Padlet as a tool to develop common guidelines for using digital media

Goals

With the help of the app "Padlet", ideas, approaches and suggestions can be collected quickly and easily even in large groups. The application can be used as a kind of digital mindmap, but it is more convincing because thoughts can be moved, summarized and clustered. Collecting ideas also works very quickly, as all participants can get involved at the same time. The mindmap can be projected onto a screen so that all participants can read each other's contributions, anonymously if desired.

“Padlet” is very well suited in this form to get into a discussion on specific topics and to develop common rules and guidelines. Children and young people often find it much easier to adhere to and respect them when they have been involved in their creation. In this way they assume responsibility and take a position. The tool presented here can be used to develop guidelines and initiate discussions on a number of relevant topics.

An important question that keeps coming up and can be discussed with the help of "Padlet" is, for example, the use of digital media in general and in youth centres in particular. Since the visitors of these facilities are directly affected by the question, it makes sense to let them decide for themselves whether and how digital media should be used in youth centres.

The development of common guidelines works excellently via "Padlet" as several groups or individuals can use the application at the same time - their respective views, suggestions and ideas pop up simultaneously so that participants inspire each other and opinions of the group become equally visible. Participants* can also quickly express their opposition by likening or commenting on contributions, but this feature can be disabled.

As a digital medium, “Padlet” can also be used to strengthen the participants’ media competence.

Implementation

The preparation of the respective "Padlet" template should be done in advance by the youth worker, so that the participants can start immediately. "Padlet" basically offers a variety of possible templates that offer different functions and advantages. For the creation of common guidelines in groups, the "Canvas" board is particularly suitable, as contributions can be categorized and moved as desired by the youth worker during the exercise or together with the group after the exercise, so that clarity is maintained.

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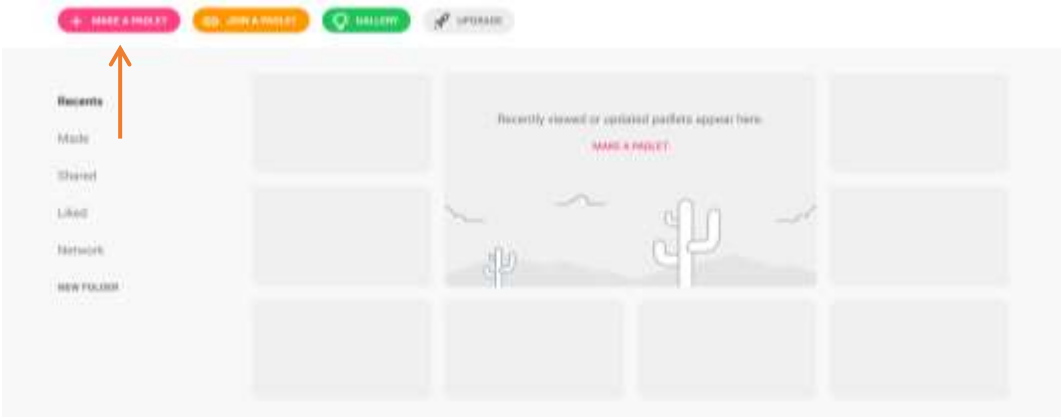
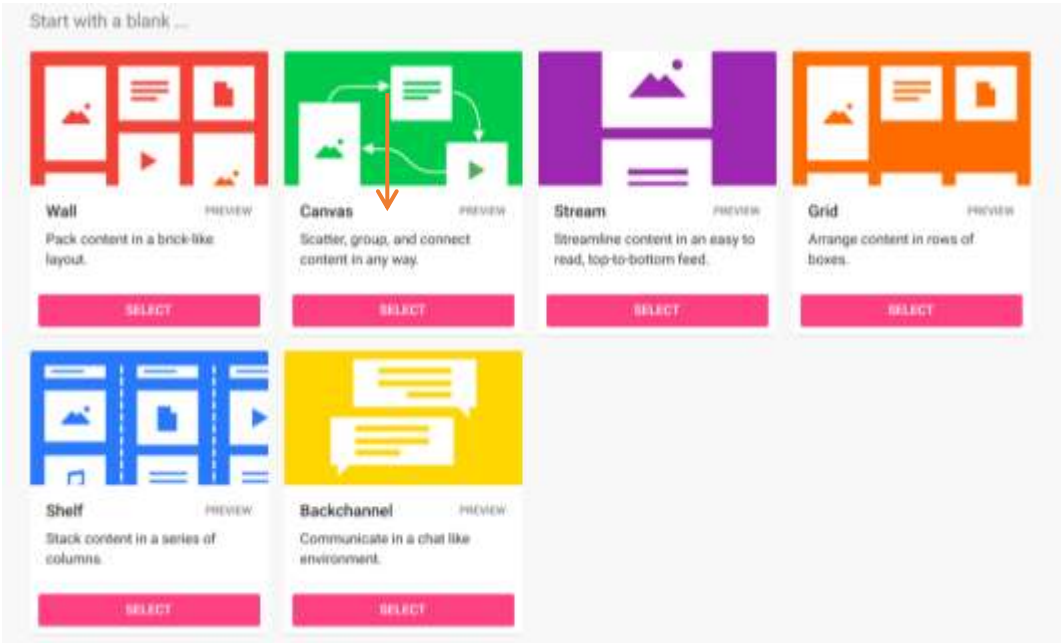
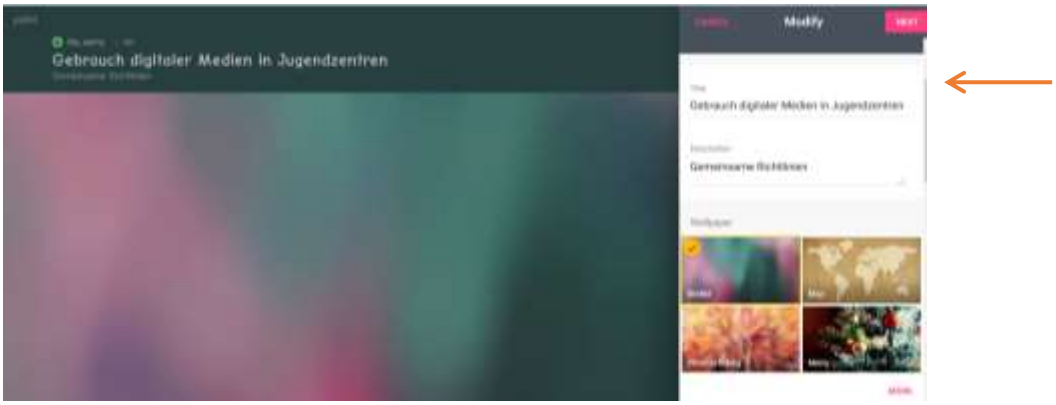


All images: Own screenshots taken in Padlet



After a board is selected, the name of the template, the background image and many other optical details can be set at the right edge. If you scroll down in the bar, you will also come across important options that characterize the course of the group exercise. For example, it is possible to control whether the posts are displayed anonymously or with names on the board, whether the respective contributions can be commented, clicked, marked with "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" in order to make different opinions visible. Once the appropriate settings have been made, click the "Next" button to continue.



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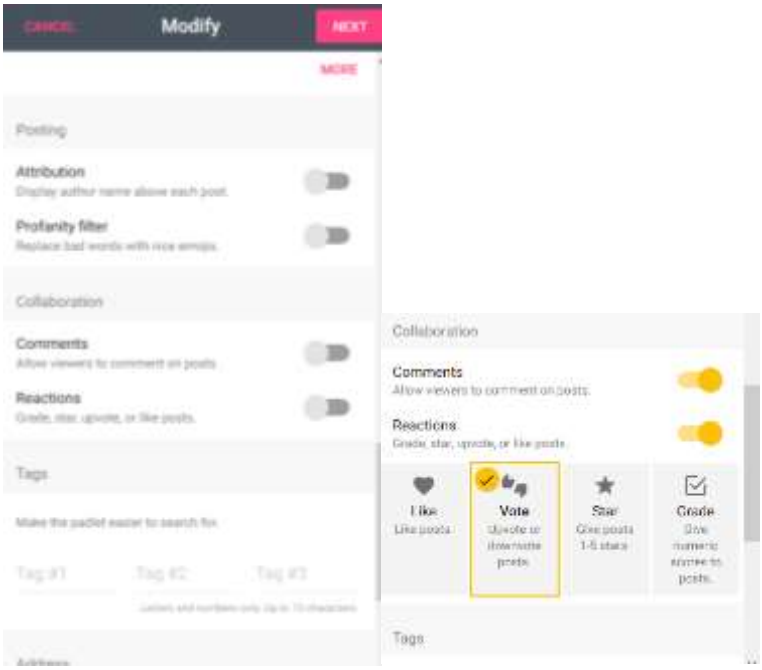
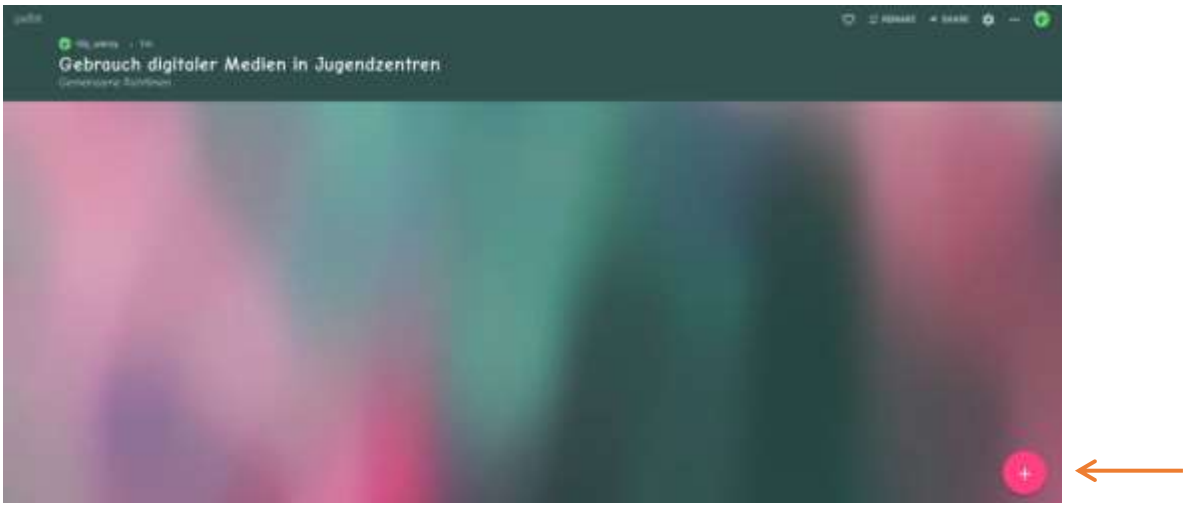


If desired, you can also create different categories on the board under which the participants can post their contributions, e.g. "Smartphone", "Game console" or similar. All you need to do is click on the "+" symbol at the bottom right. Now a box opens in the board in which you can enter a category. The respective categories can be moved on the board by clicking and holding the mouse button.



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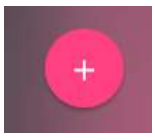
Now the board is ready for the exercise with the adolescents. Before the app is used by the children and teenagers, there can be a brief input on the topic for which common guidelines are to be drawn up - for example, the use of digital media in youth centres.
Afterwards, there can be an introduction to the "Padlet" application, but depending on the age and level of experience of the participants, this is not absolutely necessary or can at least be kept very brief, since the operation of the app is basically self-explanatory.
The students can then enter their thoughts directly into “Padlet”, either individually or in small groups. Simply click on the "+" symbol in the bottom right corner and the box on the board will open again. Here the participants can enter text, if desired with a title. It is also possible to embed a variety of media in the post, such as pictures, videos, maps, links and more. To do this, click on the "..." button at the bottom of the box.



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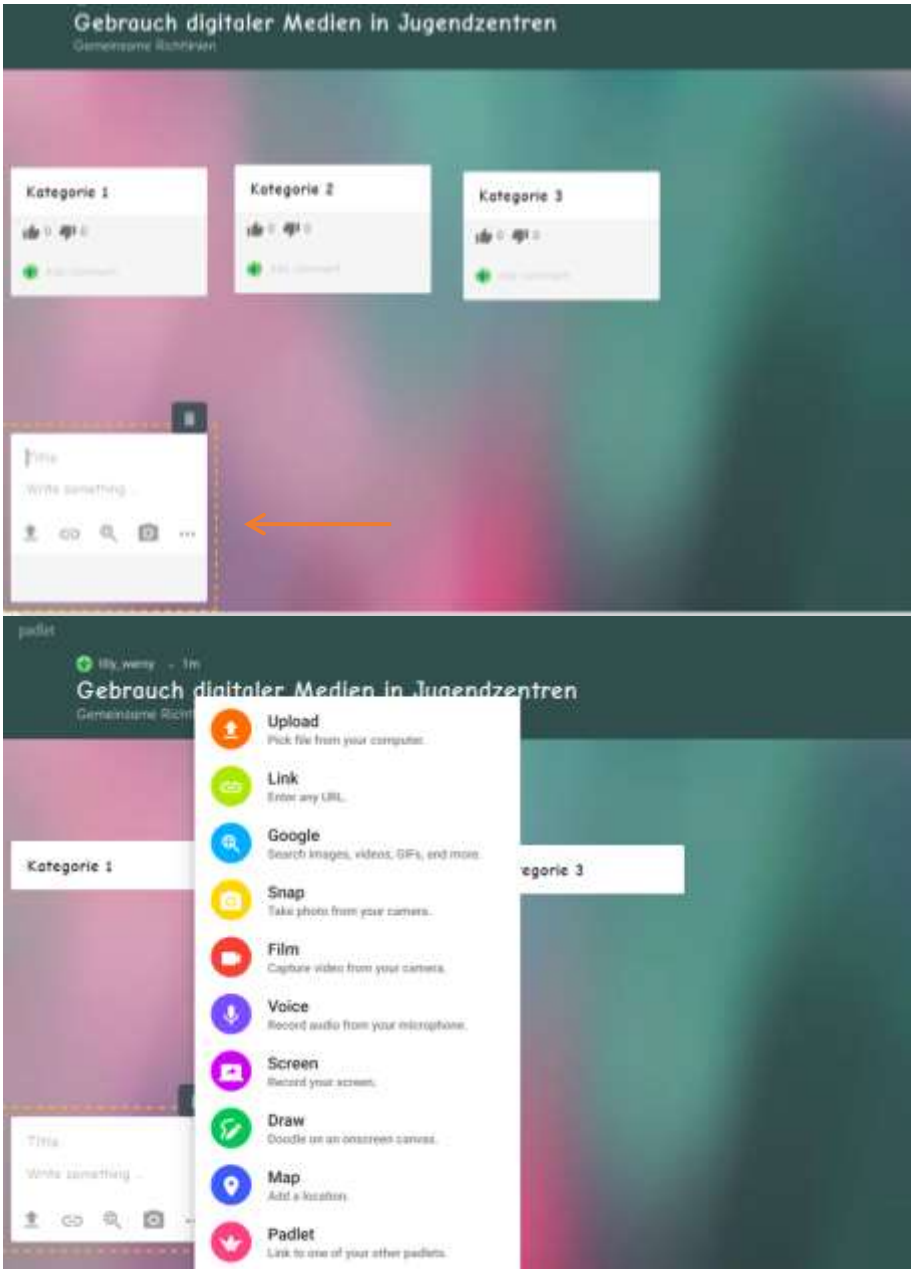

The post can then be moved to the appropriate place on the board, either directly by the author or by the educational director. For this purpose, an additional tablet should be connected to a beamer so that all participants can see the various ideas as a projection on the screen and the youth worker can cluster contributions by clicking, holding and moving. The respective posts can be arranged, summarized and categorized more precisely on the tablet, so that a kind of clear mind map is created in which everyone can make suggestions on equal terms and at the same time.

The posts can also be deleted, highlighted or, depending on the setting, marked with "thumbs up" or "thumbs down". The latter is possible by clicking on the respective thumb, the deletion or editing is possible by clicking on the respective post and clicking on the trash can or the "..." symbol.

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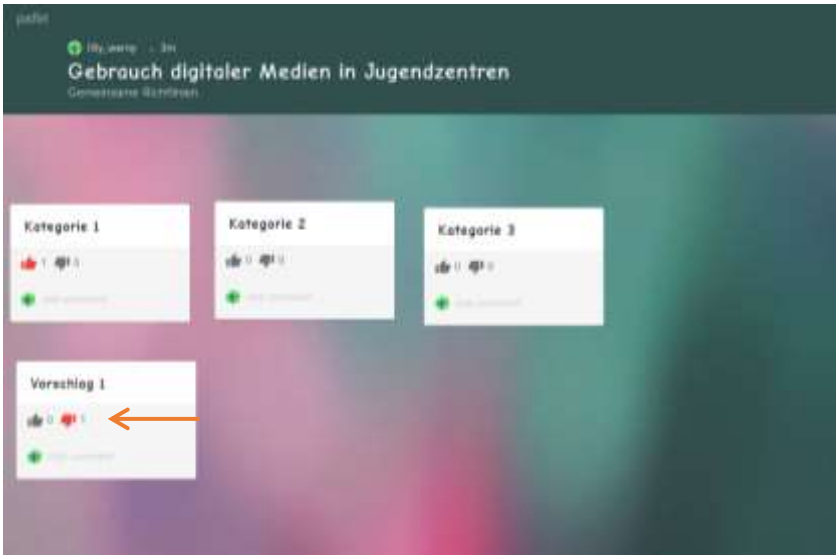

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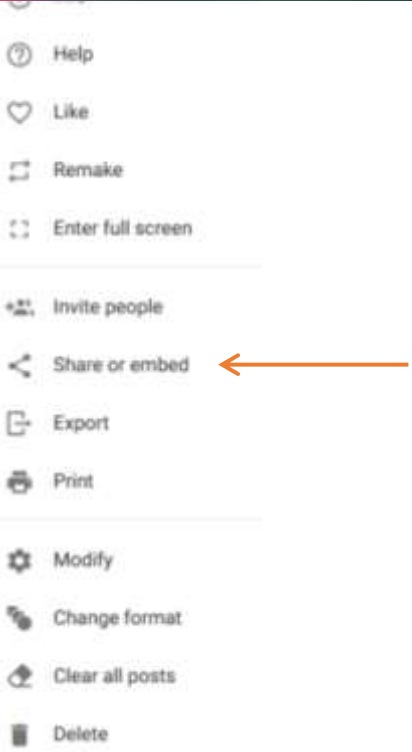
After a few minutes the students should put the tablets aside and the resulting board with suggestions will be discussed, structured and optimized. In this way, a basis for discussion is created that can be reflected upon with pedagogical support and expanded into common guidelines for media use in youth centres or comparable regulations.

After completion, the board can be exported, split or printed. This is done using the "..." icon in the upper right corner and the pop-up bar.



Impact

The clear and simple collection and presentation of complex opinions and ideas, which the app "Padlet" offers, stands out especially. Also in contrast to comparable handwritten mind maps. While this traditional method requires participants to actively draw attention to themselves and may not be repeated, "Padlet" allows students to make themselves heard more easily, quickly and as

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often as they want within a certain period of time. Suggestions can be made anonymously so that the inhibition threshold is lower. In addition, the application as a modern medium fits into the lives of children and young people and therefore offers an opportunity to accommodate them and motivate them to participate.

Resources

Tablets and Wi-Fi are required to use the app.

Links

- https://padlet.com/

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For more information about the project visit: https://www.digitalyouthwork.eu/

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