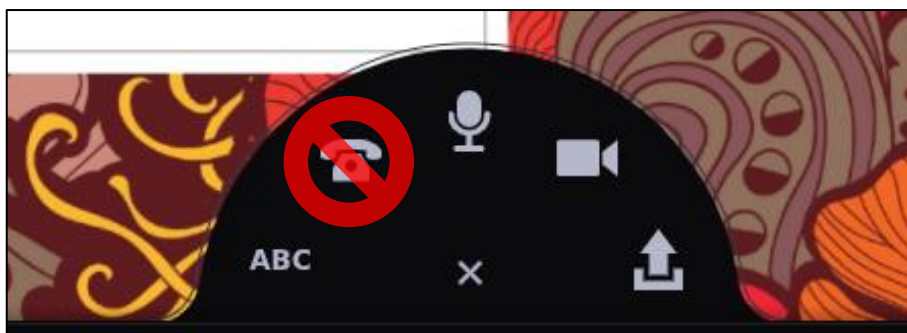
You will now see the first slide of your VoiceThread. To add a comment click the + sign at the bottom of the slide and select which sort of comment you want to make:



The comment type options are:

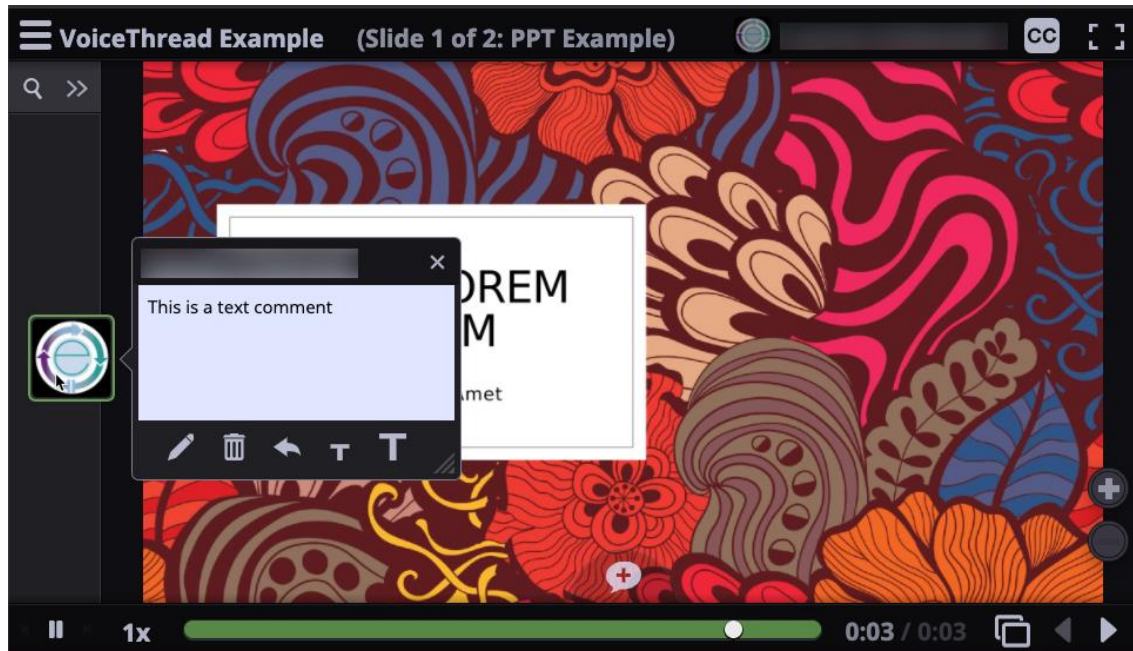
- Text
- Record audio
- Record video
- Upload pre-recorded audio or video

(Please ignore the telephone icon – recording phone audio is disabled at the University.)



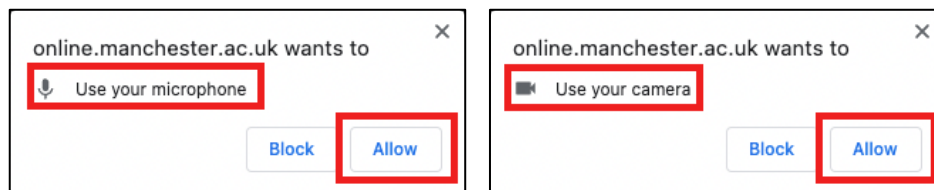
Commenting with Text

Press the **ABC** link to add a text comment and press the **Save** button. Your comment will appear in the **Conversation Channel** on the left of the VoiceThread slide.



Commenting with Audio or Video

When you select to comment using audio or video for the first time, you will be asked to allow VoiceThread to access your microphone or webcam. In each case, click the **Allow** button.



With both audio and video comments, you will see a 4-second **countdown** before recording begins.



Recording will start once the countdown has finished. There will be a **Stop Recording** link underneath the slide you are commenting on.



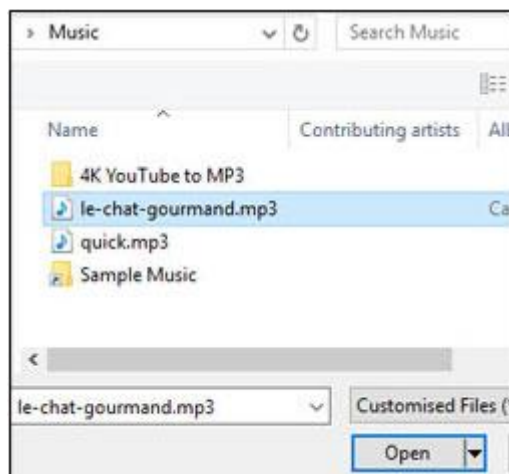
Press the Stop Recording link when you have finished recording your comment. After a few moments, **you will have the option to Save the comment, Cancel and re-record, or Record More.**



If you choose to save your recorded comment, it will appear in the Conversation Channel on the left of the slide.

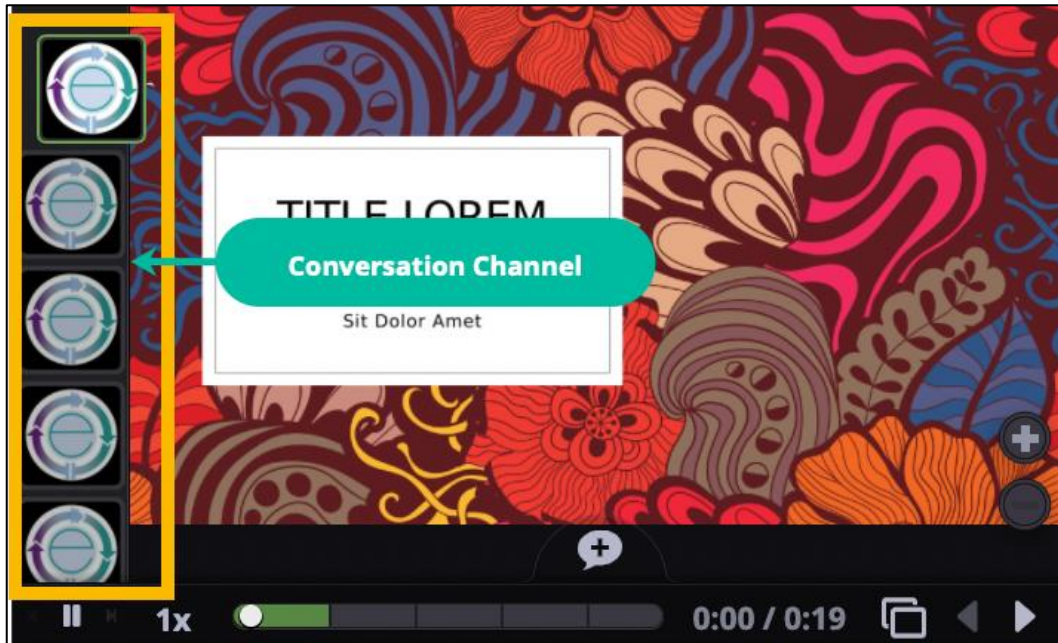
Commenting with Pre-recorded Audio or Video

When you choose to **upload a pre-recorded audio or video file**, you can select the file from a File Browser window that will show any supported file types.

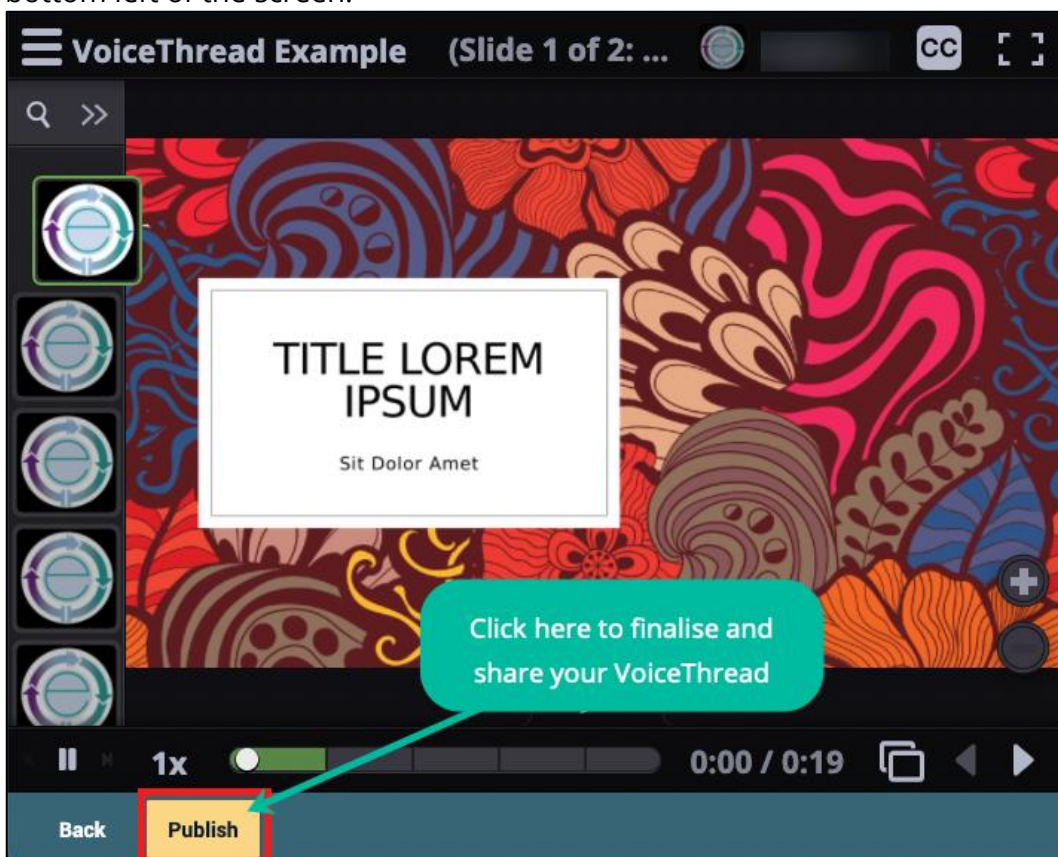


How Comments Are Displayed

When you have finished adding comments to your slides, they will appear in a **Conversation Channel** down the left-hand side of the screen. Each comment shows the commentator's initials or their profile picture (if they have uploaded one).

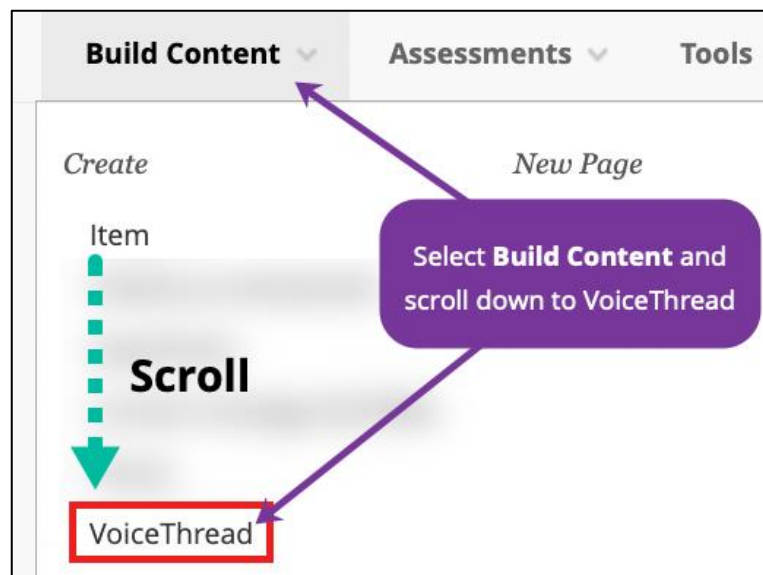


When you have finished adding comments, share the VoiceThread by selecting **Publish** in the bottom left of the screen.



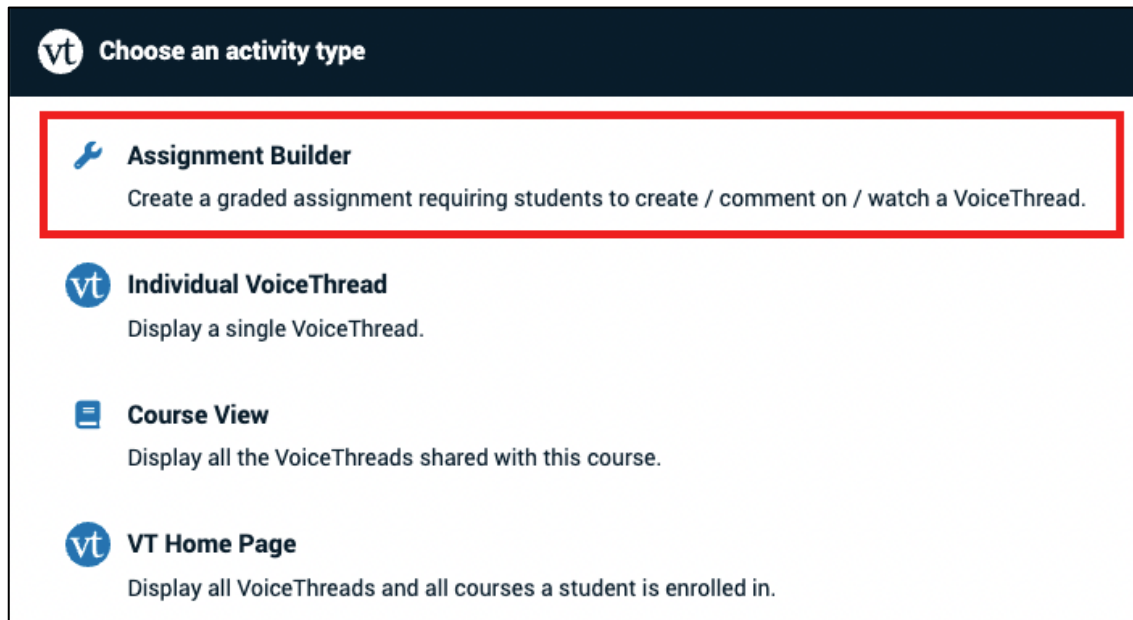
Create a Graded Assignment

In your Blackboard course, with **Edit Mode On**, select **VoiceThread** from the **Build Content** menu.



1. Give your VoiceThread a **title** and include the **assignment instructions**.
2. To set up a graded VoiceThread, select **Yes** for **Enable Evaluation** and enter a figure for **Points Possible** (usually 100).
3. Press the **Submit** button.

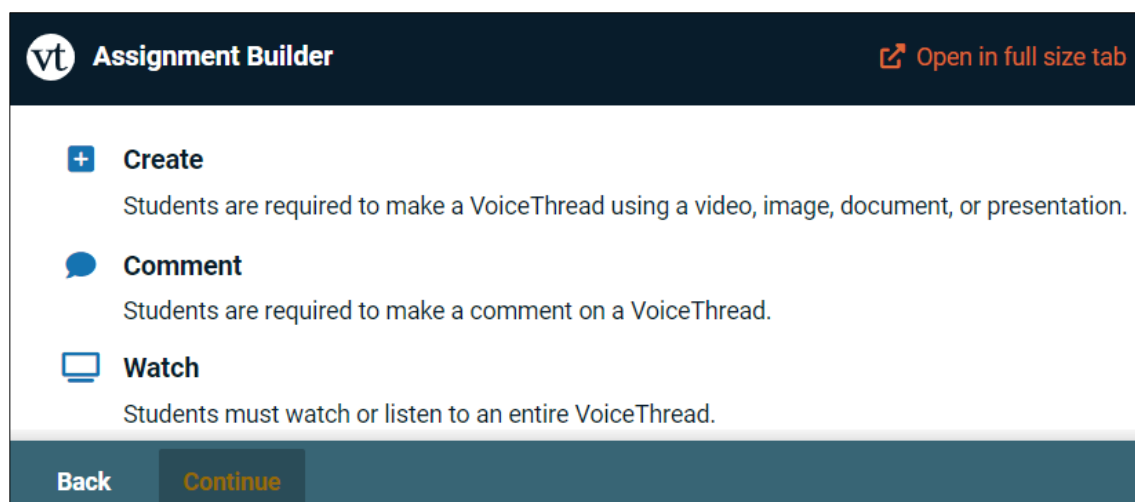
Clicking submit will create a link to VoiceThread in your Blackboard course. You now need to tell the link what it should lead to. To do this, click on the link in your Blackboard course. This will take you to the **VoiceThread Setup** page where you will see that a new option has appeared for **Assignment Builder**.



To create the assignment, press the **Assignment Builder** button.

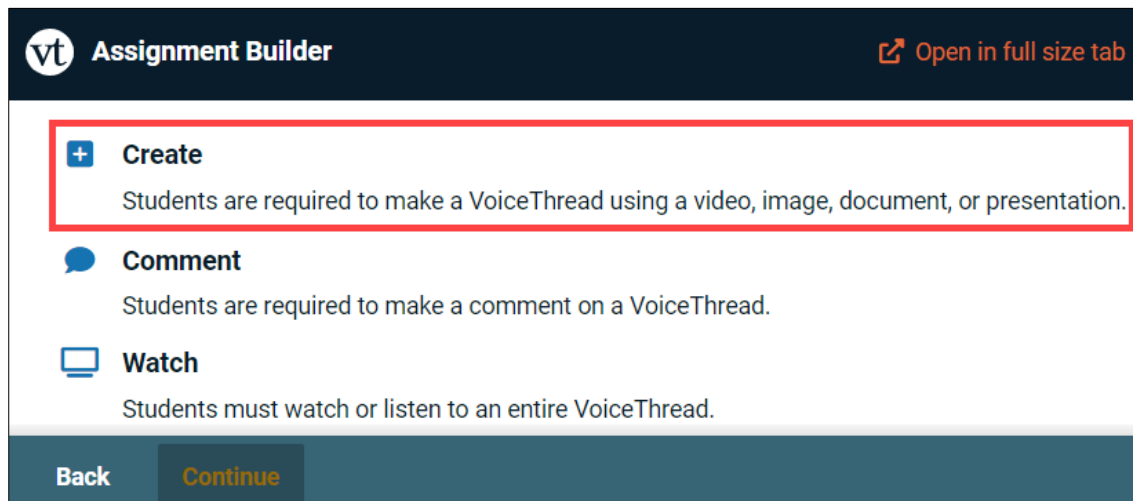
There are three assignment types to choose from:

1. **Create:** requires students to create and submit a unique VoiceThread of their own.
2. **Comment:** requires students to submit comments on a VoiceThread posted by you. You decide the number of comments required by each student.
3. **Watch:** requires students to view an entire VoiceThread posted by you. The system will not allow a student to submit verification of viewing until the entire VoiceThread plays from beginning to end.



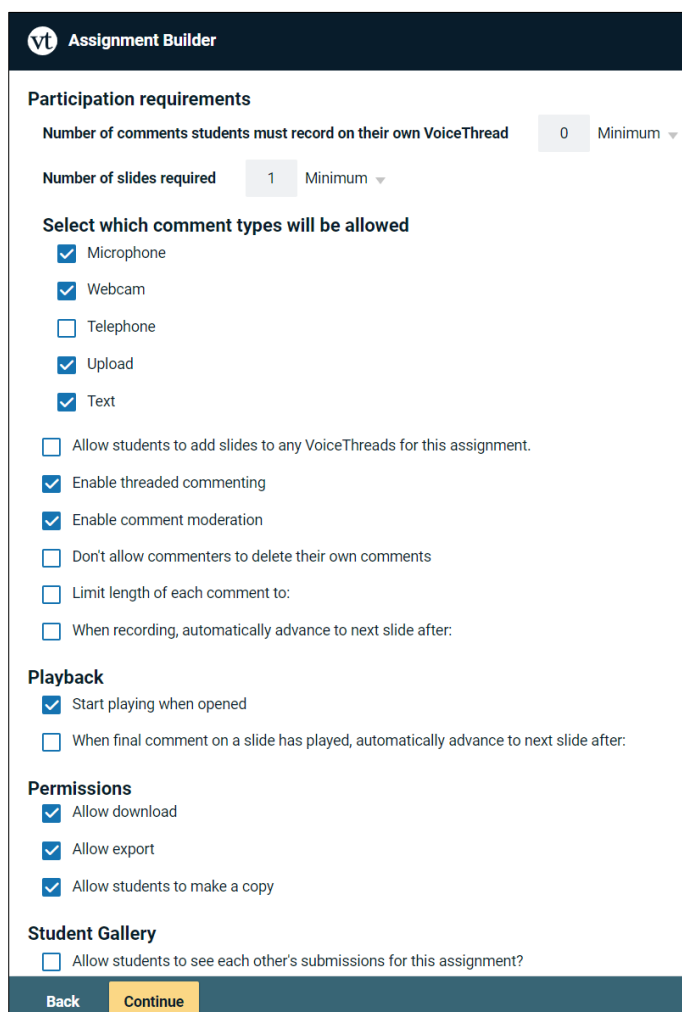
Assignment Option 1: Create a VoiceThread

Click on **Create** and then click **Continue**.



The screenshot shows the 'Assignment Builder' interface. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the 'vt' logo and the text 'Assignment Builder'. On the right side of the header, there is a link that says 'Open in full size tab'. Below the header, there are three main options: 'Create', 'Comment', and 'Watch'. The 'Create' option is highlighted with a red rectangular box. It includes a plus icon and the text 'Students are required to make a VoiceThread using a video, image, document, or presentation.' The 'Comment' option includes a speech bubble icon and the text 'Students are required to make a comment on a VoiceThread.' The 'Watch' option includes a monitor icon and the text 'Students must watch or listen to an entire VoiceThread.' At the bottom of the interface, there are two buttons: 'Back' and 'Continue'.

This will take you to the **Choose options** menu which will allow you to set up the basic parameters you wish all student VoiceThreads to follow.



The screenshot shows the 'Choose options' menu in the 'Assignment Builder' interface. The menu is divided into several sections: 'Participation requirements', 'Select which comment types will be allowed', 'Playback', 'Permissions', and 'Student Gallery'. In the 'Participation requirements' section, there are two settings: 'Number of comments students must record on their own VoiceThread' set to 0 (Minimum) and 'Number of slides required' set to 1 (Minimum). The 'Select which comment types will be allowed' section has checkboxes for 'Microphone', 'Webcam', 'Telephone', 'Upload', and 'Text', all of which are checked. There are also checkboxes for 'Allow students to add slides to any VoiceThreads for this assignment.', 'Enable threaded commenting', 'Enable comment moderation', 'Don't allow commenters to delete their own comments', 'Limit length of each comment to:', and 'When recording, automatically advance to next slide after:'. The 'Playback' section has checkboxes for 'Start playing when opened' (checked) and 'When final comment on a slide has played, automatically advance to next slide after:'. The 'Permissions' section has checkboxes for 'Allow download', 'Allow export', and 'Allow students to make a copy', all of which are checked. The 'Student Gallery' section has a checkbox for 'Allow students to see each other's submissions for this assignment?'. At the bottom of the interface, there are two buttons: 'Back' and 'Continue'.

VoiceThread Options

Number of comments students must record on their own VoiceThread <input type="text" value="0"/> Minimum ▼					
Number of slides required <input type="text" value="1"/> Minimum ▼					
This option will allow you to determine the number of comments and slides required. This can be set as either a minimum value or an exact value					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allow students to add slides to any VoiceThreads for this assignment.					
Allow students to add slides to any VoiceThreads submitted by their classmates to this assignment.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enable threaded commenting					
Selecting this option will allow commenters to respond to others' comments, allowing for more discussion.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enable comment moderation					
Selecting this option will mean that only you will be able to see and respond to students' comments. Students will see only their own and tutor's comments.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don't allow commenters to delete their own comments					
Selecting this option will mean that a student only has one attempt to comment.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limit length of each comment to: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">Minutes</th> <th style="width: 50%;">Seconds</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">60</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Minutes	Seconds	60	0
Minutes	Seconds				
60	0				
Selecting this option will allow you to limit the length of student's comments. This can be useful if asking a student to prepare a timed presentation.					

☒ When recording, automatically advance to next slide after:

Format

- ☐ 20 Seconds (Pecha Kucha Format)
☐ 15 Seconds (Ignite Format)
☒ Custom

Minutes

0

Seconds

30

Selecting this option will allow you to limit the length of time each slide is displayed. This can be useful if asking a student to prepare a timed presentation.

Playback

- ☒ Start playing when opened
☒ When final comment on a slide has played, automatically advance to next slide after:

Seconds

4

These options determine whether you want a VoiceThread to play automatically when you open it and advance through slides automatically.

Permissions

- ☒ Allow download
☒ Allow export
☒ Allow students to make a copy


These options determine whether you will allow a student to download their finished assignment, export to other student's VoiceThreads or whether they will be able to save a copy to their own VoiceThread account.

Student Gallery

- ☒ Allow students to see each other's submissions for this assignment?

If selected this will allow students to see other students' submissions.

Once you have selected your preferred options for the assignment, click **Continue** and you will be taken to the **Finalize** tab. Fill in the options and select **Publish** to save your assignment.

 **Assignment Builder**
[Open in full size tab](#)

Assignment name

VoiceThread Assignment - Create

Assignment instructions

Assignment instructions go here.

Example URL

Message shown to student after they submit

You have successfully submitted the assignment

Start date

Due date

Close date

☒ Allow students to resubmit assignment

☒ Allow students to view assignment after submitting

Assessment

☒ Percentage

☐ Complete / Incomplete

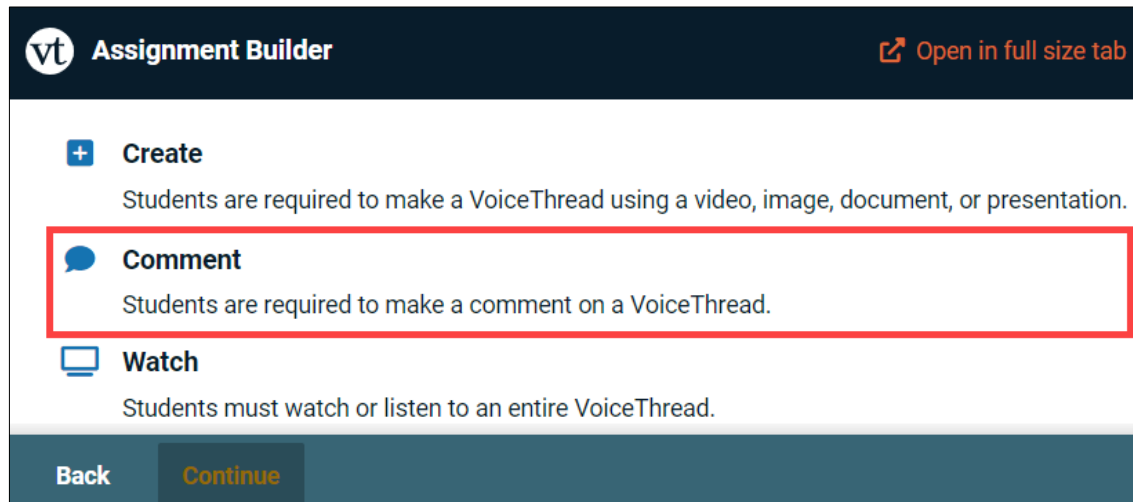
☐ Points

Back **Publish**

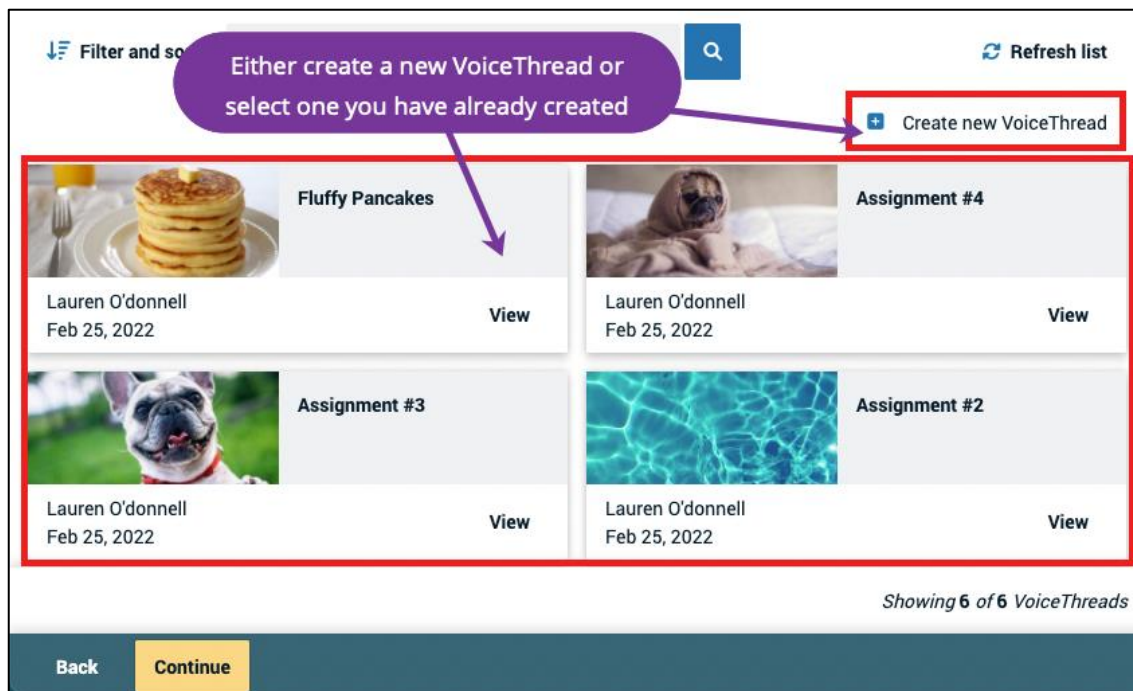
Note: If using **start** and **due** dates, students will not be able to see the assignment before the start date or submit after the due date. If you want the assignment to start immediately leave the start date blank. Also make sure you use the same due date as you did when setting up the assignment in Blackboard.

Assignment Option 2: Submit a Comment

Click on **Comment** and then click **Continue**.



This will take you to the **Choose content** menu. Here you can either **select an existing VoiceThread** for students to comment on or **create a new one**.

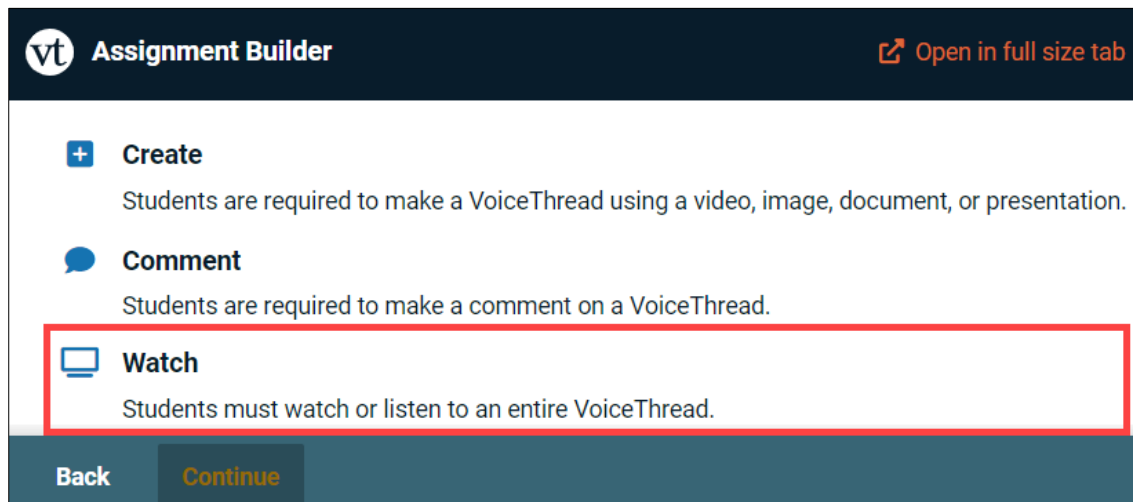


If you choose an existing VoiceThread, select **Continue** and this will take you to the **Choose options menu** which will allow you to set up the parameters for how students should comment (see [VoiceThread Options](#) for full information about options)

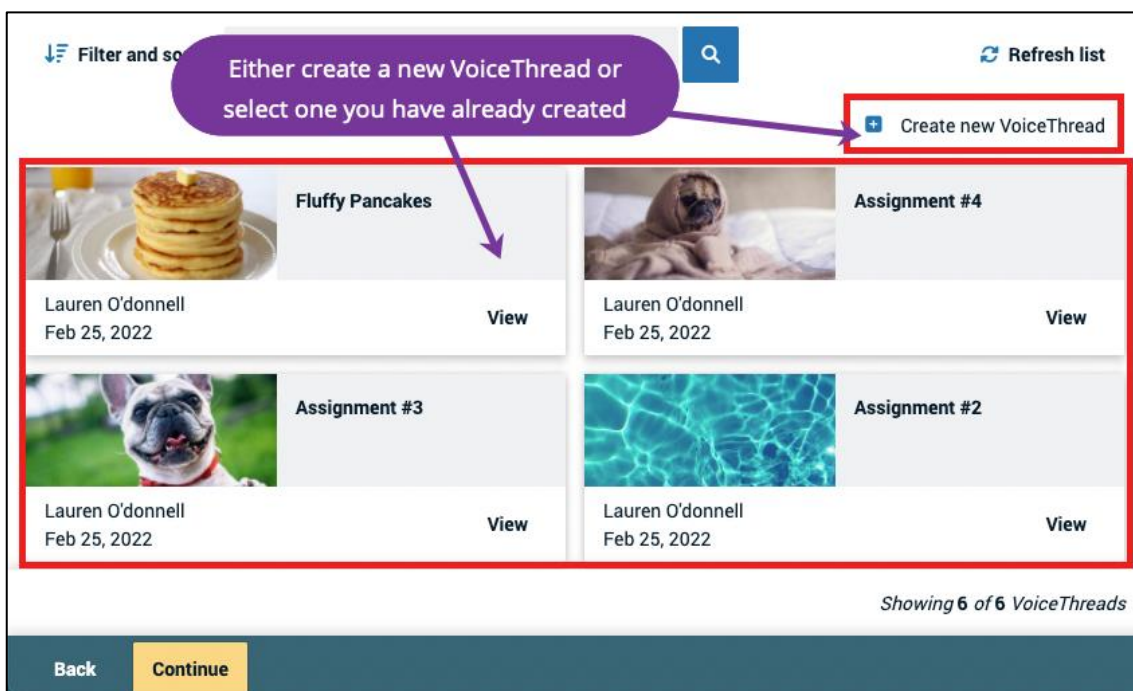
Once you have selected your preferred options for the assignment, click **Continue** and you will be taken to the **Finalize** tab.

Assignment Option 3: Watch a VoiceThread

Click on **Watch** and then click **Continue**.



This will take you to the **Choose content** menu. Here you can either **select an existing VoiceThread** for students to watch or **create a new one**.

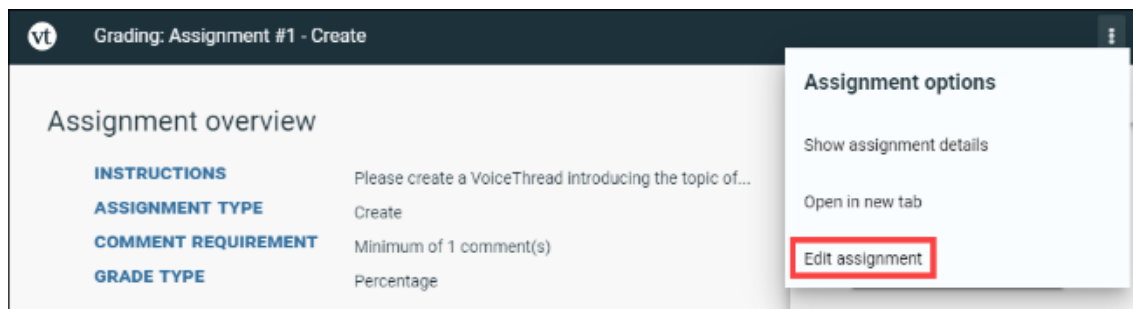


If you choose an existing VoiceThread, select **Continue** and this will take you to the **Choose options menu** which will allow you to set up the parameters for how students should comment (see [VoiceThread Options](#) for full information about options).

Once you have selected the correct options for your assignment, click **Continue** and you will be taken to the **Finalize** tab.

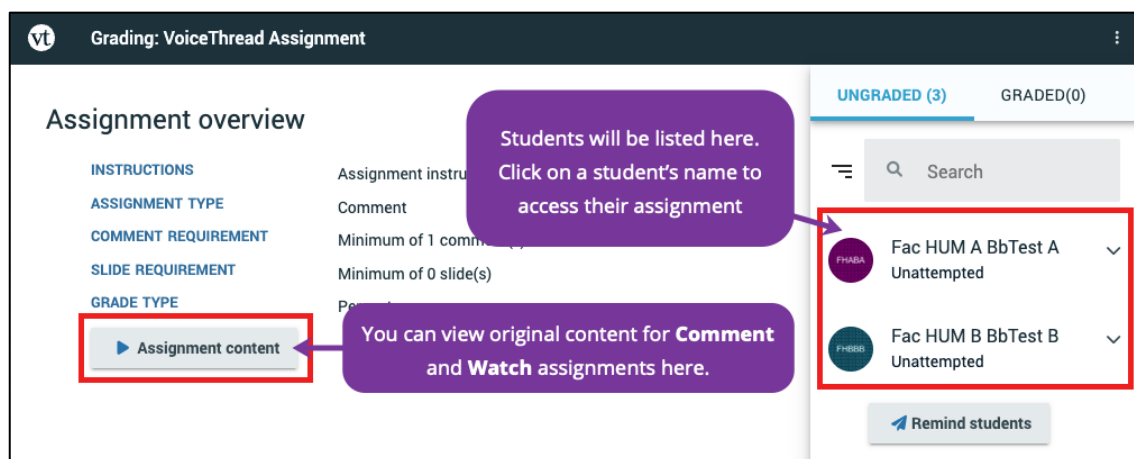
Editing an Assignment

If you need to make changes to how your assignment is configured, click on the menu icon top-right and select **Edit assignment**.

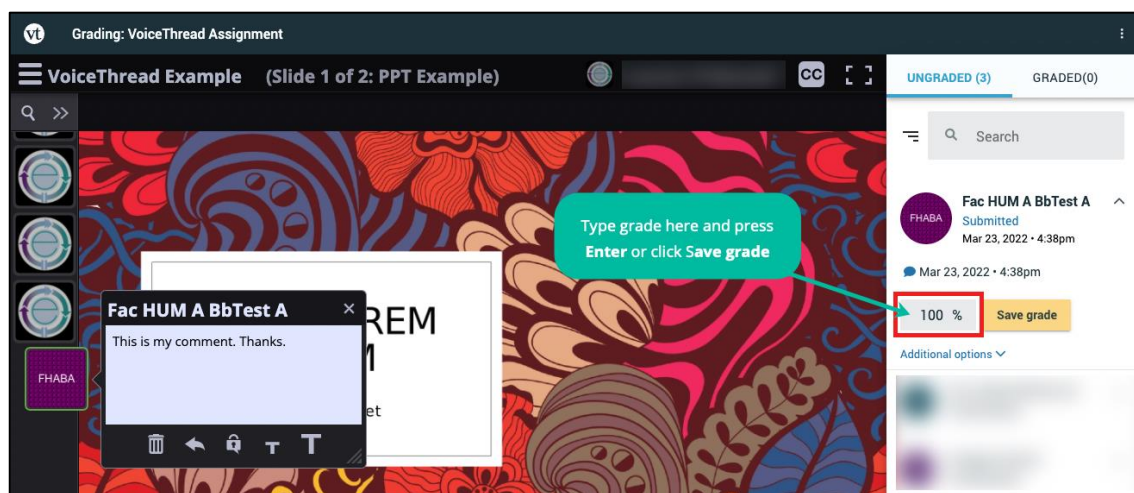


How to Grade Assignments

When you are ready to grade the students' submissions, click the specific **VoiceThread Assignment link** in your Blackboard course. You will see the grading interface automatically. All submissions will be listed by student name down the right side of the screen. Selecting a student name allows you to view their submission and enter a grade. You can also view the original assignment content for **Comment** and **Watch** assignments.



Enter the grade value in the box and **press the Enter key** on your keyboard. (This saves the grade.) The grade will be entered into your Blackboard course Grade Centre.



If you have set the assignment to be worth fewer than 100 points, *still grade it on a scale of 0-100*, and the score will be adjusted accordingly in the Grade Centre.

Additional Topics

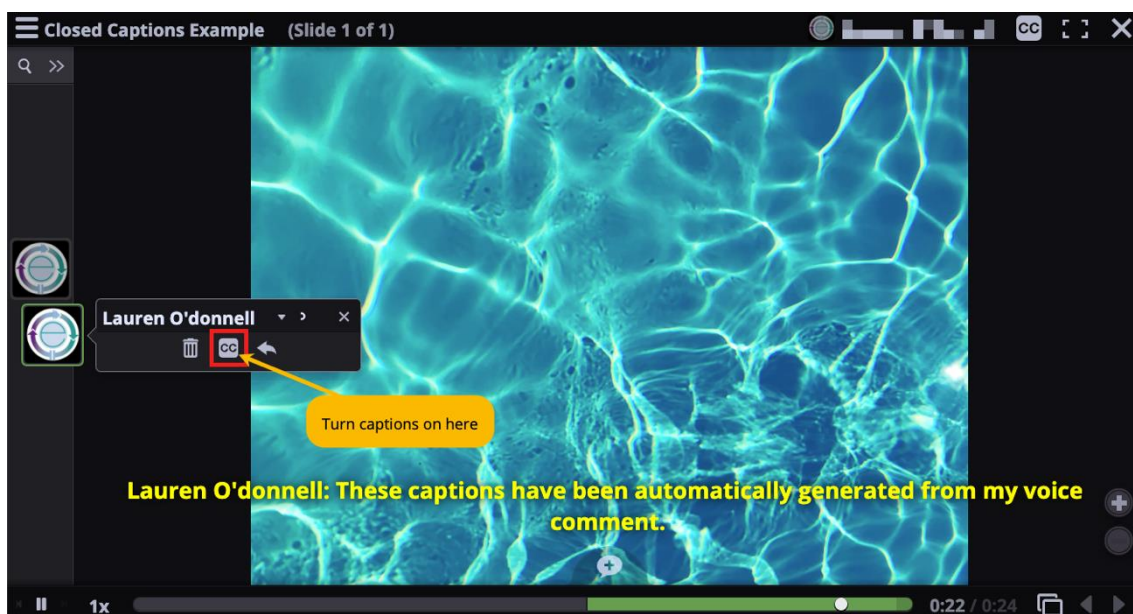
Accessibility: Captions/Subtitles

Audio and video recordings you create in VoiceThread are captioned automatically. As soon as you save your recording, the captioning process will begin. Captions should appear in 5 to 10 minutes, depending on the length of your recording.

To view captions for the main presentation, turn them on using the CC button in the top-right corner of the VoiceThread.



To view captions for individual comments, turn them on using the CC button within the comment box.

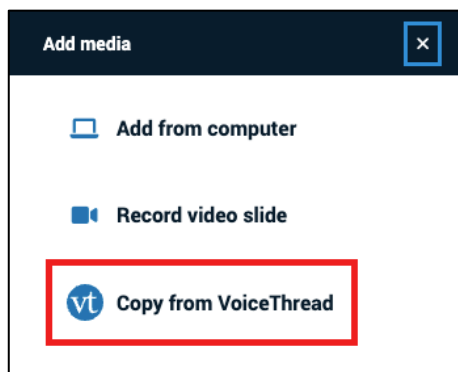


Creating

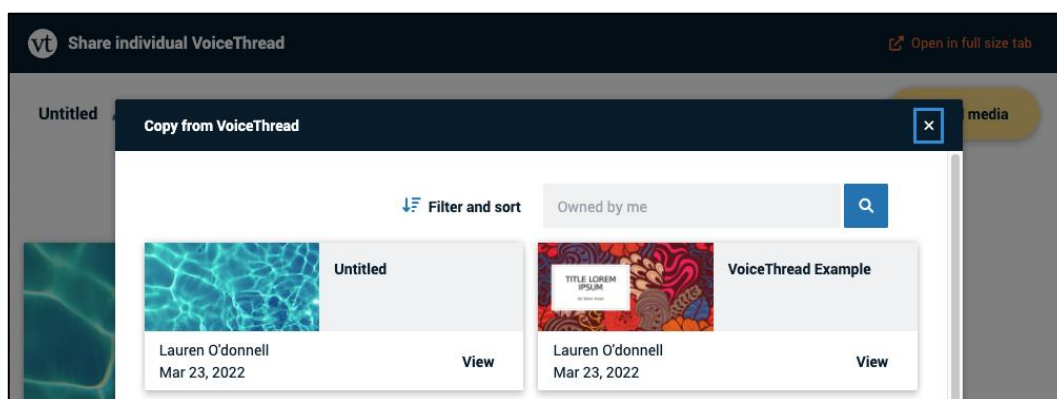
Importing Media from Other VoiceThreads

If you've already created slides in another VoiceThread that you'd like to re-use:

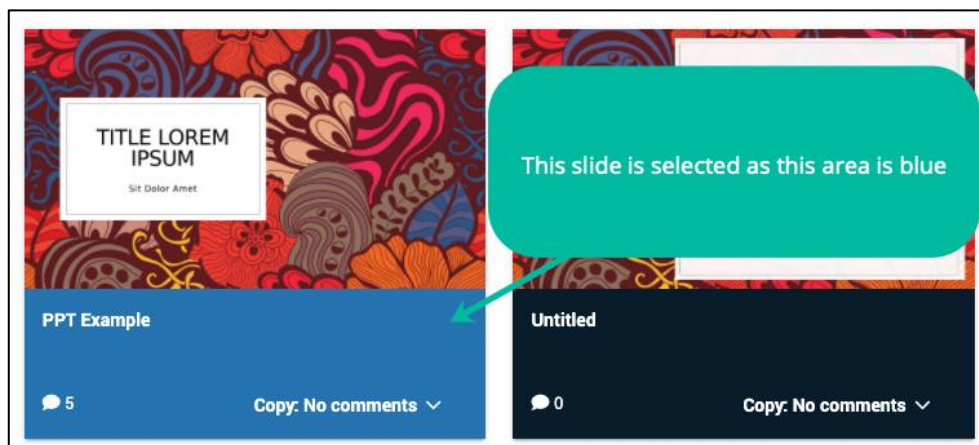
1. Click on the **Add Media** button.
2. Click **Copy from VoiceThread**.



3. Choose the existing VoiceThread to find the slides you'd like to import.



4. Select the slides you want to import – selected slides will turn blue at the bottom

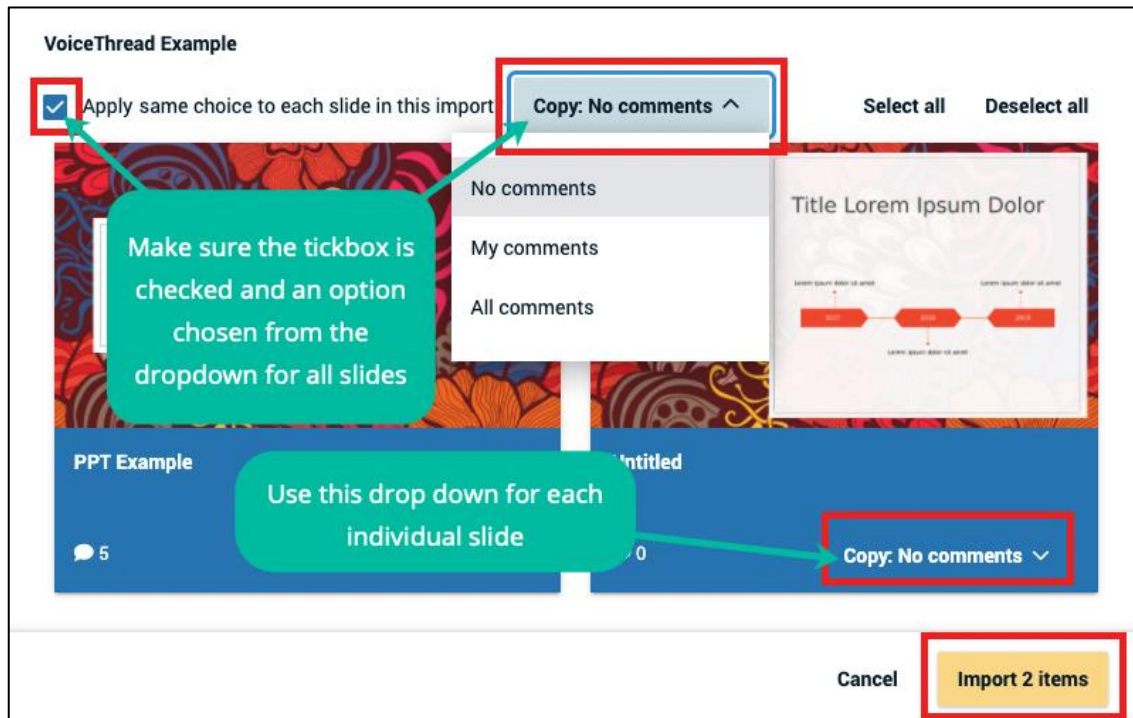


5. You can choose to copy:
 1. none of the original comments on a slide,

2. only your own, or
3. all comments.

To do this for all selected slides check **Apply same choice to each slide in this import** and choose the relevant option from the drop down. Differing options can be set for individual slides using the drop down on each slide.

6. Click the **Import items** button

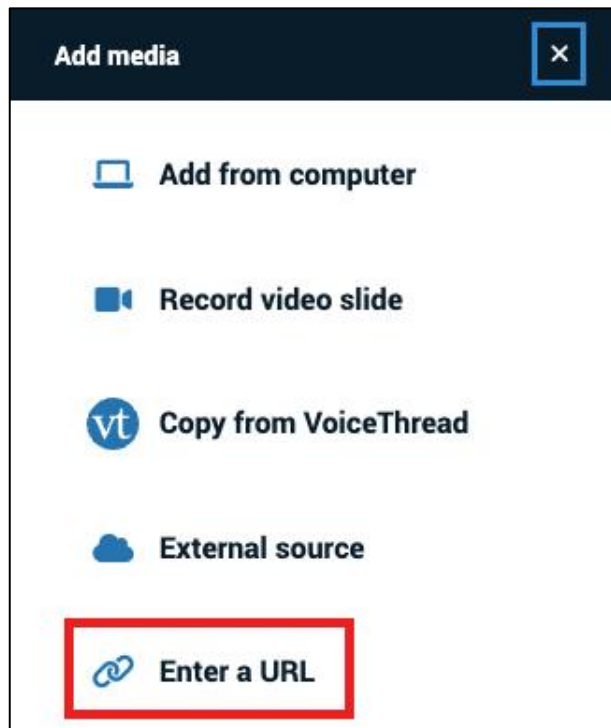


Importing Media from Another Website

Images and videos can be imported from other websites if you have the URL that points directly to that piece of media. These URLs usually end in a file extension like .jpg or .mp4.

1. Click on the **Add Media** button.

2. Click **Enter a URL**.



3. Enter your URL and an optional slide title into the pop-up window.

When the media has fully imported, you'll see the slides appear as thumbnails on the Create page.

New! YouTube links are accepted! Note that some videos (for example, official music videos) have specific licensing and cannot be imported into VoiceThread.

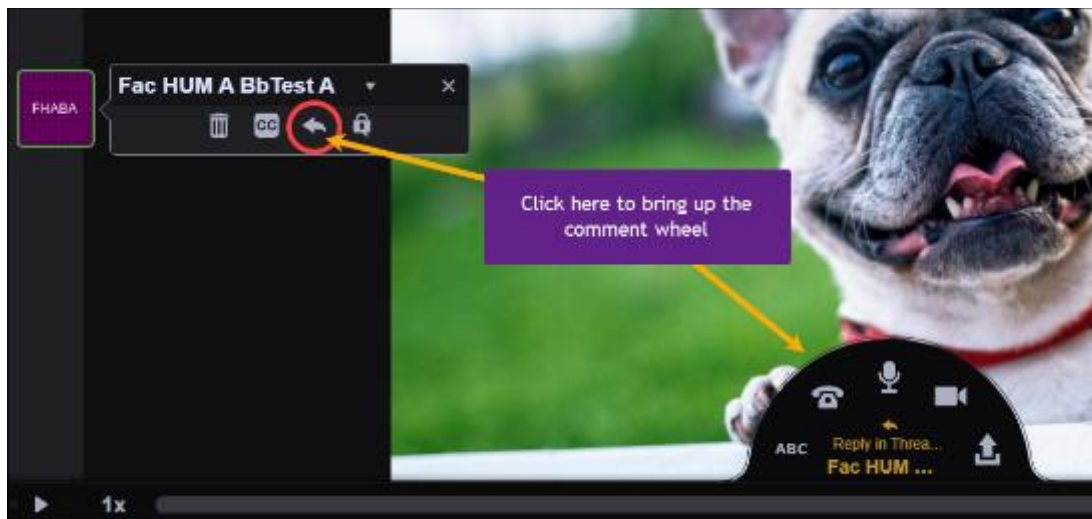
Note: If you enter the URL for a full website instead of a specific media file, VoiceThread will import the largest media file from that site. The full website will **not** be imported.

Commenting

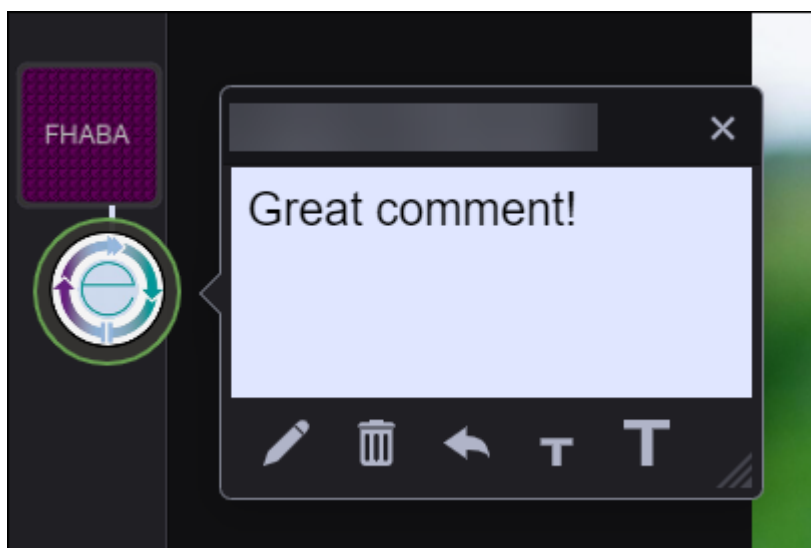
Threaded commenting

Threaded Commenting allows participants to start a separate comment thread that branches from the main conversation channel. These comments are represented by a round **Identity Image**.

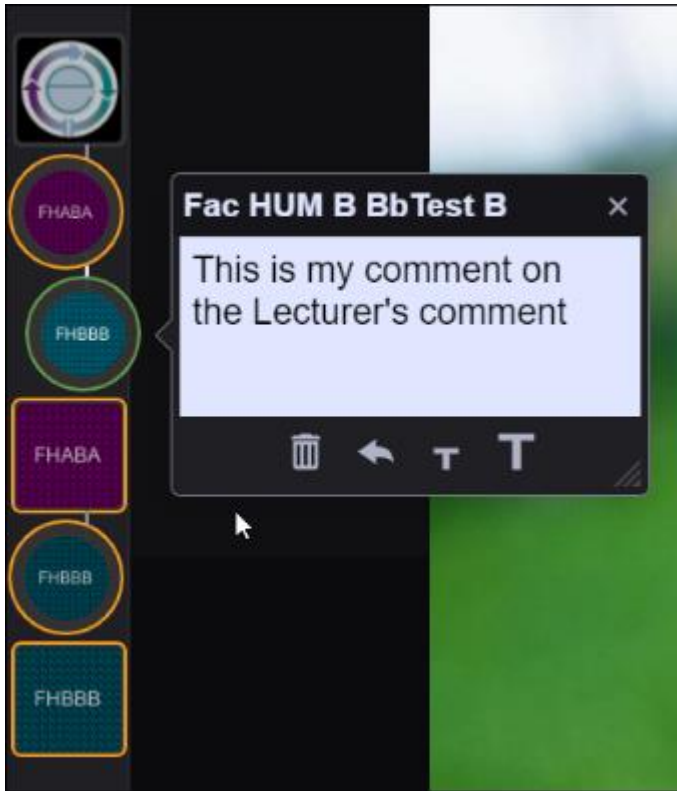
To start a new threaded conversation, click on the comment in the **Conversation Channel** to bring up the **Comment Window**. From the **Comment Window** select the **Reply** button which will bring up the comment wheel in the usual place.



Select your preferred method of commenting and once finished click Save. Your reply will then be added underneath the original comment, with your initials or profile picture shown in a circle underneath, and a white line connecting to the original comment.



As more people contribute to the threaded conversation, you'll see those replies connected by a white line.



Changing the order of comments

You can change the order of the comments in your VoiceThreads. Just select the **Identity Image** in the **Conversation Channel** and drag it to where you want it to appear.



Deleting a comment

You can delete any comment from a VoiceThread that you own. Select the comment you want to delete and click on the **trash can button** at the bottom of the **Comment Window**.

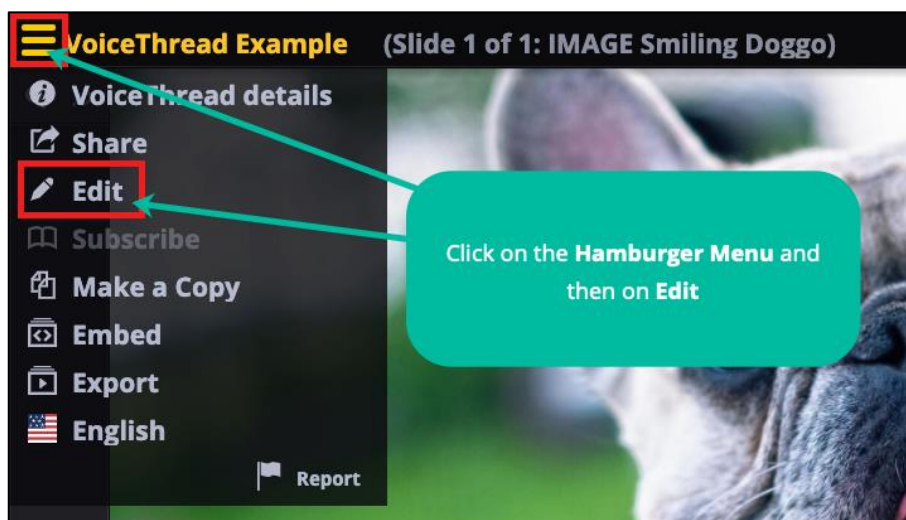


Note: If you don't see the trash can icon, that means you don't have permission to delete that comment.

Using Comment Moderation

Comment Moderation allows you to review comments before allowing others to see them. This is particularly useful if you are using a VoiceThread as an assignment.

To enable Comment Moderation, first navigate to the **VoiceThread Edit** page.



Then click on the **Options** menu in the top-right corner and select **Playback Settings** from the menu.



Check the box that says **Enable Comment Moderation** and **Save**.

×

Thread Settings

[Title/Description](#)
[Playback Options](#)
[Cover Art](#)

☒ Enable threaded commenting
 ☒ Allow commenters to add slides to this VoiceThread
 ☒ Allow others to download original media
 ☒ Allow others to export
 ☒ Start playing when opened
 ☐ Allow others to make a copy
 ☒ **Enable Comment Moderation**

Allowed Comment Methods

☒ Microphone
 ☒ Webcam
 ☒ Telephone
 ☒ File upload
 ☒ Text

☐ Automatically advance to the next slide after seconds
 ☐ Don't allow commenters to delete their own comments
 ☐ Limit each comment to minutes seconds
 ☐ When recording, go to the next slide every minutes seconds

☐ Pecha Kucha format
 ☐ Ignite format

☐ Save as default

Save

Doodling

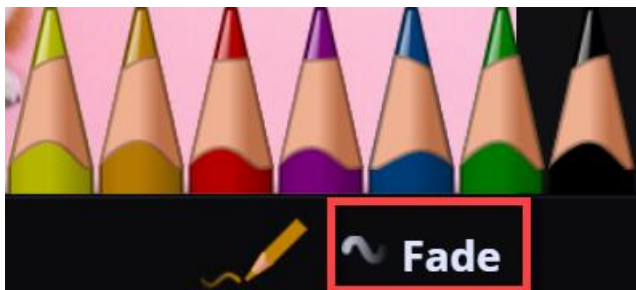
The Doodler allows you to annotate slides while you comment to highlight relevant or important areas of the slide. The Doodler will automatically appear as soon as you begin recording a comment with your microphone or webcam.

To doodle whilst you record a comment, **click the pencil icon** and **select the coloured pencil** you want to use at the bottom right of the screen.



And then use your mouse to **click and drag** on the screen to annotate.

By default, doodles fade over time, however, you can switch to no fade next to the pencil icon. Once set this preference will be remembered in your web browser the next time you comment.

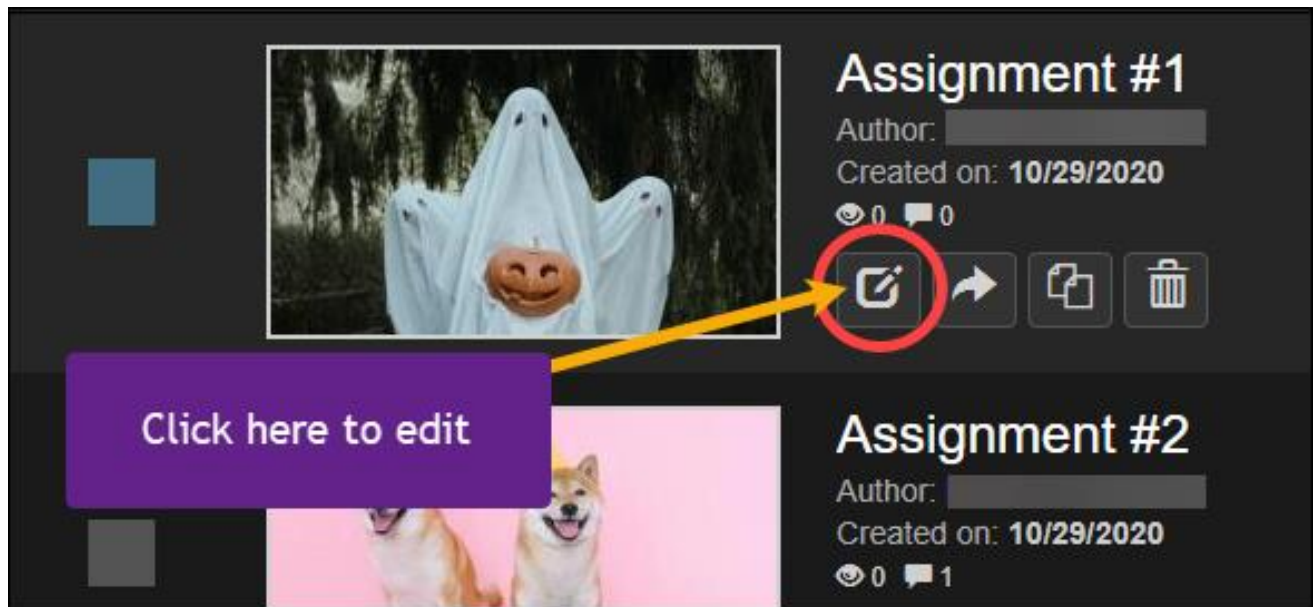


Note: Doodles are recorded as part of your comment so to delete a Doodle, you'd also have to delete the comment that contains it.

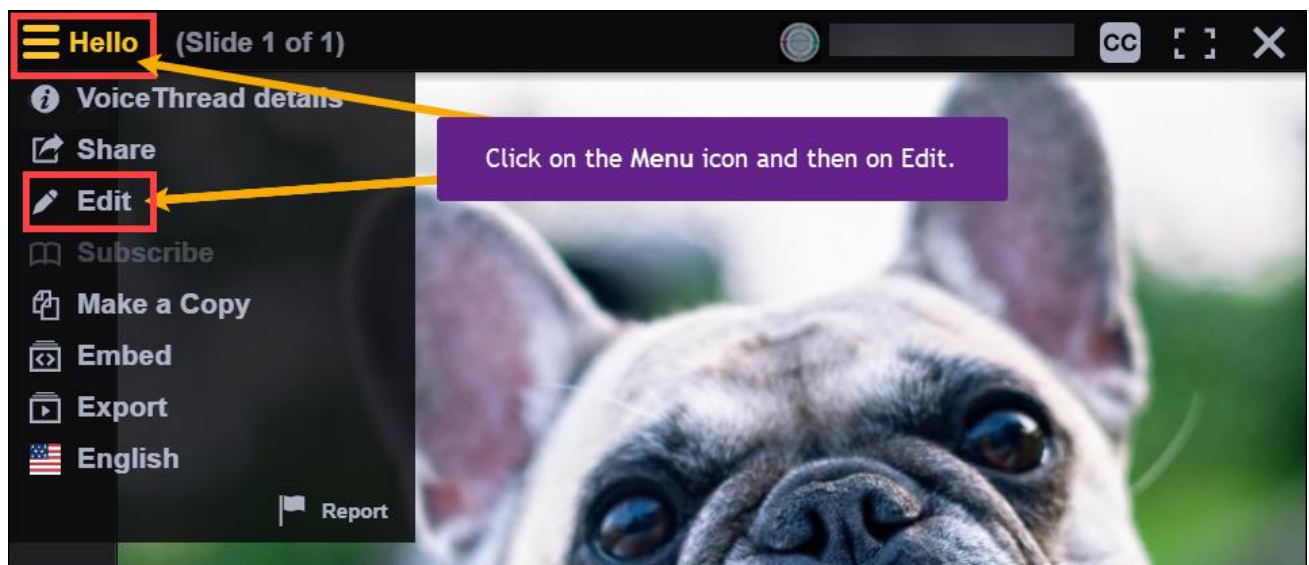
Editing

Editing an existing VoiceThread

To access the Edit area, go to the VoiceThread homepage and **hover your mouse** over the VoiceThread you want to edit. Click on the **Edit button** that comes up.

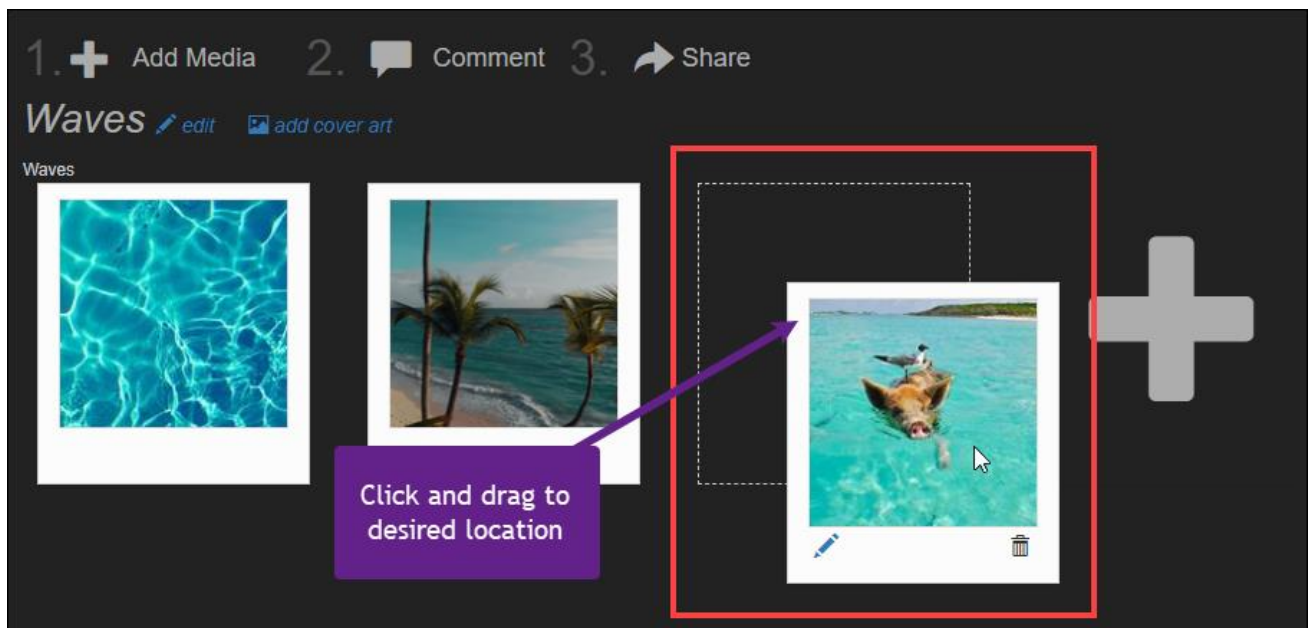


If you want to edit a VoiceThread that is already open, click on the **menu** icon in the top-left corner and select **Edit**.

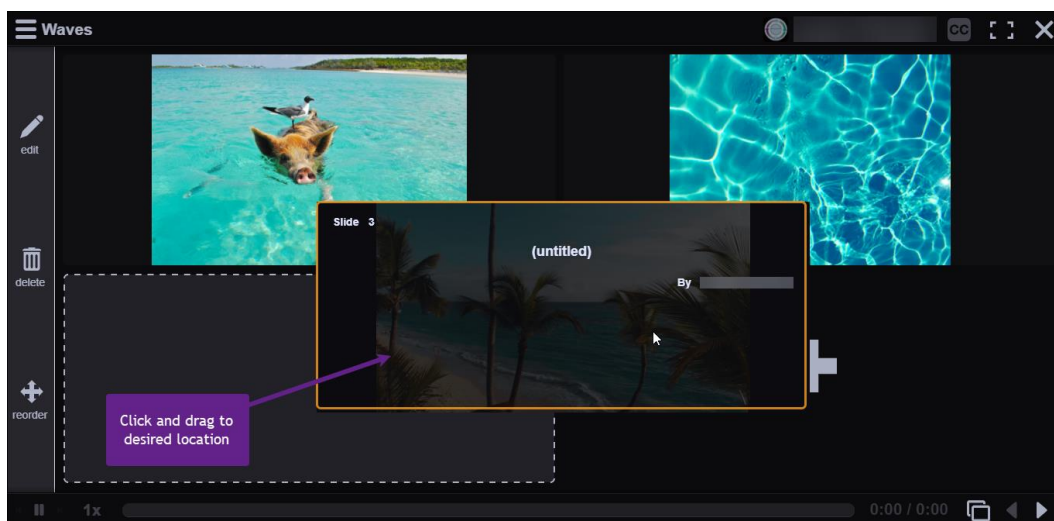
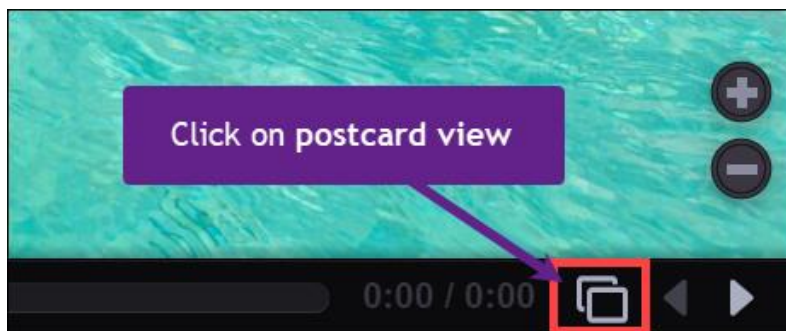


Changing the order of slides

From the **Edit Page**, click and **drag** the slide to its desired location.

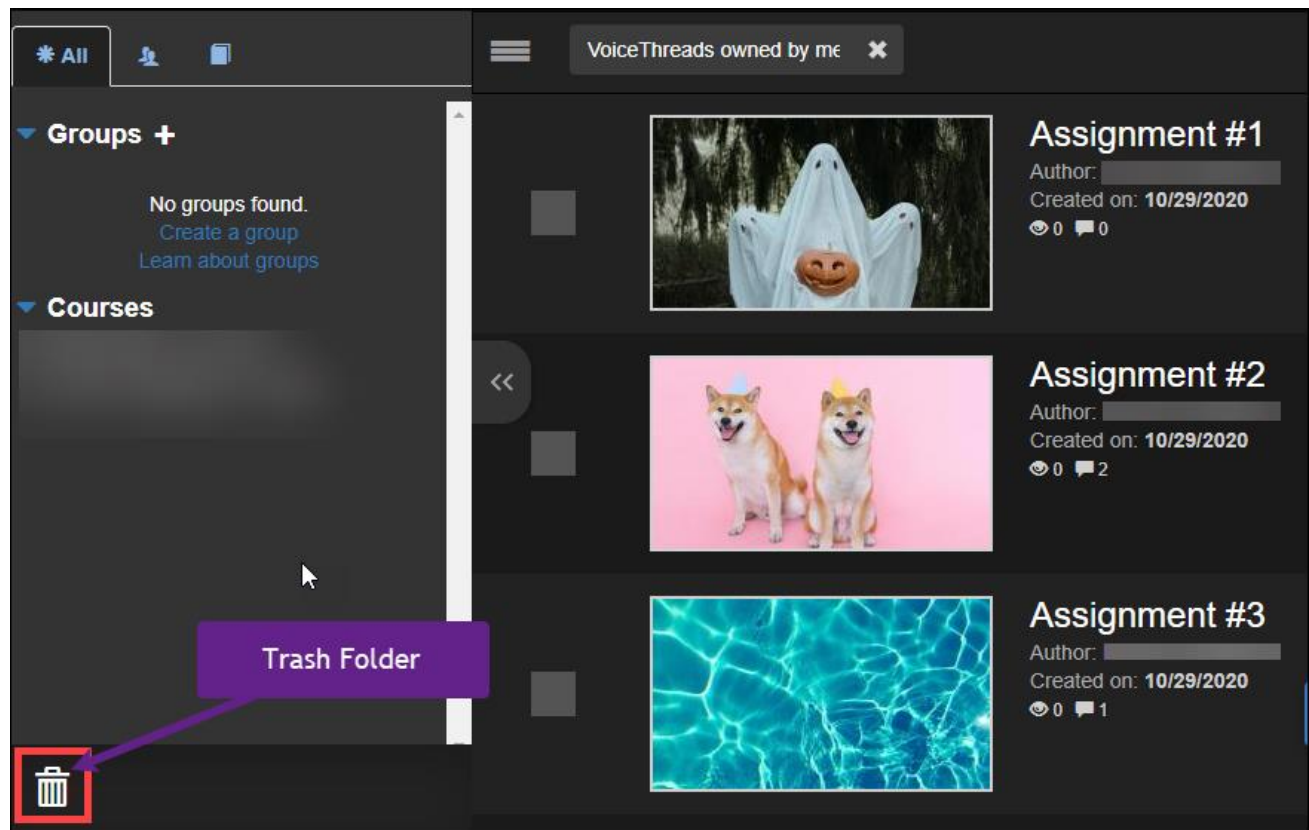


From an **open VoiceThread** click on the **postcard view** at the bottom of the VoiceThread and **drag** any **slide** to a new position.

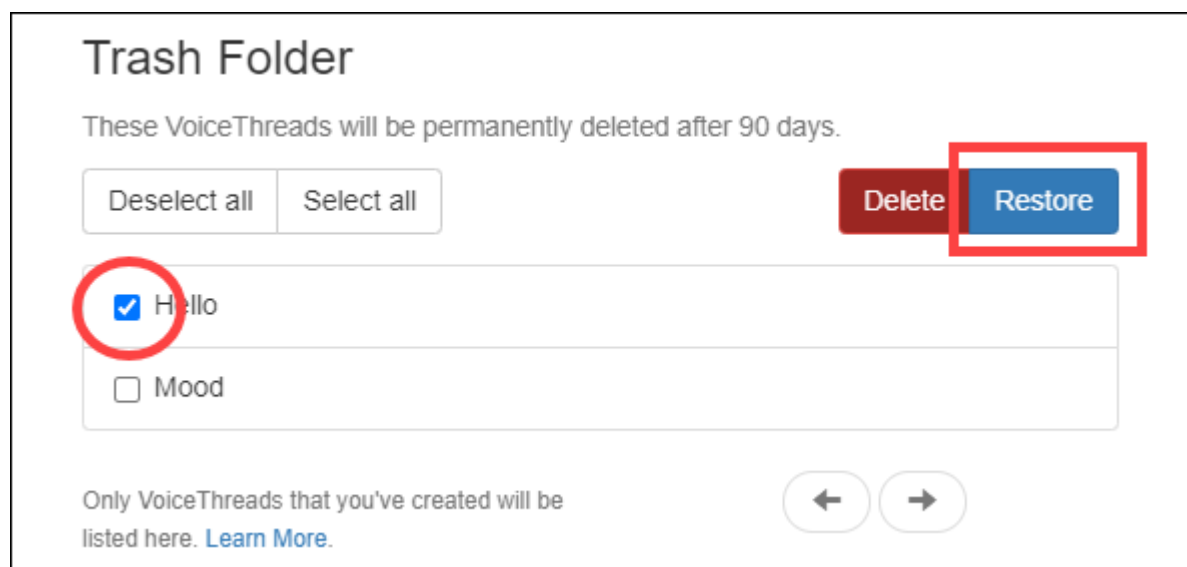


Retrieving a Deleted VoiceThread from the Trash

You can find deleted VoiceThreads in your Trash Folder for **up to 30 days**. Inside Trash, you will find a list of VoiceThreads that you own and that have been deleted.



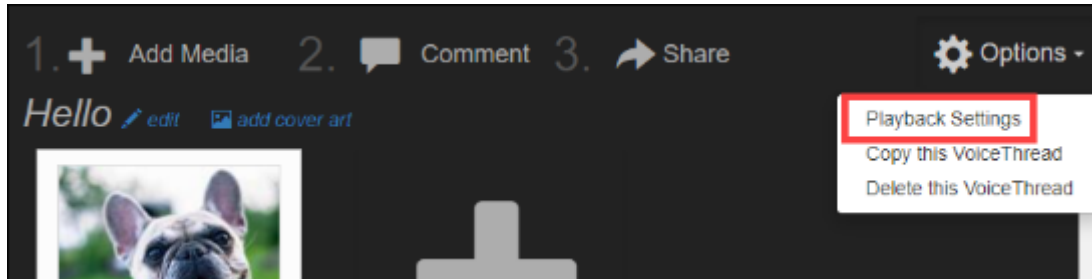
Just check the box next to any VoiceThread you want to restore, and then click the **Restore** button.



Settings

Changing your VoiceThread playback settings

These determine how participants will experience your VoiceThread. To make changes go to the **Edit** page for the VoiceThread and click on **Options** in the top-right corner. Then select **Playback Settings**.



Selecting default playback settings

To save settings as the default for all VoiceThreads you create check the boxes for the settings you would like to enable and then check the **Save as default** option at the bottom of the window.

×

Thread Settings

Title/Description

Playback Options

Cover Art

☒ Enable threaded commenting
 ☒ Allow commenters to add slides to this VoiceThread
 ☐ Allow others to download original media
 ☐ Allow others to export
 ☒ Start playing when opened
 ☐ Allow others to make a copy
 ☐ Enable Comment Moderation

Allowed Comment Methods

☒ Microphone
 ☒ Webcam
 ☐ Telephone
 ☒ File upload
 ☒ Text

☐ Automatically advance to the next slide after 4 seconds
 ☒ Don't allow commenters to delete their own comments
 ☐ Limit each comment to 60 minutes 0 seconds
 ☐ When recording, go to the next slide every 0 minutes 20 seconds
 ☐ Pecha Kucha format
 ☐ Ignite format

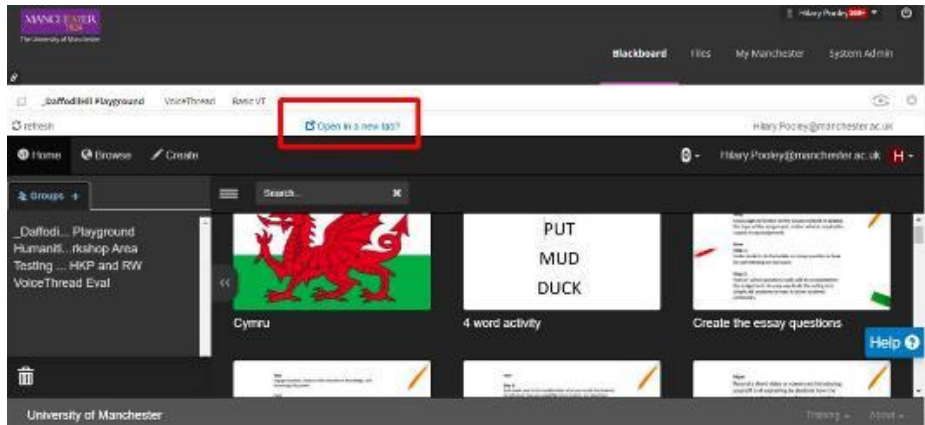
☒ Save as default

Save

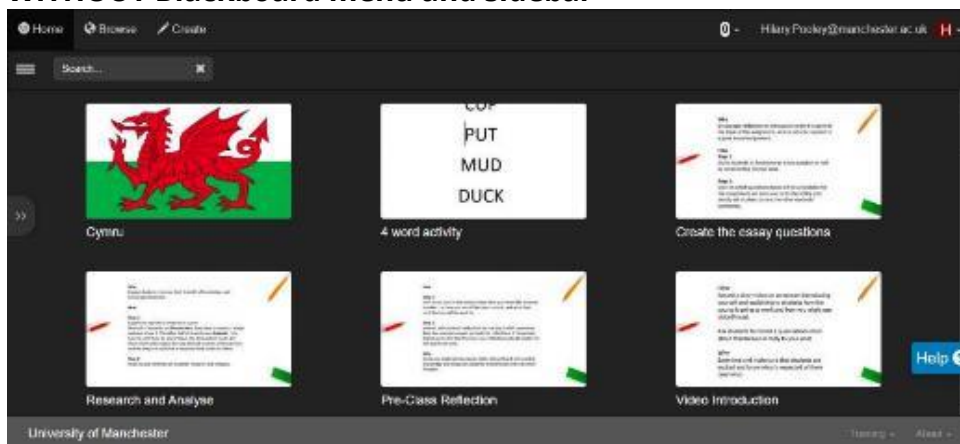
Customizing your VoiceThread Home page

Top Tip: Just above the VoiceThread Homepage, within Blackboard, you can select the '**Open in New Tab**' link. This will remove the Blackboard navigation menu at the top of the screen and give you more room to work within VoiceThread.

WITH Blackboard menu and sidebar



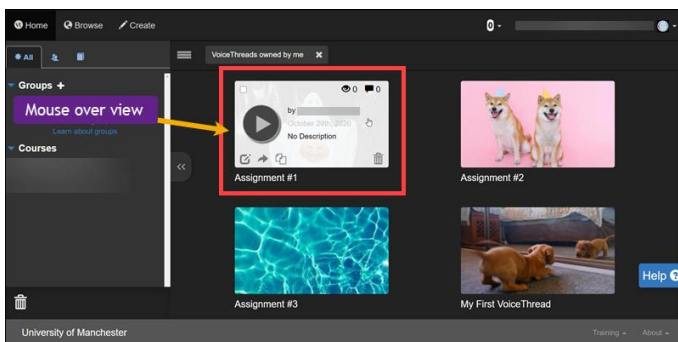
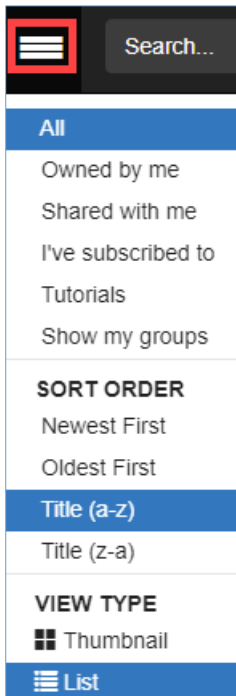
WITHOUT Blackboard menu and sidebar



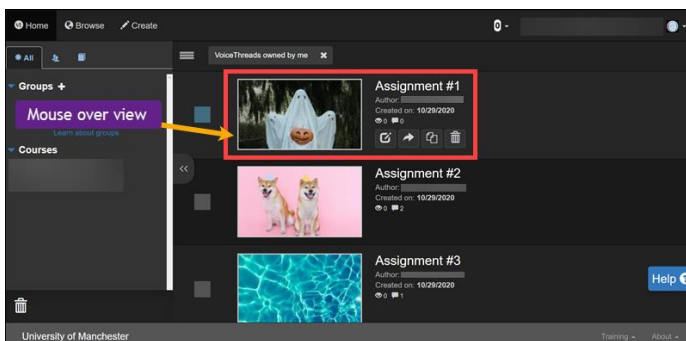
Page Layout

You can switch from the default large thumbnail view to smaller thumbnails by clicking **the menu icon** and selecting **List**. This displays the same content but in a single list with smaller thumbnail images.

N.B. Depending on the size of your screen, you may need to open VoiceThread in a new tab in order to see *all* the menu options.



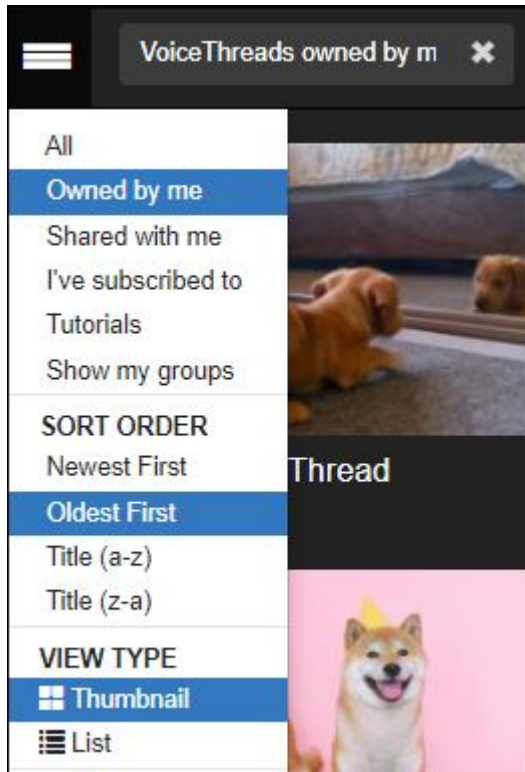
Thumbnail View

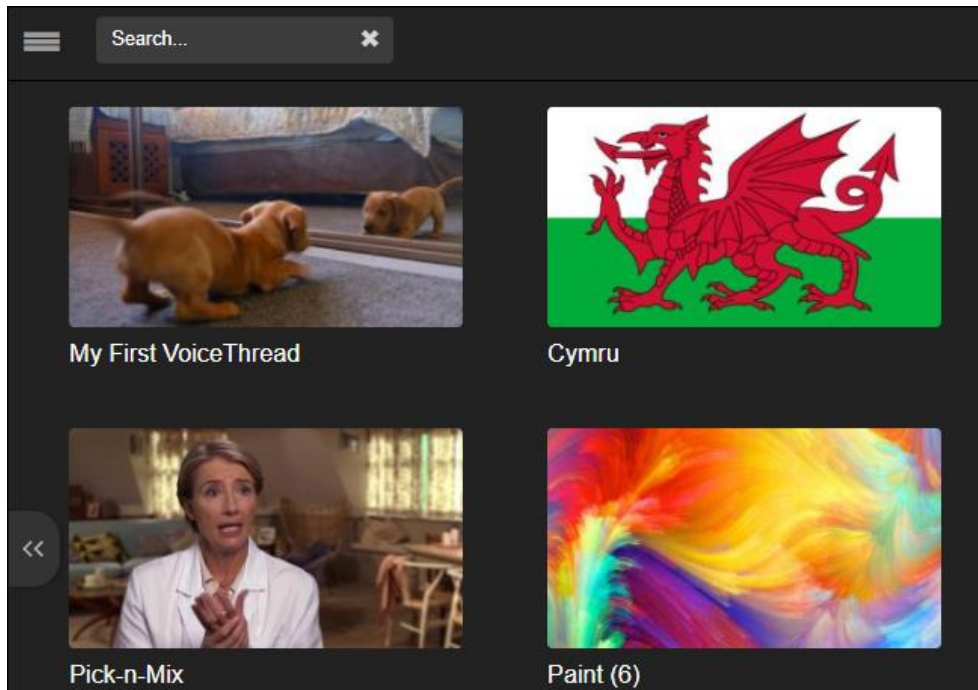


List View

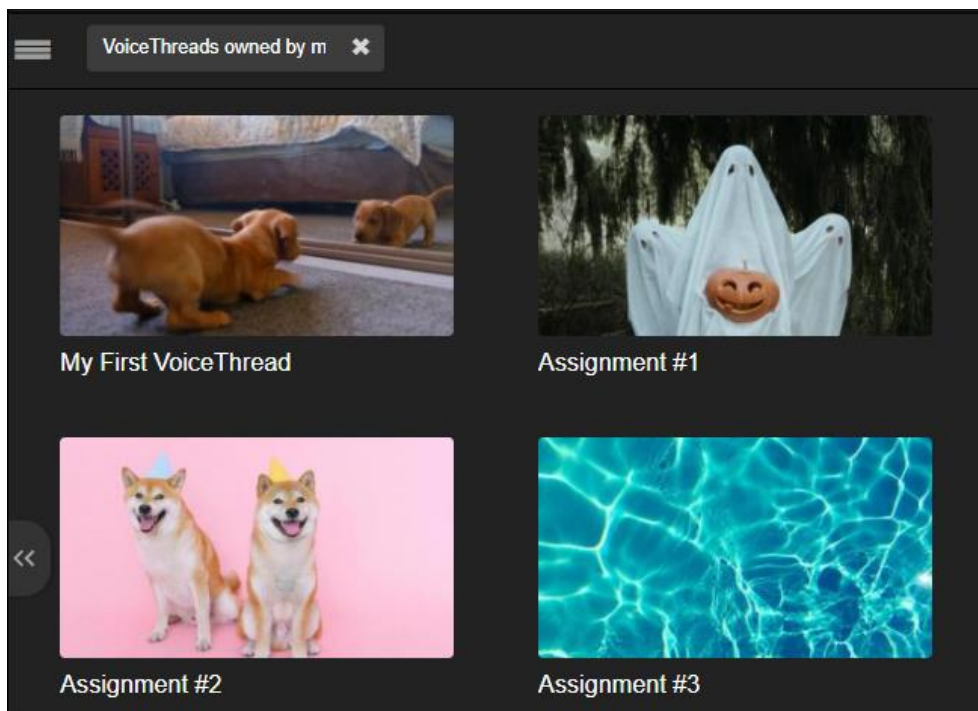
Sorting your VoiceThreads

You can reduce the number of visible VoiceThreads by clicking on the menu icon and selecting a filter. After you have selected a filter, you can also sort the VoiceThreads on view by selecting a specific ordering from the same menu.





View BEFORE filtering



View AFTER filtering

Useful Resources

- [Humanities eLearning VoiceThread Hub](#)
- VoiceThread How to Pages
 - [For computer](#)
 - [For mobile/tablet](#)