

Google Docs

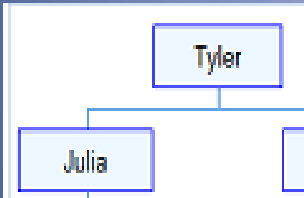
Use in the Traditional Classroom

Jeanne Canale, Adjunct Faculty
Middlesex Community College

Why Google Docs?

- Expand collaborative learning.
- Helps promote group work and peer editing skills.
- Monitor student progress via an interactive process.
- Stay organized.
- Get feedback easily anytime/anywhere.

Example Exercises



Documents

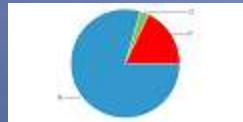
Essays (individual or co-edited)
Collaborative research papers
Journals

Spreadsheets

Flowcharts and Forms
Graphs, charts, maps, and data presentation techniques

Presentations

Presenting group research
Active student participation during a presentation



Department	Quarte	Sales
(All)	(All)	(All)
	30	406730
Cardboard	10	18419
Cardboard	1	1299
Cardboard	2	2197

Collaboration

- Multiple editors.
- Real time editing.
- Co-authoring.
- Shared tasks.
- Harmonious interaction/less arguments.
- Produced better presentations that all team members were proud of.

Assessment

- Mark-up less and often.
- Asses Learning w/target setting (due dates) throughout the process.
- Focus on students understanding the lesson/ exam skills.
- Continuous feedback on content of both my lessons and revisions.

What were the wins and what were the fails?

Wins:

- All of the groups managed to edit a document in real time and could see how this speeded up the process.
- All of the students quickly familiarized themselves with the Google docs interface, and I heard almost no complaints about it. In fact, some students said that they preferred it to PowerPoint.

What were the wins and what were the fails? (continue)

Fails:

- Some of the groups failed to work together effectively.
- The nature of editing one document for submission threw up a variety of issues including concerns over trust, ownership and effort.
- Still did not alleviate human factors –what happens when someone does not pull their weight?

Some Final Thoughts

If you are thinking about using Google docs to foster collaboration between your students then:

- Spend some time with them discussing what it means to edit another student's work.
- Model collaborative editing with them – show them that it is okay to edit, delete, change, improve each others work.
- Have them complete some shorter, smaller tasks to get used to the idea of changing one another's work.
- Group your students by similar ability so as not to draw attention to differences in ability.
- Definitely have your students add you as a collaborator. (This was the biggest win for me) as it allows you to effectively support your students throughout the process.

Final Reflections

What Google Docs brings to the classroom:

- A system fit for the purpose, and also evolving at the same time.
- Not dependent on a specific browser or operating system, and requires no extra knowledge to use it.
- Easy to sign up for, and works with any web browser.
- Is inclusive, and free.