

How to Use This Site for ABE

Description: ‘How to Use This Site for ABE’ is displayed on the screen.

Description: Debbie Jensen speaks to the camera. She is a Caucasian female with shoulder-length brown hair. Debbie is wearing a red, black and brown blouse. She is sitting in a classroom with a plant visible behind her.

Debbie Jensen, ABE/GED Instructor, Baldwin Park Adult and Community Education:

Today I presented the overview of Google Docs. For years our ABE program has taught our students the basics of using the computer. We taught vocabulary through creating tables and we used class demographics for data sorting. We taught the basics in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Email. But recently I attended an OTAN Webinar on how to use Cloud Technology. I was excited to include this in my class.

The Internet is the technology of now and the future. I wanted my students prepared to move forward knowing how to access information on the Internet and have the skills they needed in the work place. But this new idea of collaboration online was what really excited me.

I had two ideas. I knew I wanted to try Google Docs and I also was open to collaboration online so I went to the OTAN page on Teaching with Technology.

Description: The screen becomes an active view of the OTAN page: Teaching with Technology. The cursor moves and navigates through the page while Debbie speaks.

Debbie: My class has a variety of students but it is primarily ABE so I selected Adult Basic Education. For level I choose Intermediate. For subject I choose Writing. I could have chosen a more specific topic under Writing by clicking on the word ‘Writing’, but I wanted to see everything related to Writing for my students. Next I click on Search.

Description: A Search Results page is displayed that shows the search for Adult Basic Education, Intermediate, and Writing yielded 49 results. The results are listed in alphabetical order.

Debbie: I got 49 results, which is a lot, but I knew I was looking for Google Docs so I scrolled down. The resources are listed alphabetically. I could also have searched for Google Docs using the Keyword Search.

Description: The hand cursor clicks on the result listed as Google Docs and a Description page is opened. This page contains a link to the homepage for Google Docs as well as sample documents. As Debbie speaks she opens the links and previews the documents.

Debbie: The Resource Description page has a link to the Google Doc homepage and also two links to examples.

The first one is an instruction sheet for creating a document. The second one is instructions for how to create a slide presentation. Both of these could be used as handouts for students.

Next is the Activity Description. They talked about Google Docs being free access to software allowing anyone to use word processing, spreadsheets, presentation software and more. They mentioned world-wide collaboration and online saving of files. Those were extra benefits for my students who don't always have the same software at home.

How To provides steps that gave me an idea of how to get started with my students.

The sections on Preparation and Teacher Tips turned out to be invaluable because I hit some glitches and the suggestions to use YouTube videos and Google Help solved my problems.

The More Ways section gave me ideas for more in-class applications. We have done our vocabulary list using the table feature of Document, a class presentation of technology terminology, and we are gathering answers to student surveys so we can learn about graphing and sorting data. I think the applications using this software are limitless in the class and work place.

Description: Debbie's interview continues with her seated in the classroom.

Debbie: To use Google Docs you need a Gmail account so that is where we started. For some students they could master this with very little help. For others, more help was needed. The OTAN Worksheet included a video link on how to get Gmail accounts for those who needed extra help.

The next step was a writing assignment using Google Document which the students sent to the teacher using their new Gmail account. I asked them to write down their thoughts about Math. I received some great paragraphs. The students loved it. They used the worksheets and took off. I circulated helping them if they had any problems. The students came each day excited and wanted another assignment using Google Docs. We used the three assignments presented at the OTAN site, then I started preparing more.

We need to prepare our students with skills they need for a job. These skills include using software like Google Docs.

The OTAN logo is displayed on the screen and is dated 2012.