

Making Digital History: students as partners in online learning, teaching and research

Postcard from Lincoln Workshop (version 3)

During this workshop you will learn to use the Xerte online toolkit to make a Learning Object called “Postcard from Lincoln” (you can see an example here: <http://makingdigitalhistory.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/resources/learning-design/xerte-gallery/postcard-from-lincoln/>).

The aim of this workshop is to teach you how to use the basic tools within Xerte and we have a limited amount of time. You MUST, therefore, follow the process that we are taking you through. There will be plenty of opportunities to play around with Xerte later on!

Your Postcard will have five Pages. In Xerte Pages are called Templates. This activity will introduce you to five Xerte templates. There are many more which you can explore when your Postcard from Lincoln is complete and you’ve learnt the basics of the tool.

Step One: Getting into Xerte

Open the Chrome web browser – make sure that any links you click on also open in Chrome.

(Xerte works best with Chrome, which is downloadable from <https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/> if it is not already on your machine)

Open your email via the following website:
<https://email.lincoln.ac.uk/>

Go to the Xerte website at: <https://xerte.lncd.lincoln.ac.uk/>

Log in with your university username and password.

Your inbox should include an email from Jamie with links to the Xerte website, a Word document to help you to make your postcard, and an image.

You should open all of these and save them to your desktop.



The screenshot shows the Xerte online toolkits website. At the top, there is a language dropdown menu set to 'English (en-GB)' and a 'Set language' button. The University of Lincoln logo is on the right. The main heading is 'Welcome to Xerte online toolkits'. Below this is a large graphic of a wrench and a pencil, with a pair of scissors cutting the pencil. To the right of the graphic is a 'Welcome to Xerte' message and a 'login area' with fields for 'Username' and 'Password', and a 'Sign In' button. Below the login area are sections for 'Getting Started' (with a link to 'Demonstration') and 'Other resources' (with links to 'Example: 'Sam the Dog'', 'Adapting handouts to Xerte', and 'Xerte teaching guides').

Step Two: Setting up a new Learning Object

Xerte opens on the My Projects page.

Click the Create button (if your Learning Object does not appear immediately, make sure that you have highlighted the 'Workspace' folder).

Name the Object 'Postcard from Lincoln'.

Include your name in the title.

Once created, the new Learning Object will appear in the Workspace area on the left of your screen.

At a later stage you can create folders to store Learning Objects in.



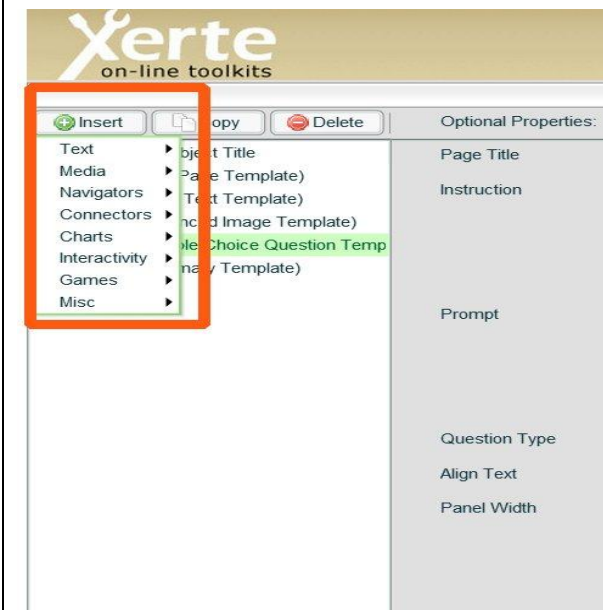
In order to start work on your Learning Object, you need to click on the Edit button in the Workspace area (note: your object must be highlighted)

In Xerte, Pages are called Templates. The different Templates styles are found under the Insert button (see image).

Each Category (Text, Media, Navigators, Connectors etc) contains lots of different Templates.

Click on the black arrows to see the template lists. As you hover over each option an image will appear showing the style.

NOTE: You can write out your own text or copy it from the Word document in your Xerte Workshop email from Jamie.



Step Three: Creating your Postcard from Lincoln

1 Title Page Template

Click Insert, Text, Title Page.

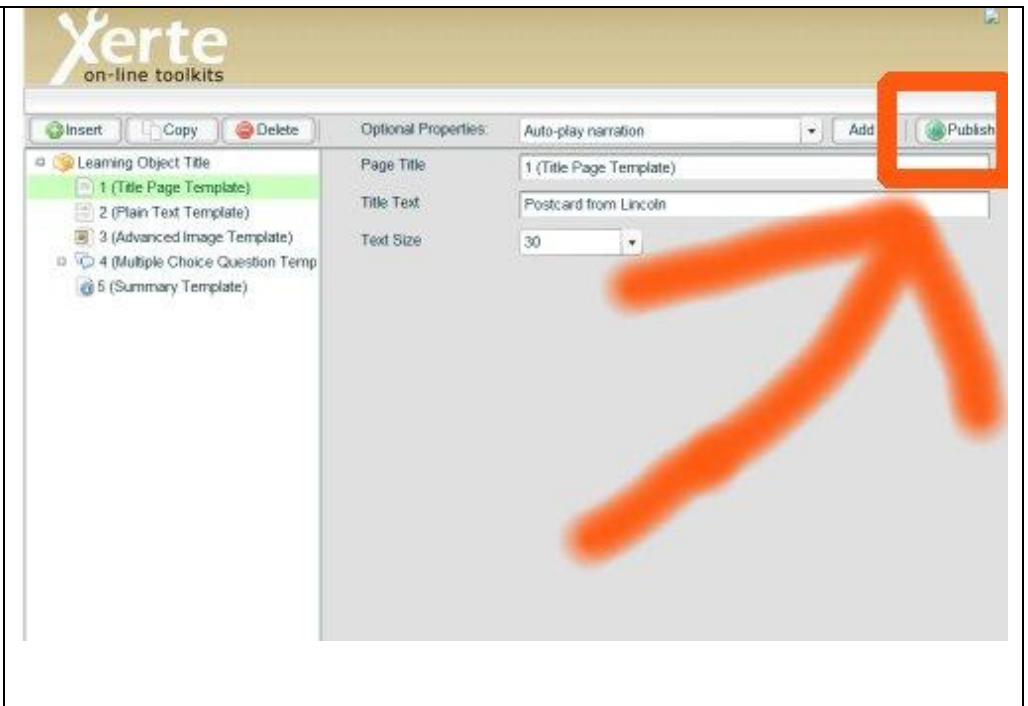
Give the template a Title.

In the example the name of the template has been used in the title.

The name will appear in the navigation tree on the left.

Key Postcard from Lincoln in the Title Text box.

IMPORTANT! Click the Publish button in the top right hand corner of the screen to save your work.



2 Plain Text Template

Click Insert, Text, Plain Text.

Give the template a title.

Key in some text or copy and paste from the Word document attached to your Xerte email from Jamie.

To format, highlight text, right click the mouse. Select Bold. Some html code will appear (e.g. and to mark text in bold). This will not show in the final version.

IMPORTANT: Always reference original content (either with a hyperlink or a bibliographic reference; including the source of all images).

To insert a Hyperlink, highlight the text which will be hyperlinked.

Right click over the highlighted text, select Hyperlink, paste in the relevant URL (web address) and click OK.

Click the Publish button to save your work.

Click Play button (on the right at the foot of the page) to see what your Xerte object looks like.



3 Advanced Image Template

Click Insert, Media, Advanced Image

Give the template a title.

To add an image, click on the small Import Media button [...] to the right of the Image box and select an appropriate image or use the one attached to your Xerte email from Jamie.

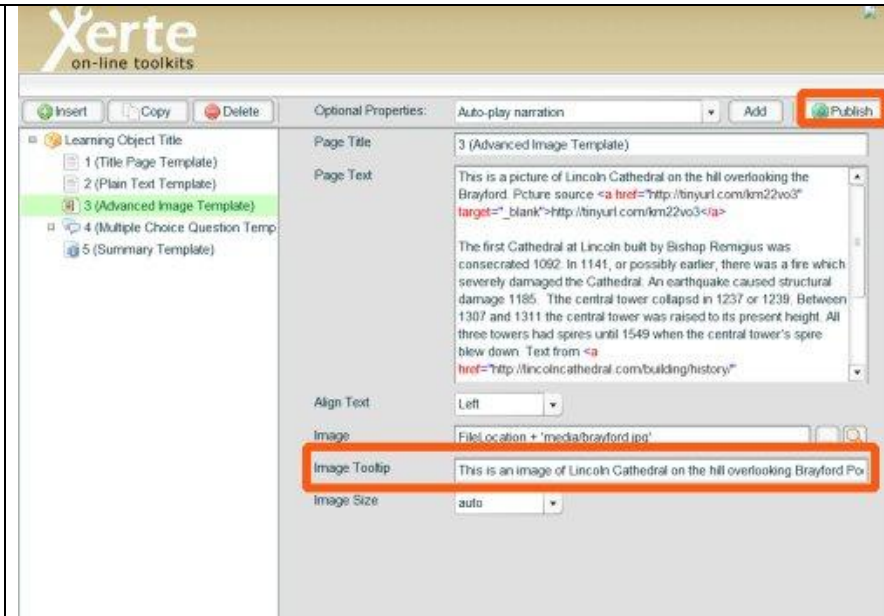
Add Tooltip Text to describe the picture (see image). This is really important. It means people who are unable to see the image because of visual impairment or any other reason can still use your Xerte object.

Key in approx 100 words into the Page Text area describing your image (or copy from the Word document).

Don't forget to reference the source of any images you use. The image in Jamie's email is from the University of Lincoln Image Bank.

Key in Picture from the University of Lincoln Image Bank, highlight the text, right click and add the URL: <http://lincoln.ac.uk> then click OK

Click the Publish button to save your work.



4 Multiple Choice Question Template

Click Insert, Interactivity, Multiple Choice Question.

Give the page a title.

In the Instruction box key in the following text (or copy from the Word document):

‘Now you have read my postcard, see if you can answer this question. What year did an earthquake cause structural damage to Lincoln Cathedral?’

In the Prompt box add some instructions:

‘If you need any help, go back to page three.’

Selecting ‘Single Answer’ in the Question Type box means only one of the four possible answers which you provide will be correct.

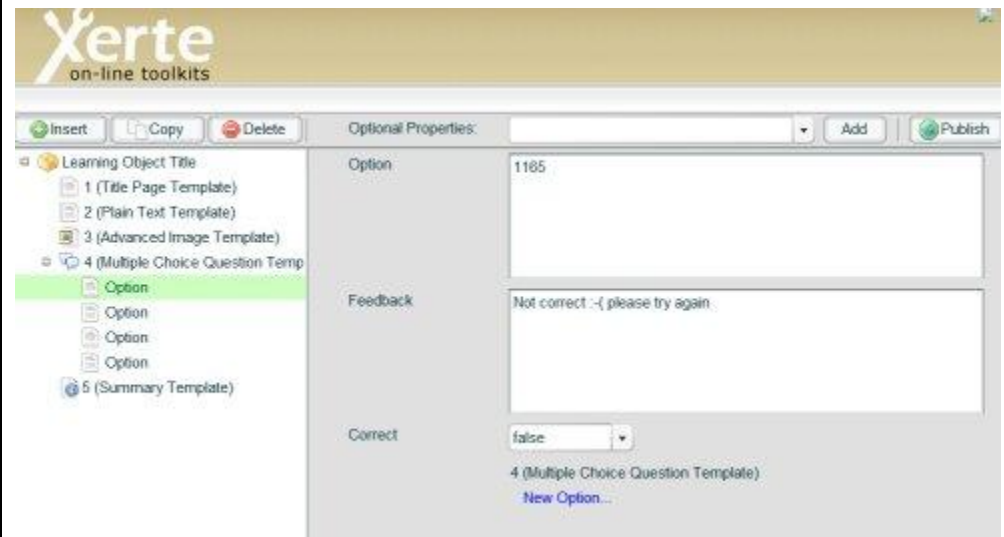
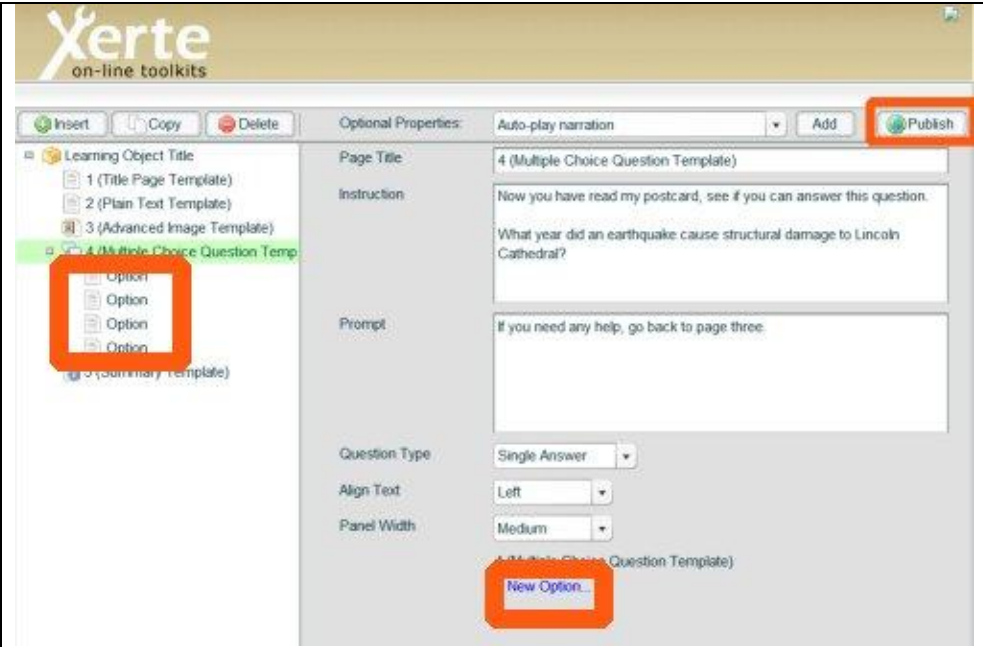
Click the New Option link to create a new page for the first possible answer and feedback. These options will appear as a sub-list beneath the Multiple Choice Question template in the left hand side.

Key in an answer with feedback text. Make sure you click True or False as appropriate. Repeat to create four options (make sure that one of them is ‘True’!).

Click the Publish button to save your work.

Click the Play button to check what your Xerte learning object looks like.

One more page to go and your postcard is finished!



5 Summary Template

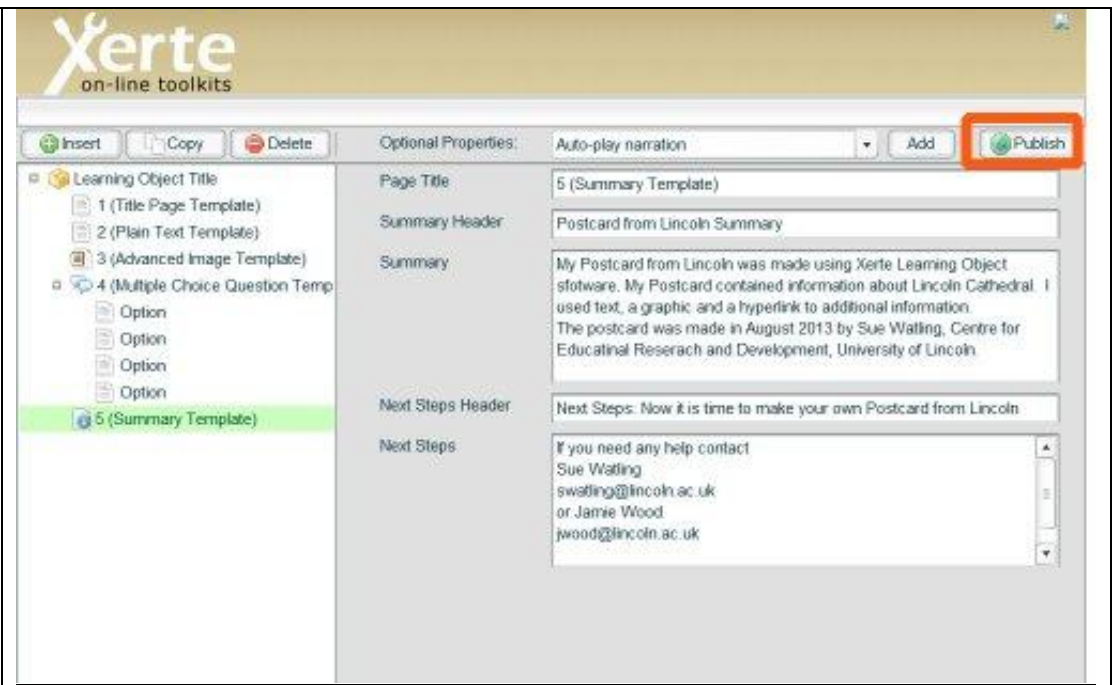
Click Insert, Text, Summary.

Give the template a title.

Use this page to summarise what you have done.

Include your name, the date and your contact details.

Click the Publish button to save your work.



Step Four: Duplicating your Learning Object for sharing

Your completed 'Postcard from Lincoln' can be duplicated for sharing with others.

Highlight your Learning Object in the workspace. Click the Duplicate button to make a copy. Highlight the Copy and click the Properties button.

In Project Properties, rename the copy of your Learning Object.

Add your initials and date. This is known as version control. It avoids confusion over different versions of the same file and will be



important when working together on a learning object.



Step Five: Sharing your Learning Object

To share your Learning Object, go to Properties, click Give this project.

Key in the user name(s) of the user(s) you want to share your object with (e.g. jwood for Jamie).

Your renamed duplicate Learning Object will appear in their list of My Projects and they will be able to edit and then share it back with you.

Note: remember to rename your learning object to maintain version control as you work on them and share them with other members of your group.



Step Five: Altering the appearance of your Learning Object

There are three ways of altering the appearance of your Learning Object:

1. **Edit individual pages** – we have shown you how to do this during today’s workshop; the best way to get to grips with this is to play around with different page templates and layouts of textual and visual material within them. Always remember to save changes that you are happy with by hitting ‘Publish’ before logging out.
2. **Change basic Learning Object templates** – this is a simple way of altering things like the size of the font on the slides and the way in which the Learning Object loads in your browser. To change this, highlight the Learning Object in your workspace, click Edit, then on the Learning Object Title page change the Default Text Size and/ or Display Mode. Click Play to see what effect these have on your learning object.
3. **Change Learning Object ‘default engine’ setting** – this alters the way in which your learning object is displayed on the web and can be altered by highlighting the Learning Object in the workspace, then clicking Properties. Within Properties, make sure that you are within the Project tab (this is the top level so you should open onto it by default). The ‘default engine’ setting is ‘Javascript (a.k.a. HTML5)’ – you can change this to ‘Flash’. Experiment with the different setting to see which one you prefer.

Troubleshooting

- If you encounter any problem when working on your Xerte object, you should first of all consult the guidance and frequently asked questions we have uploaded to the following website: <http://makingdigitalhistory.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/resources/learning-design/xerte-guidance-and-faq/>
- We will provide further guidance and advice as your work further on your project.