

## 12. PARTICIPATING IN AND HOSTING ONLINE CHATS



### What is it?

An online chat is a discussion on a social media platform (like Facebook or Twitter). In this context, we are referring to discussions about professional topics like classroom management, developing reading skills etc. Taking part in chats is a good way of getting real-time solutions and ideas.

For this guide, we will focus on Twitter chats. Generally known for news updates and opinions, Twitter chats are a good way for educators to interact with and learn from each other. The chats happen weekly or monthly and are on topics of interest.

### Useful Twitter language

**tweet/retweet:** a message is called a tweet. If you find a tweet interesting or thought provoking, you can share it with your followers in a retweet.



**hashtag:** a chat is identified by a hashtag (#) which is also used to track and participate in the chat.

**at:** accounts are called handles and start with the @ sign. After you create a handle, you'll see an @ sign before your username. We say 'at' when referring to this sign.

**feed:** You can follow Twitter handles and quickly create your own personal learning network (PLN) and a customised series of tweets called a feed.

### Twitter chats for teachers

#### #ELTchat

A long running weekly chat for English teachers with a useful repository of chat summaries.



#### #edtechchat

This chat explores the use of technology in learning and education.

#### #edchat

A popular weekly chat that explores a variety of topics related to education.

#### #edlitchat

A virtual book club for educators with an online chat once a month.



*This guide uses Quick Response (QR) codes. To scan these codes, look for the app in Google Play or App Store and download it for free. To access resources, open the app and hold it above a QR code.*

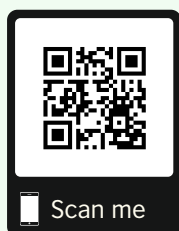
# Participating in and hosting online chats

## Participating in a chat

Find out what time a chat is scheduled and the topic of discussion. You can usually do this by opening the chat's hashtag on Twitter. At the scheduled time, log in to Twitter on a computer or your smartphone and search for the chat's hashtag.

Chat moderators will ask questions and participants will give responses. You can participate by:

- replying to a tweet
- liking a tweet
- retweeting a tweet - either as it is or by adding a comment
- sharing the tweet through Facebook or WhatsApp or bookmarking it



Scan this QR code to watch a video on participating in Twitter chats.

## Hosting a chat in six easy steps

1. Choose a unique hashtag that represents your community of teachers and includes the word 'chat' for example **#indiaeduchat**.
2. Choose a topic for your chat and announce it through Twitter and other social media at least one week before the chat. Make a poster and include the chat topic and a short introduction along with date and time in IST format.
3. Prepare three-four discussion questions based on the topic. Think about three resources related to the topic you can share with participants.
4. Post reminders for three or four days leading up to chat. Also share relevant articles and links for participants to prepare.
5. Open your Twitter account using **tweetdeck.com**. This will help you moderate the chat more effectively. If you are working in a team, decide on moderator roles and be ready to post questions.
6. Use the like, retweet and quote tweet buttons to appreciate and encourage chatters. Keep reminding them to use the hashtag!

This guide is linked to the British Council CPD Framework for Teachers.

It develops the professional practice:  
*Integrating ICT:*

- Developing effective strategies for locating appropriate digital content
- Promoting autonomous learning by exploiting digital content and technologies inside and outside of the formal learning environment.

**Stage: Understanding**