Google Classroom in the Adult Education Classroom

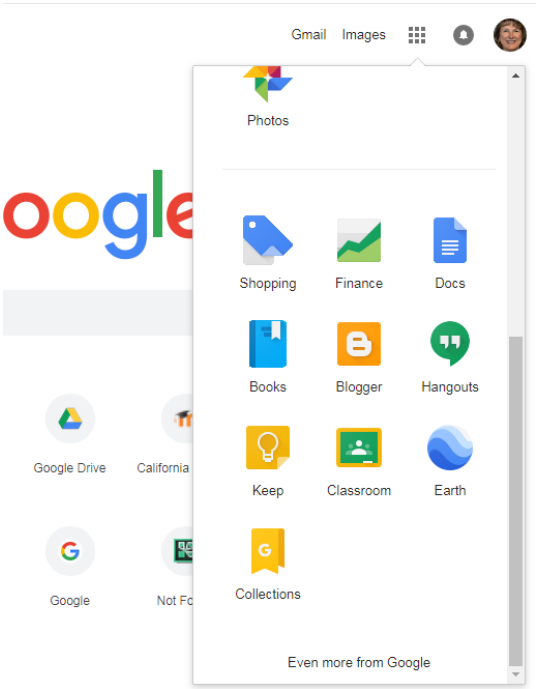
You may be wondering about Google Classroom. You have heard about it. Maybe your children have it at school. You may have been told that you had to have district account numbers before you could use Classroom. But today is your day. With the recent changes in Google Classroom the time is right and you should get your own Google Classroom for your adult students today.

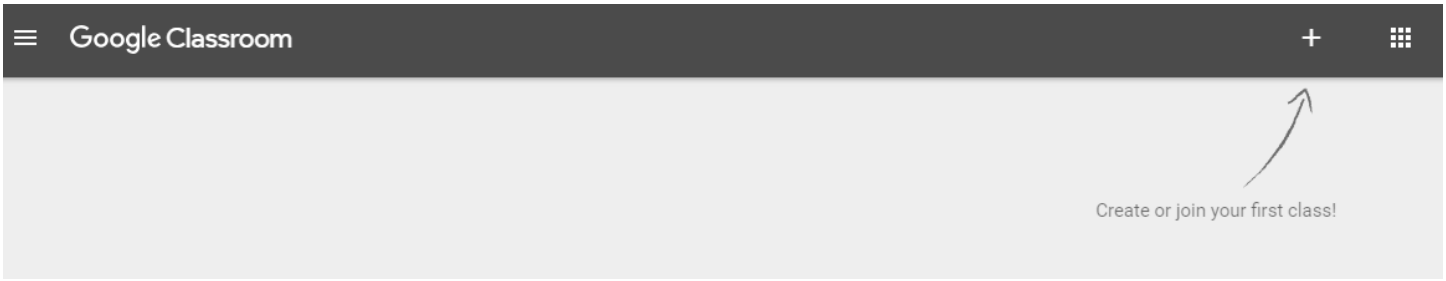
Here are twelve reasons why: (my list keeps getting longer the more I use it)

1. You don't need district accounts so you can get your classroom immediately. All you need is a Google account (Gmail).
2. Your class will become virtually paperless. Assignments are created online, finished online, graded online...you get the picture.
3. It allows you to organize your assignments in one place.
4. If a student misses class, you don't have to run to the file cabinet to find the assignments.
5. Once created, you can reuse assignments/classrooms next quarter. Just change the dates! (this is new with the update!)
6. It's easy to use. After you read this article, you can have your classroom ready to use tomorrow.
7. Students can access their assignments through their emails or in Classwork.
8. Google Calendar is linked to Classroom so assignments appear on the calendar to keep students on top of what's due.
9. Students can keep up even if they don't have a computer. They just do their work on their smartphones. This always amazes me.
10. You can include quizzes made with Google form as formative assessments. And you can set the quizzes so students know the results immediately after taking the quiz! Instant feedback!
11. You can easily see who has done the assignments and who has not. You can then give immediate suggestions, encouragement, or reminders.
12. Your students will love it, mine do.

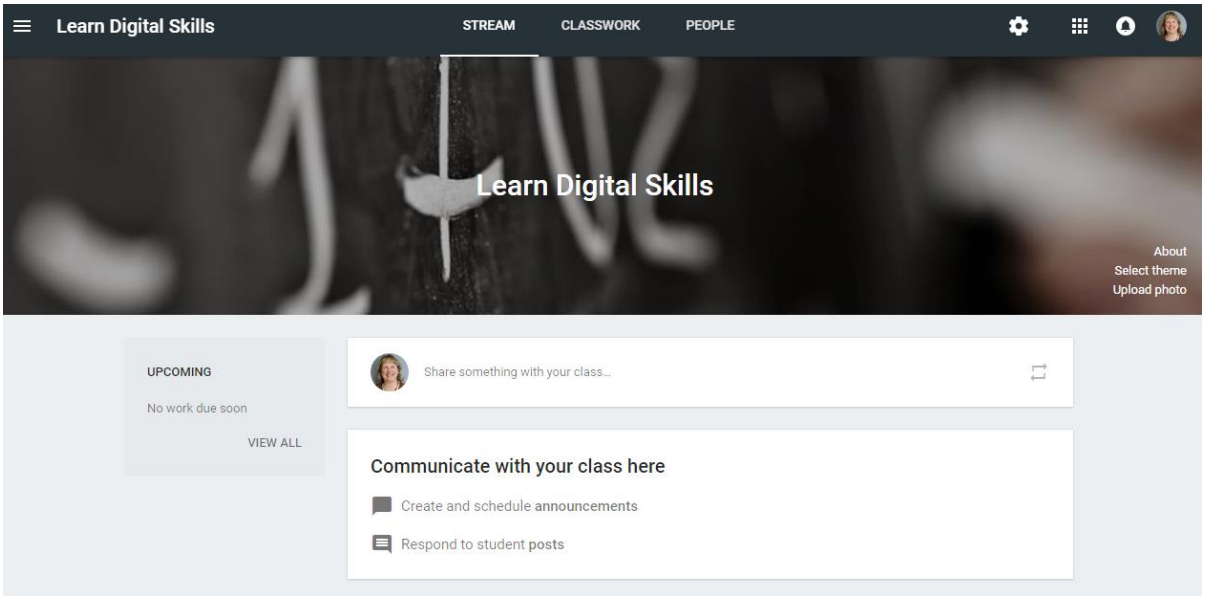
Getting Started:

If you already have a Google account, you have a Google Classroom. To find it, open your Google account. Go to the Apps box, top right, on the Google screen. Click on the Apps box, scroll down to More. Then select Classroom.





Click on the plus sign, upper right and choose Create a class. Agree with the Google agreement. They want to be sure you are not teaching children and needing to address K-12 privacy issues. Give your class a name and Create.

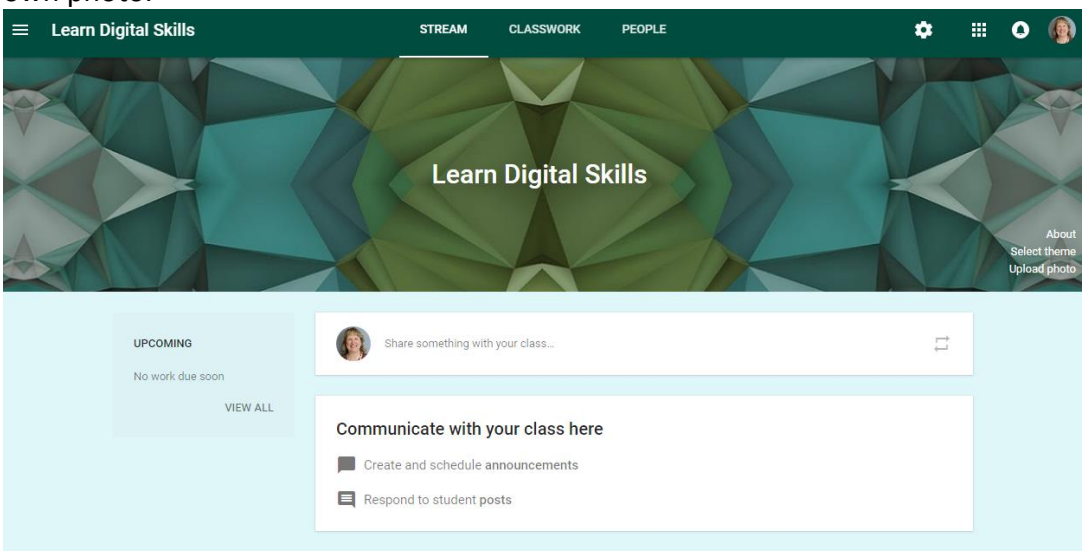


First, a brief tour. At the top center you have three section titles, Stream, Classwork, and People. The **Stream** is where you are when you open classroom. You can post announcements here. It is for general

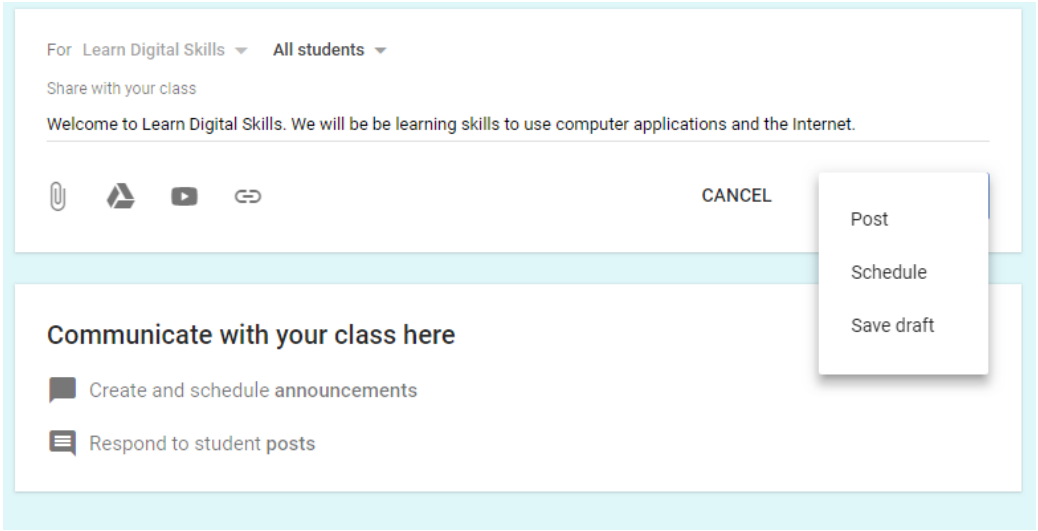
communication to the class. It is in chronological order and lists announcements and assignments as they are scheduled. **Classwork** is where assignments or questions are housed and is organized by topics. **Student** is where you will find a list of who is enrolled in the class and co-teachers. Move over to the right and you see a gear. This is Settings. In Class Settings you can edit the title or description of the course. You can decide how you want the students to be able to use the Stream, do you want them to be able to post? Make comments? Etc. But the most important thing in settings is, this is where you find your class code.

As a Teacher

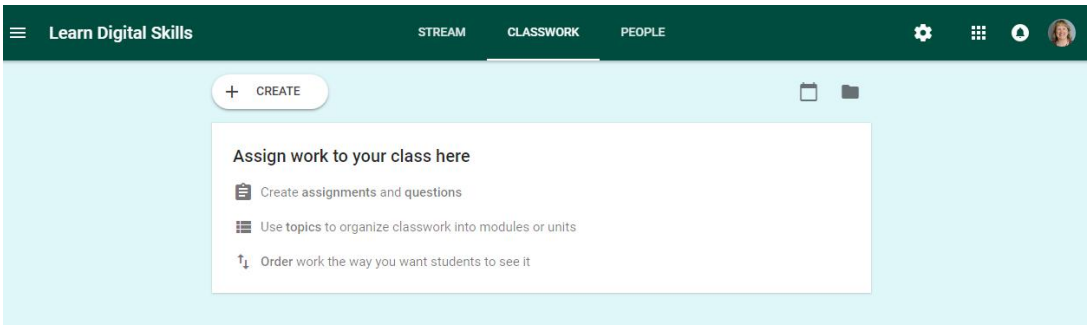
At the top of the screen is a banner picture. You can change this picture. Go down to the bottom of the picture on the right and you find "Select a theme." Click here and browse through ready-made themes or add your own photo.



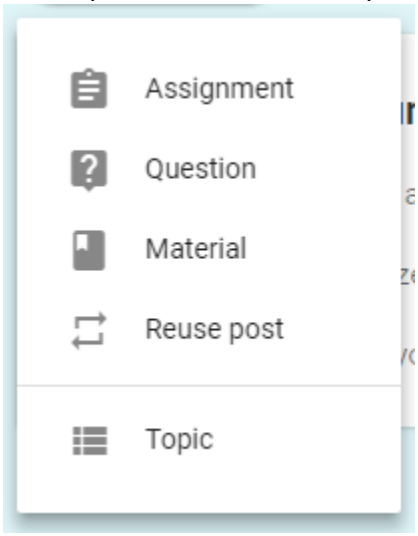
One of the great things about classroom is how quickly you can get started. On the Stream page, add a class welcome by clicking into "Share something with your class." By clicking on the arrow beside post, you can post the announcement immediately or schedule it for a later date. If you don't finish you can also save it as a draft.



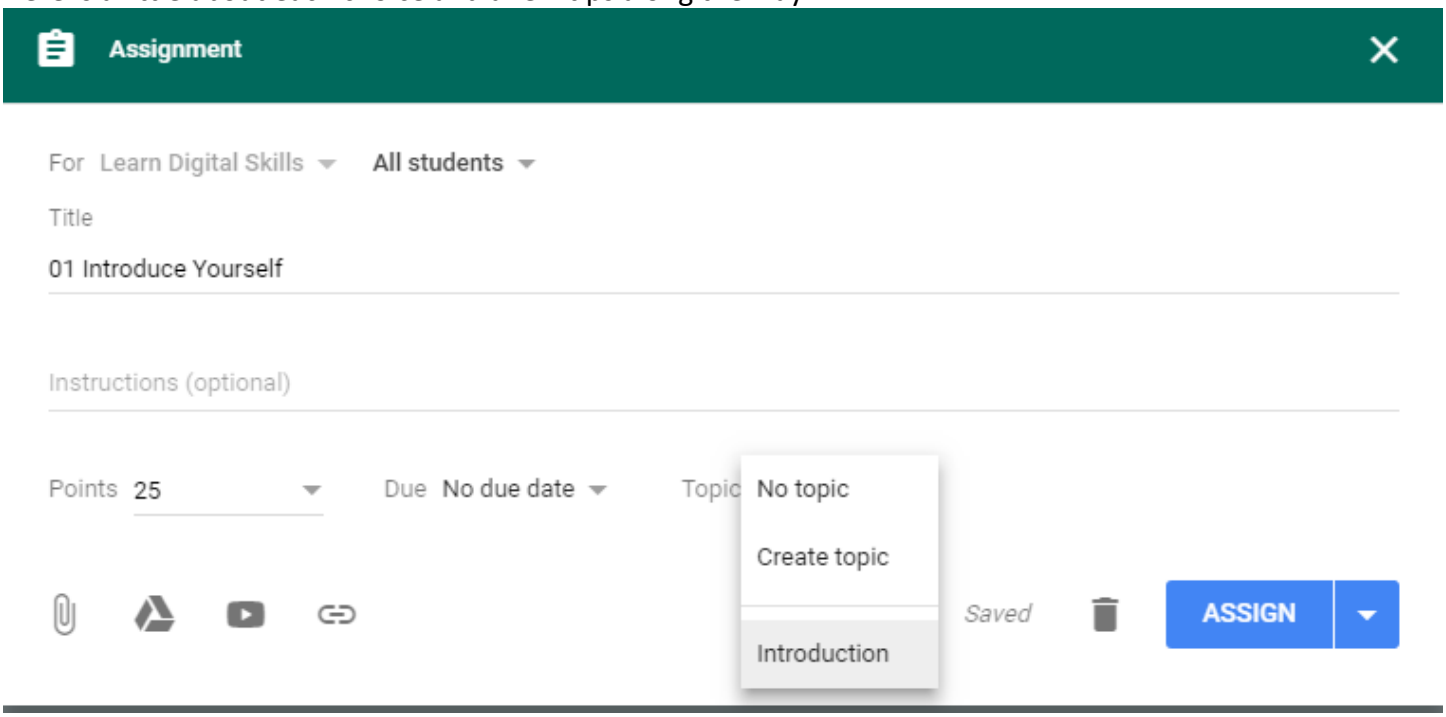
Now move on to the Classwork section.



By clicking on the + Create button at the top left you access five choices: Assignment, Question, Material, Reuse post, and Create a Topic.



Here is a little about each choice and a few tips along the way.

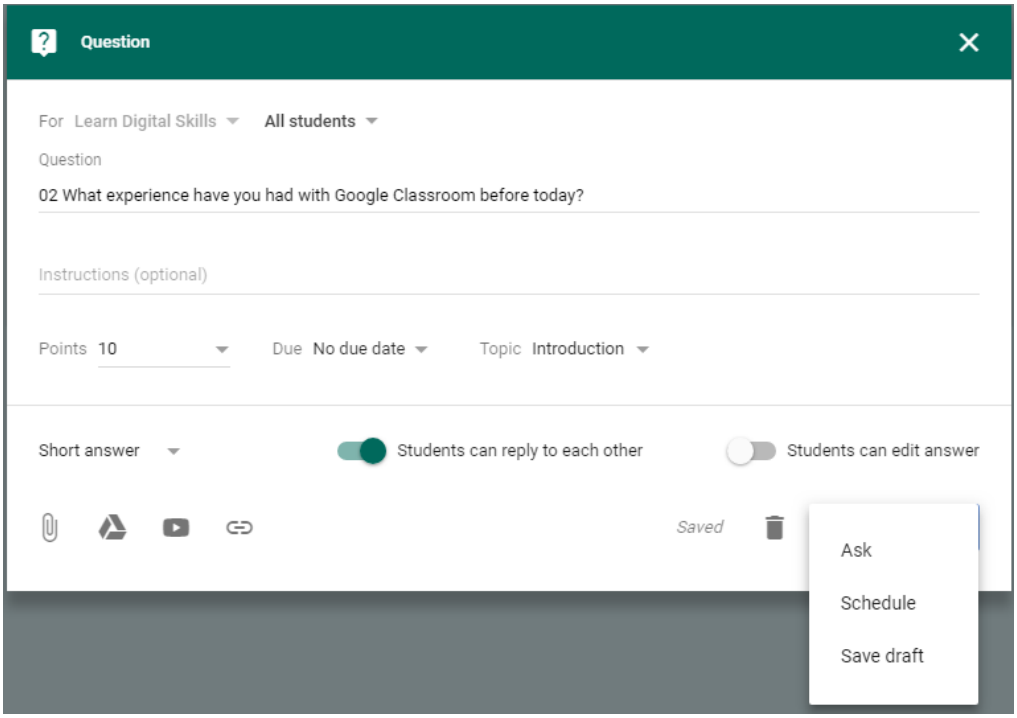


In assignment you name the assignment, add instructions, give it points, add a due date, add a topic to organize the assignment by units, and decide when you want it assigned, immediately or on a later date.

Tip #1: Number the assignments. This makes grading and keeping track of grades much easier. It is also easier to refer to the assignments with the students.

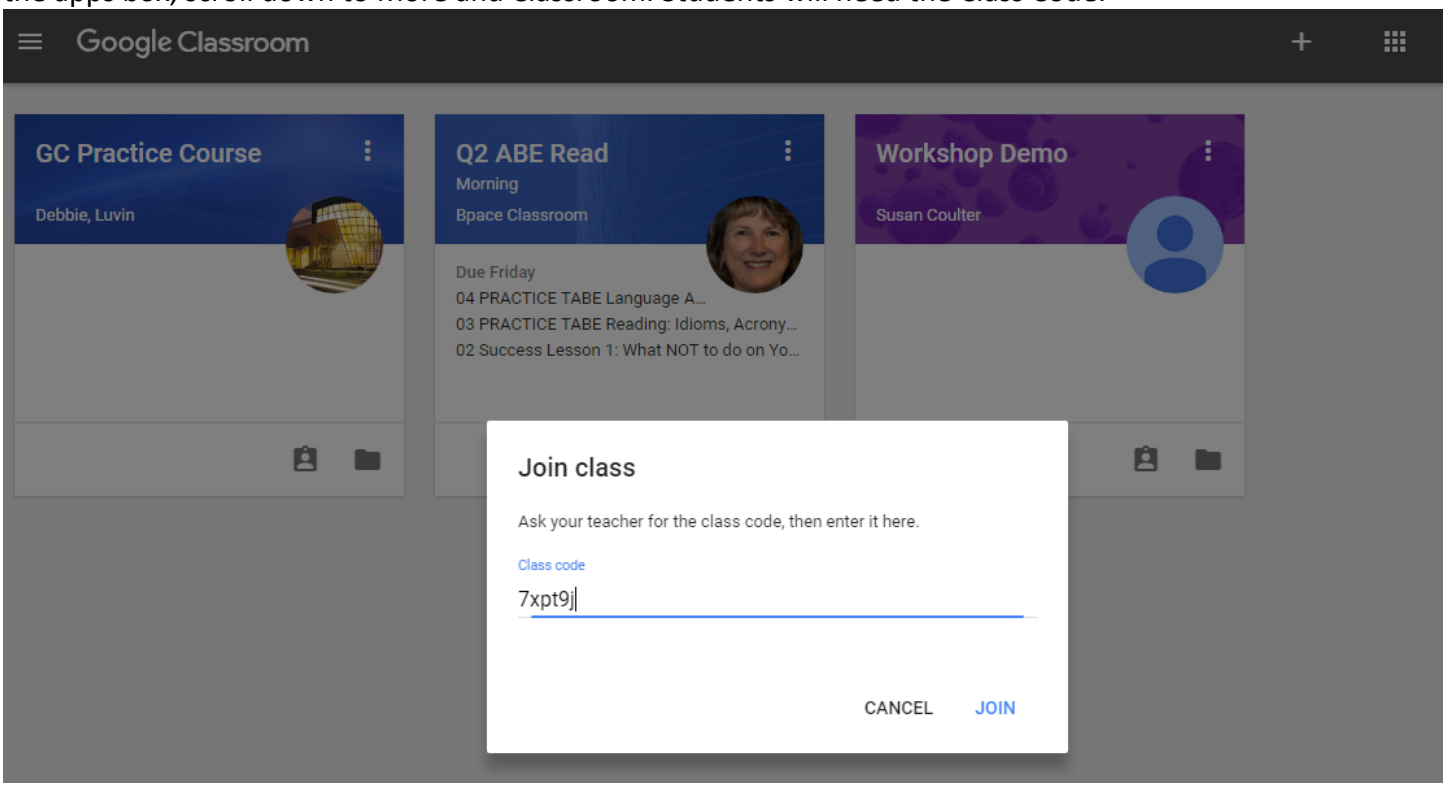
Tip #2: Create topics. This is how your Classwork section is organized--by topics. You could organize by units,

chapters, types of assignments etc.

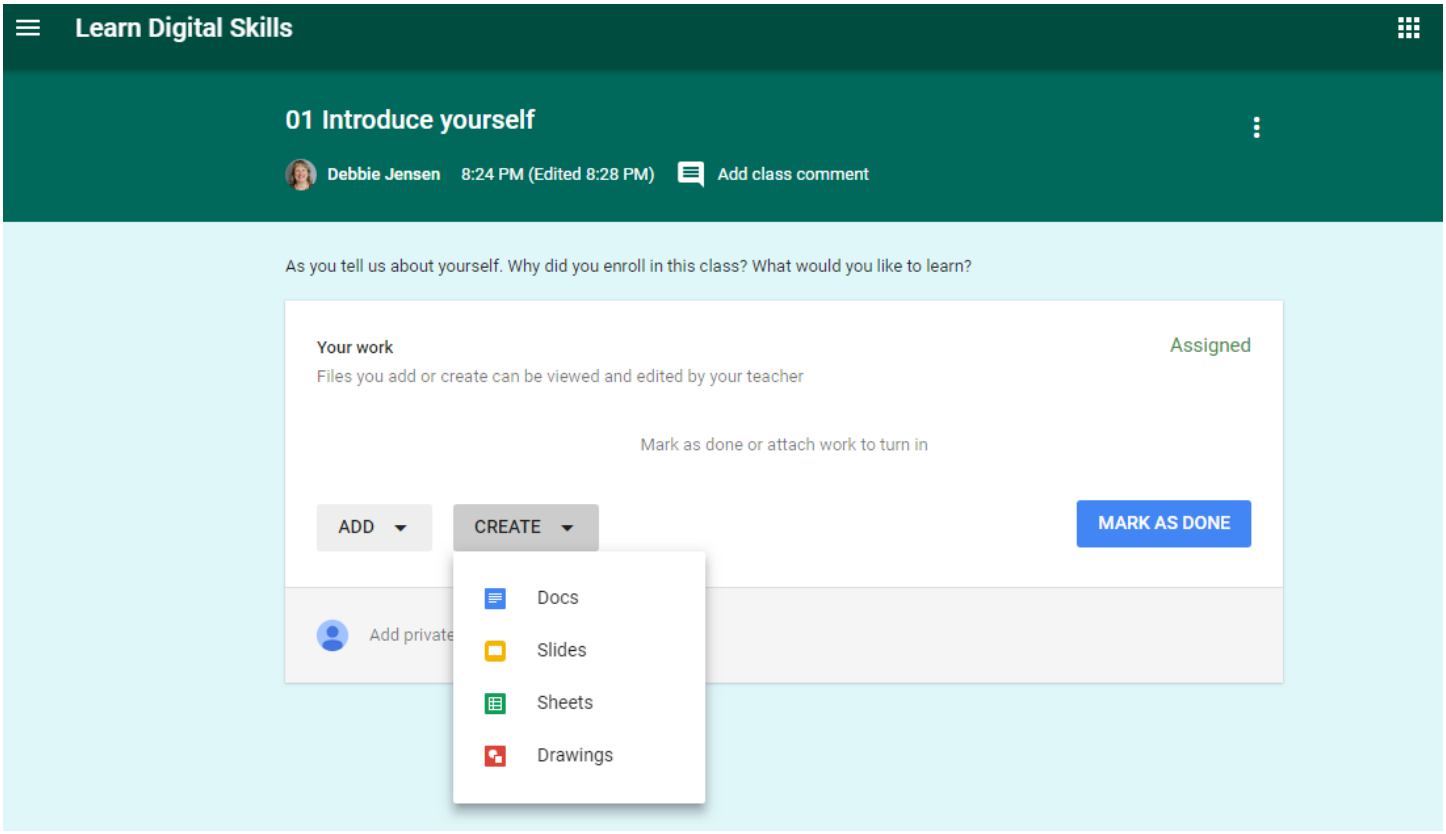


Question is similar to assignment. Answers can be short answer or multiple choice and you can decide if students can reply to each other and/or edit their answers.
Tip #3 Use due dates. This puts the assignments on the calendar allowing students to learn and use time management.

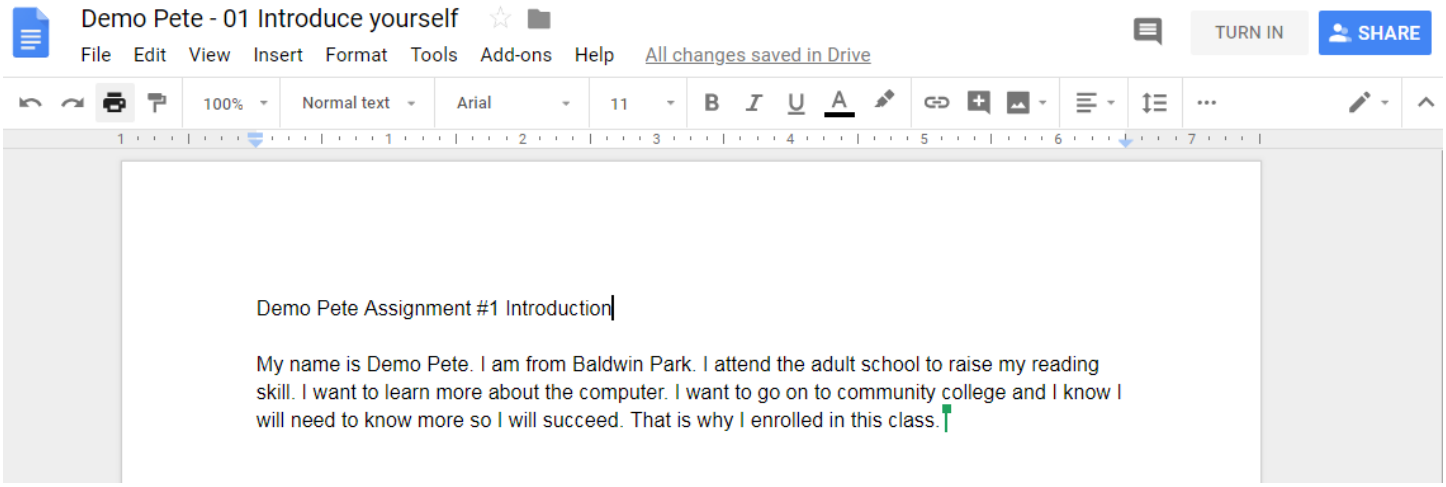
As a Student
As the student, enroll in the classroom the same way you did as a teacher. Open your Google Account, go to the apps box, scroll down to More and Classroom. Students will need the Class Code.



Students can access assignments chronologically in the Stream or by topic in Classwork. They also receive an email for each assignment and can do their work from their email.
Once a student selects an assignment, he or she can click on Create and choose the app needed for the assignment. For this “Introduce yourself” assignment, choose Docs.

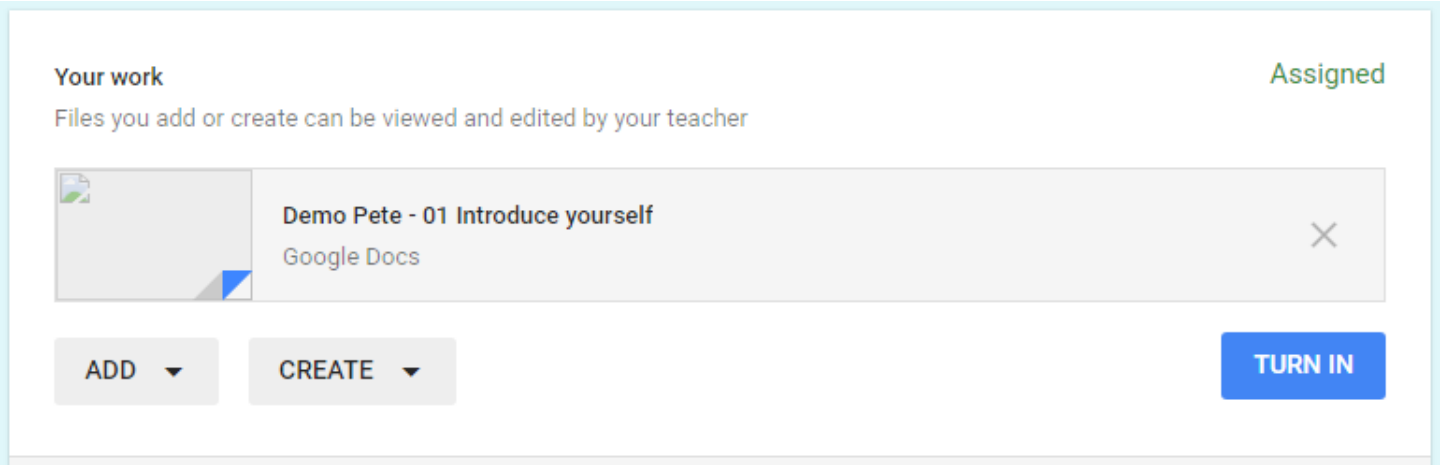


By clicking on Docs, Google creates a titled document file for the student. Students can then type their assignments on the document.

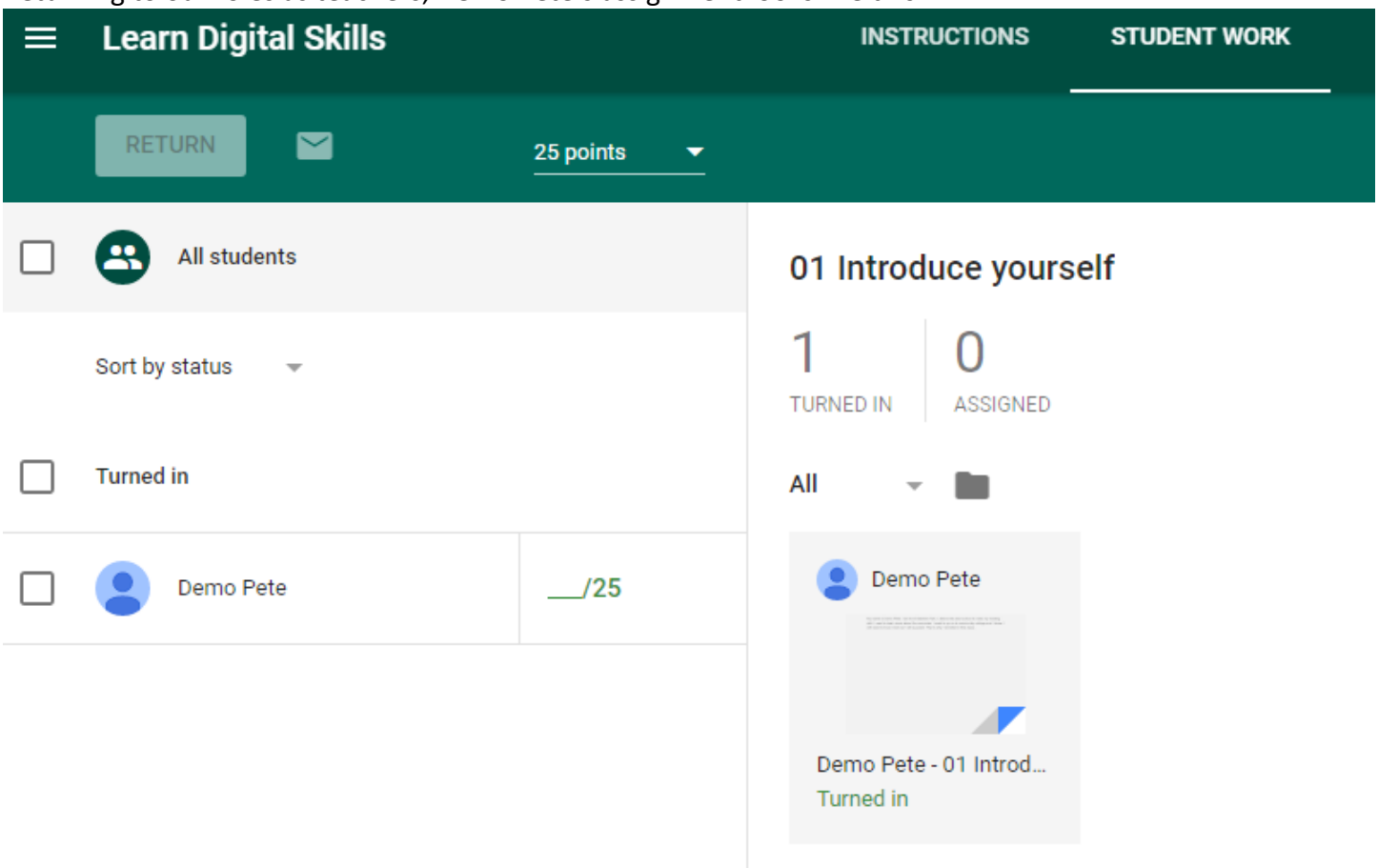


Tip #4 Have students put their name and assignment information on the top of the document. This allows the document to be printed and displayed. Otherwise the document does not have the student’s name on it.

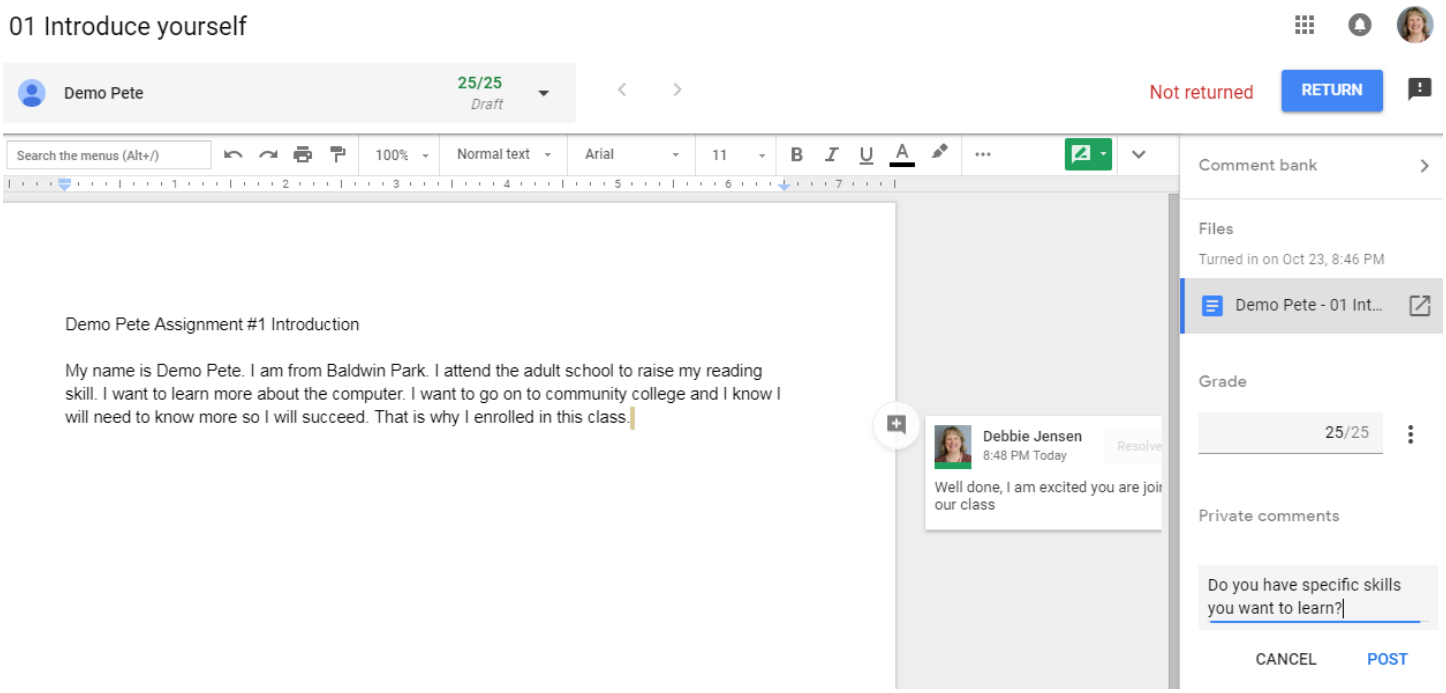
The document is automatically saved. After students finish writing their introductions, instruct them to go back and click on Turn in. This then sends the documents to the teacher for correction and grading.



Returning to our roles as teachers, Demo Pete's assignment looks like this:

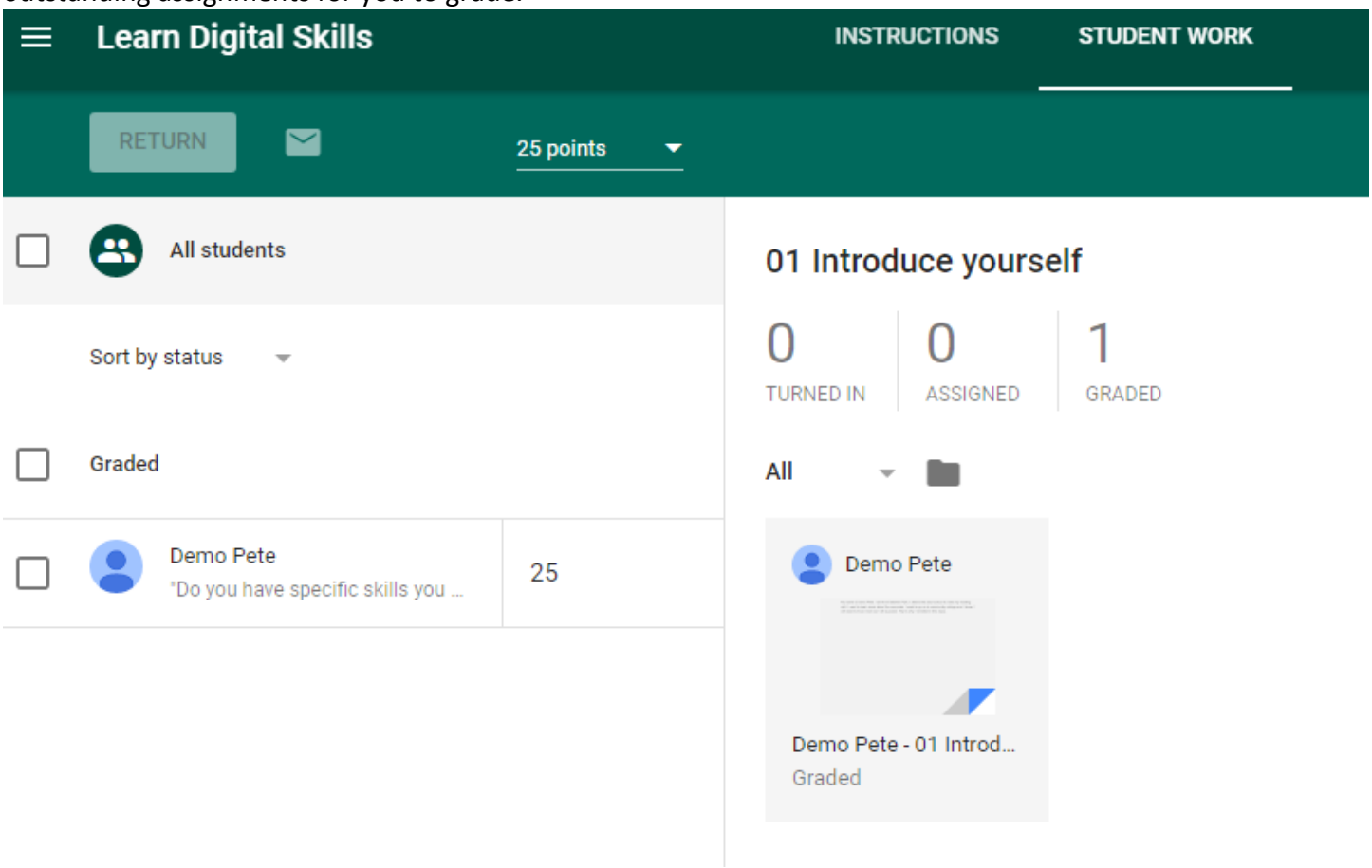


The number 1 above the Turned In indicates you have one assignment to grade. By clicking on Demo Pete's document you can read it, make corrections, make comments in the text or add private comments to post to the student's individual classroom, and you can add a grade.

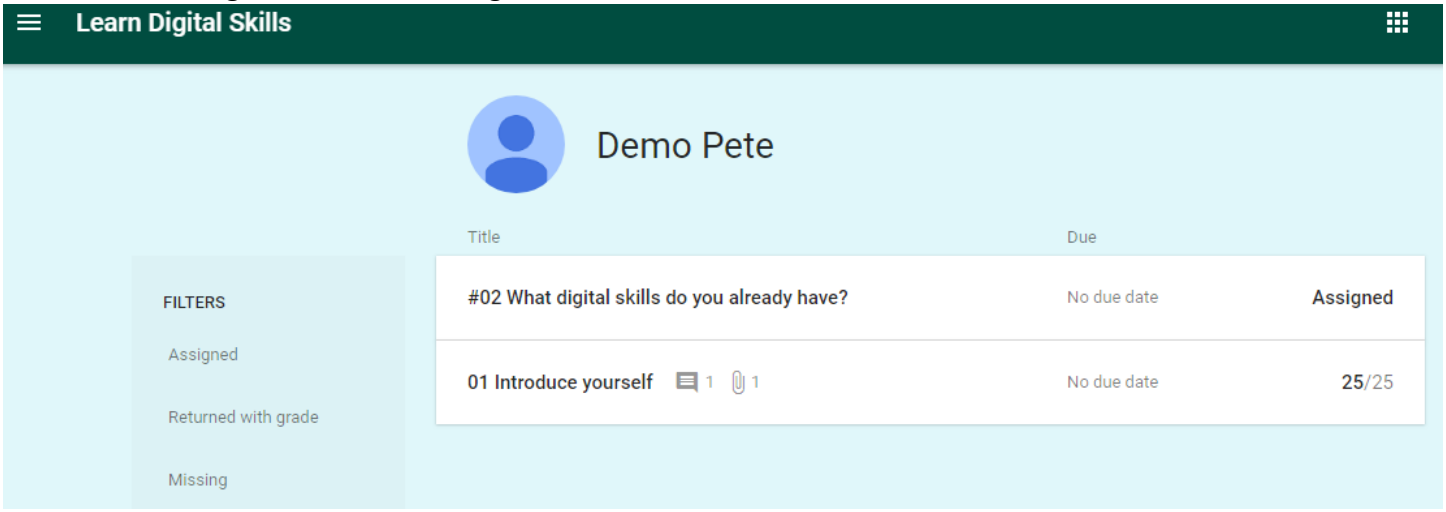


One new feature is the Comment bank at the top right. This allows you to create comments that you repeat often. For example, students often have trouble with sentence fragments.
Tip #5 Create a bank of common student mistakes. Include links to websites for more instruction and extra practice pages for students to learn about and improve the skill.

When you return the student's assignment, you clear the "turned in", so now you know there are no outstanding assignments for you to grade.



Return to the student view in Stream. Select View All. This shows the student work completed, grades received and assignments still needing to be worked on.



Tip #6 As you have seen in this article, Google Classroom looks very different in the Teacher mode from the Student mode. Before you begin using Classroom, create a faux student. Mine is Demo Pete, but you could use Sarah Student, Adam ABE, HSS Harry, Elis ESL, etc. Get a Gmail account for the "student" and enroll him in your course. Then as you demonstrate Google Classroom to your students, it will look the way they will see it on their own screens.

New features added in fall 2018

- New look: Stream, Classwork, People
- Classwork section organized by topics
- Materials section in Classwork to put your syllabus, reference materials etc.
- Comments bank added to grading
- Notifications can be customized or turned off completely. Go to the top right three horizontal lines (settings)
- You can copy a class and reuse it! The only thing you will need to change is the dates.

So what's stopping you? Getting our students online is one of the needed skills of the 21st Century. They need to feel comfortable and competent. Google Classroom works on their digital devices bringing their school experience into their homes or anywhere else using their smartphones. Before Google Classroom, I had most of the students working on assignments at the first of the quarter but as time went on the numbers went down. Life got in their way. They missed days, they got behind and didn't catch up. Now one student who was sick for two weeks kept up on his assignments using his smartphone and Google Classroom. Students know what to do, where to find it and are pleased with the speed of teacher feedback. Get a Google Classroom today. Do it for yourself and do it for your students.

Resources:

Tutorial on the New Google Classroom YouTube video
First Day of Class from Google Education
Teacher Tech: Google Classroom many resources to find suggestions and answers if you have questions