The essential guide to augmenting your science lessons with Stile
Overview

The collection of teaching tips in this guide have been carefully compiled to help every teacher make the most of Stile. They represent the collective wisdom of hundreds of experienced Stile teachers, who, between them, have run thousands of successful (and some unsuccessful!) lessons with Stile.

At Stile we love a reliable, repeatable experiment. That’s why we decided to write every teaching tips article with the same tried and tested experiment report layout. Here’s what each article section means:

- **Introduction** – a bit of context about using Stile in the suggested way.
- **Aim** – the key benefits of using Stile in this way.
- **Procedure** – a combination of Stile pointers and teaching tips to best achieve the aim.
- **Lab safety notes** – What to avoid and common pitfalls.

We wish you all the best with your Stile journey, and don’t forget, you’re welcome to discuss Stile teaching ideas with us at any time. We’re a bunch of science nerds based in Melbourne, and we love chatting with teachers about awesome science education.

Feel free to call us on (03) 8539 3289, email us at community@stileeducation.com, or swing by our office and say hi!
Teaching with Stile in the classroom  
a beginner’s guide

Introduction

There are a number of ways to run brilliant science lessons with Stile. If you’re just starting out with Stile, we suggest you follow the procedure below.

Aim

Why bother teaching with Stile? After all, you’ve been teaching great science lessons for years! Well, there are a number of benefits to using the Stile teaching tips below. These include:

- Having stimulating class discussions about the latest science news.
- Helping students better grasp the scientific concepts you’re teaching them.
- Facilitating independent learning so you have more time to assist students one-on-one.

Procedure

First and foremost, it’s worth noting that a bit of Stile lesson prep goes a long way. Before rocking up to class, make sure to skim through the lesson you’re about to teach: watch the videos, read the teacher notes, even read the model answers. It’ll take you a few minutes and you’ll be that much more prepared.

When it comes to teaching your class, we suggest mixing the following teaching strategies into an engaging symphony of learning with you as the conductor, your students as the orchestra, and Stile as the sheet music.

1. Class discussion
   Use Stile’s links to real-world science to facilitate stimulating class discussions. Every one of Stile’s units starts with an “Introduction” lesson that contains recent and relevant science news stories. Perfect!

2. Direct instruction
   Guide students through the learning goals and lesson content on the data projector as a class. Watch videos up the front of the class, read the text as a class, discuss key concepts, and so on. You’ll find that, with your guidance, the mixture of short snappy videos, clear diagrams and interactive simulations really help students grasp the scientific concepts you’re teaching them.

3. Facilitate independent learning
   Once you’ve gone through a section of content at the front of the class, have students work through the subsequent questions on their devices at their own pace. Stile’s content is scaffolded from lower- to higher-order thinking in every lesson so as to challenge every student at their level. As students work, take the time to roam the room and address knowledge gaps with students one-on-one.

4. Consolidation
   Once the students have had enough time to work through a block of questions, regain their attention and discuss their responses as a class. Consolidate key concepts and have students reflect on their learning.
That’s it! Of course, you can set any unfinished questions for homework.

1. Class discussion
2. Direct instruction
3. Facilitate independent learning
4. Consolidation

Lab safety notes

It’s worth noting that we don’t recommend using Stile as a ‘set-and-forget’ resource. Unlike most other online resources, Stile was designed with you, the teacher, at the centre of the classroom. We believe that a good resource should amplify your current teaching style, not replace you with volleys of automated lower-order questions!
Teaching with Stile in the classroom for experienced Stilists

Introduction

So, you’re comfortable with the basics of teaching with Stile in the classroom and you’re hungry to learn more. This is the article for you! The Stile teaching tips below will help you further augment your teaching practice with Stile.

Aim

Here are the three key benefits of using the following advanced Stile teaching tips in the classroom:

- Facilitating even better class discussions.
- Quickly identifying and addressing individual student knowledge gaps.
- Providing faster feedback to the class on key concepts.

Procedure

To further augment your teaching with Stile, we recommend building on the structure described in the previous article.

1. Class discussion
   Stile’s Live Polls are perfect for facilitating better class discussions. Add one to your Stile lesson at a key discussion point. Have students answer in Stile, see who answered what, and have students justify their responses to each other.

2. Direct instruction
   The key to direct instruction with Stile is to have students switch off their devices (“laptop down, eyes at the front”). Human eyes are inextricably drawn to the radiant light of a computer screen in front of them!
3. Facilitate independent learning
Once you’ve got students working through questions at their own pace, open up Stile’s Class Insights. Here you will be able to immediately identify and address student knowledge gaps. As you see students answer questions incorrectly, walk over and help to nudge them back in the right direction.

Tip: If you’re up for an additional challenge, configure your computer’s display settings to make the data projector an extension of your laptop screen (as opposed to it mirroring your laptop screen, which is often the default setting). Once you’ve done this, you can display the lesson on the data projector, and display Class Insights or the model answers on your laptop screen.

4. Consolidation
Once students have worked through the lesson questions, it’s time to consolidate learning as a class. The best tool for this is Stile’s Quick Review (click “View responses” from the Class Insights page). Use it to quickly scan through student responses on the data projector and have students provide feedback on each others’ responses.

Tip: Stile’s Quick Review has special hotkeys! Use the left and right arrows to move between student responses. Use ‘R’, ‘W’, and ‘C’ for ‘right’, ‘wrong’, and ‘comment’ respectively.
Conducting formative assessment with Stile

Introduction

Used well, formative assessment is one of the most effective ways that we can help improve student learning. The trick, of course, is to do it effectively and in the limited time that we have. That's where Stile comes in.

Aim

Some of the key benefits of using Stile for formative assessment are:

- You can provide students with feedback faster than is otherwise possible.
- Students can change their responses based on your feedback, building a record of their improvement over time.
- You will save time writing reports and preparing for parent-teacher interviews.

Procedure

Before class

1. Skim through the Stile lessons you’re about to teach – decide which questions you’re going to assess and provide students with feedback on. In most cases, these questions should elicit understanding of the lesson’s learning goals. Let’s call these key questions.

   Tip: Many of Stile’s units contain quizzes. These are perfect for your key questions as every question is designed to elicit understanding of the learning goals.

In class

2. Inform students of the key questions you will be assessing.
3. Conduct your class as you normally would.

Either during or after class

4. Use Quick Review to provide students with written feedback on key questions.

   Tip: there are two ways that you can provide feedback on a given question:

   - Leave a comment in the comment box.
   - Highlight a section of text in the student’s response and add a comment.
5. Ask students to review your comments and resubmit their work if required.

Tip: We suggest repeating this feedback loop until you’re satisfied with your students’ responses.

6. Use the Markbook to navigate through all of a student’s work in Stile.

7. When looking at a student’s lesson submission, you may wish to view the various versions of their work to showcase their improvement over time.

Lab safety notes

- While Stile provides you with the option, you don’t have to provide feedback on every question! Rather, simply decide on your key questions and focus your feedback on them.
- Along those same lines, you don’t need to have students respond to every question in Stile. Simply delete any questions you don’t want students to respond to or answer some questions verbally as a class.
Running a prac with Stile

Introduction

Pracs and hands-on activities can provide some of the most powerful learning moments for our students. Whether you wish to run one of Stile’s investigations or one of your own, Stile is the perfect digital lab book to help your students become scientific thinkers.

Aim

Why have students write up their investigation reports in Stile? Here are some of the top benefits:

- You can easily tailor the openness of an investigation to the ability level of your students. They can be open-ended, student-led investigations, ‘follow the recipe’ practical activities, or anything in between.
- Students can upload and annotate photos of their investigation right into their report.
- Students can instantly visualise their data as they’re collecting results.

Procedure

Your procedure will vary slightly depending on whether you wish to run one of your own investigations or one of Stile’s.

Stile prep if you’re running your own investigation

1. Copy one of Stile’s scientific investigation templates from the Lesson Library into your Stile subject.

2. Modify the template as appropriate: add the aim, materials and method if you want more of a recipe-based activity. Or leave them as questions for a more open-ended, student-led investigation.

Stile prep if you’re running one of Stile’s investigations

1. Copy the relevant Stile unit from the Lesson Library into your Stile subject.

2. Modify the investigation as appropriate: remove the aim, materials and method and replace them with questions if you want more of an open-ended, student-led investigation.
Running your investigation in the class

Run your investigation as you normally would, except have students record their results and write their report in Stile. Make sure to:

3. Encourage students to upload photos and videos of their investigation. They can annotate their photos if they upload them into a Canvas (see diagram on the right).

   Tip: Students can log into Stile on their phones in order to directly upload their photos and videos.

4. Where relevant, encourage students to upload their data directly into Stile’s graph tool. Their data will be visualised right in front of their eyes!

Of course, as always, we suggest viewing student work as they go via the Markbook and providing feedback where relevant. Ask students to resubmit their work in response to your feedback to hone their scientific minds!
Running a test with Stile

Introduction

Running an online test with students can be a little daunting, especially if you haven’t done it before. The good news is that running an online test with Stile is simple, stress-free, and has a lot of benefit.

Aim

You’ll save loads of time by running a test in Stile, as:

- All multiple choice questions are automatically marked for you.
- You can quickly mark all non multiple choice questions.
- You can quickly gain an understanding of student knowledge gaps.

Procedure

Before class

1. Ensure the test isn’t visible to students (i.e. it needs to be below the release bar).

2. Set assessment mode to “Assessed”, if it isn’t already. When a Stile lesson is set to “Assessed” students cannot resubmit their work without the teacher’s permission.

3. Assign marks for each question. By default every question is assigned one mark. To change how many marks are assigned to a question, simply click “Edit” next to the question number.
In class

4. Release the test in Stile as soon as students are ready.

5. Use Stile’s Class Insights to ensure that every student has started.

6. Monitor students as they work from the back of the classroom so that you can see their screens.

7. When time is up, ask students to click “Hand in for marking” at the bottom-right of their page. Monitor which students haven’t handed their test in from Class Insights.

   **Tip:** if some students don’t hand their test in on time you can “collect all unfinished work” from the Markbook.

After class

8. Use Quick Review to mark every non-multiple choice question. We suggest that you have the model answers open at the same time to help speed things up further.

   **Tip:** Stile’s Quick Review has special hotkeys! Use the left and right arrows to move between student responses. Use ‘R’, ‘W’, and ‘C’ for ‘right’, ’wrong’ and ‘comment’ respectively.
9. Once you’ve finished marking every question, you can release the marks and answers to the whole class in one click. Simply head to the Markbook, click on the arrowhead underneath the lesson name, then click “Release all feedback and answers”.

The next class

10. Go through the model answers of the test as a class. Use the per-question analysis in Class Insights to help decide what concepts you need to re-inforce and which you don’t.

Lab safety notes

The biggest risk of running any online test with your class is having your students Google the answer to questions, or share their answers with each other. To help minimise the risks around this, Stile has:

- Firstly, Stile’s content writers work hard to ensure that the questions in our tests aren’t Googleable.
- Secondly, the order in which the options for multiple choice questions appear are randomised in Stile’s tests, making it more difficult for students to peer over each others shoulders and see the correct answer.

We recommend that when running a test in Stile you drag the test to the top of your folder, and then drag the release bar right underneath it. This will hide the rest of the lessons that you’ve taught in Stile, making it a closed-book exam rather than an open-book one.
Setting Stile for homework

Introduction
Stile is great for homework. Every lesson in Stile is self-paced and is scaffolded to ensure that every student is challenged at the appropriate level. There are a few key steps you can take to ensure you’re setting your students up for homework success!

Aim
The top three benefits of using Stile for homework are:

- You can easily monitor who did their homework and when they did it.
- Students can assist each other in the evening, while they’re working.
- Students don’t need to take anything home with them. They can log on to Stile from home on any device available to them.

Procedure
Before you set Stile for homework, we suggest you prepare by following the steps below:

1. Read through the Stile lesson that you wish to set and decide which questions you want students to answer for homework. Either communicate to students which questions you want them to answer or simply delete any unwanted questions.

   Tip: We recommend using the “Introduction” news article for homework if you’re starting a new topic. It’s great for stimulating conversations with students over dinner with their parents.

2. Set a due date for the homework in Stile. This will set a reminder on the students’ home screen. It will also show you which students hand in their homework late in the Markbook.

3. Open the class discussion. This will allow students to ask each other questions and chat with each other in the evening in a safe, teacher-monitored, environment.

Lab safety notes
It’s always worth keeping an eye on the Class Discussion if you’ve opened it for homework. If students realise that you’re not looking at it then they may do the wrong thing. Keeping an eye on Class Discussion has other benefits too, such as providing insight into any peer teaching happening in your class.
Want to learn more?

You can speak with one of Stile’s friendly resident teachers by calling (03) 8539 3289 or emailing community@stileeducation.com

Alternatively, you can find specific video tutorials and support articles at help.stileapp.com