

Minimising the distance,
maximising the learning:
Successful selection and implementation
of an online virtual whiteboard for
tutorial sessions

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The need ...

How to improve the teaching of the methodology
of mathematical problem solving to Distance Ed
students in a Genetics Theory unit?

- disparity between on-campus and Distance Ed tutorials
- direct participation in problem-solving tasks
- timely practical support for their learning process

On-campus:

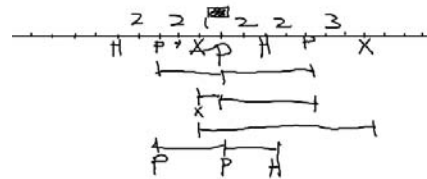
Student tutorials focus on working through the mathematical problems collaboratively **every** week.



Distance Ed:

Students complete problems individually and then work through 5 weeks of problems collaboratively on **one** on-campus day.

1	Pvu II	3kb + 4kb	Pvu Xba	1kb + 4kb	2
3	Xba I	3kb	Pvu Hind	2kb + 3kb	4
5	Hind III	7kb	Xba Hind	3kb	✓



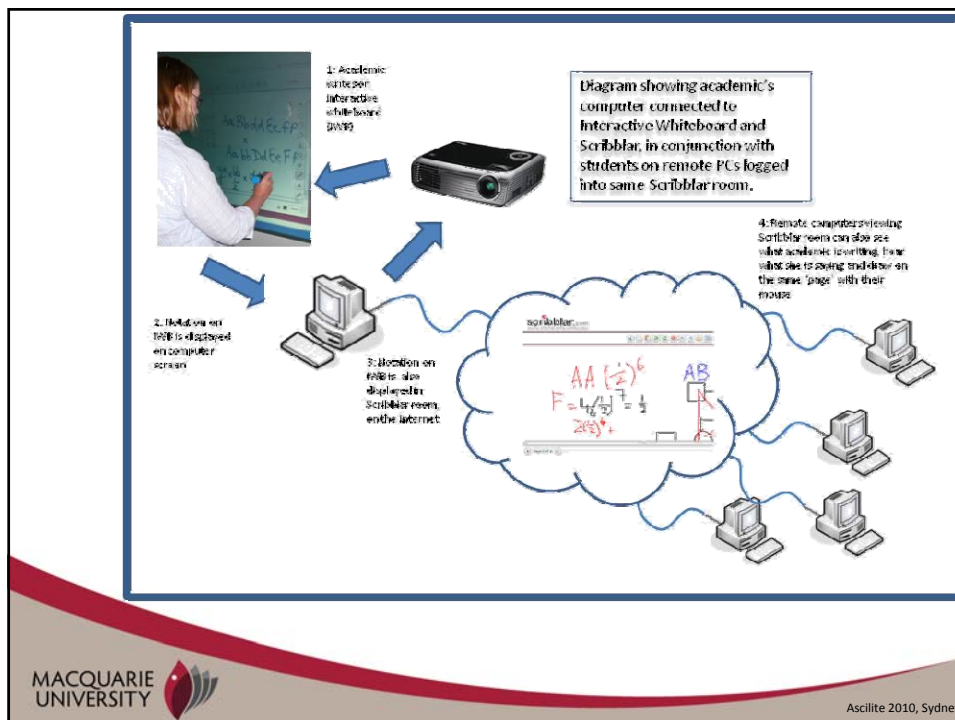
Design brief:

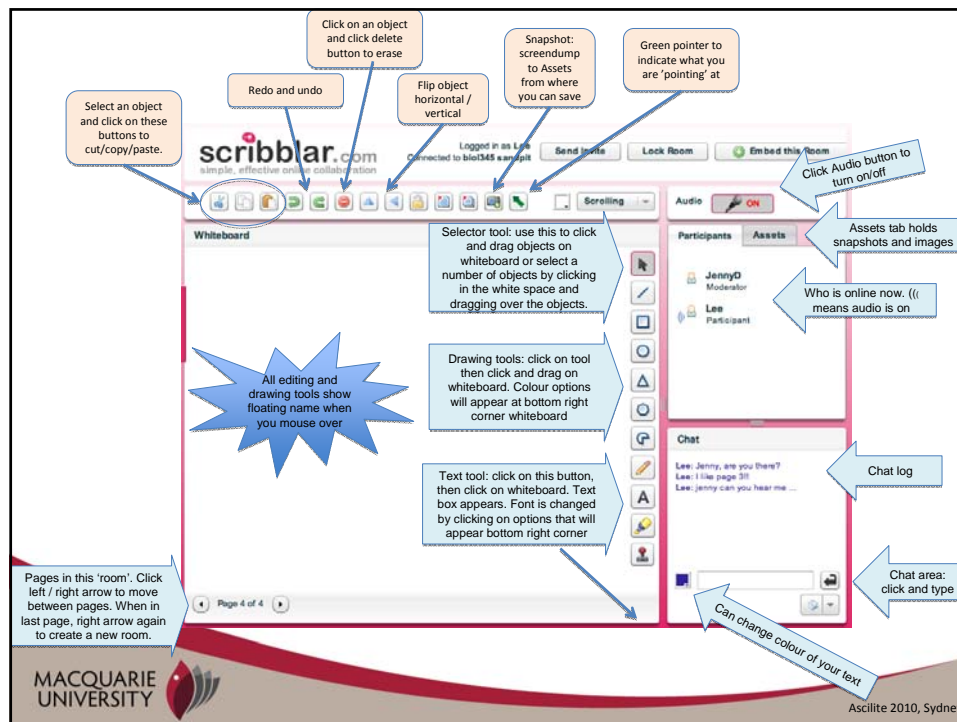
To find an online interactive learning space which has:

- interactive whiteboard, with drawing tools
- audio facilities
- no cost
- text chat area
- ability to upload and download documents
- session times between 1 and 2 hours

The process ... finding the best tool

1. Needs analysis
2. Research and test the possible solutions (9)
3. Trial the possible solutions (4)
4. Demonstrate final contenders
5. Pilot with lecturer and student (3)
6. Choose final solution
7. Prepare for first online tutorial





Student evaluation

Feedback from students was very positive. Comments included:

- Good interactive tutorial with ability to hear other students and draw on whiteboard.
- They helped reinforce the problem sets and provided an opportunity to work through any questions I was struggling with.
- To go through worked examples together was handy and useful.

Modifications for next time

Feedback from students indicated:

- accessibility issues for one student i.e. computer at work could not access Scribblar
- timing issues i.e. dinner time for young family, working hours
- length of session shortened i.e. to one hour
- minor tech troubleshooting during sessions

Use of Scribblar with
Macquarie Distance Ed students:

<http://www.vimeo.com/13724941>

YouTube demo movie of Scribblar:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByZenKhLVRg>