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The HyperDoc Handbook

Digital Lesson Design
Using Google Apps

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Foreword

Why We Need to Change How We Learn

High school senior Jordan Moldenhauer shares a student perspective
about being a modern student in a traditional classroom:

As a high-school student, school is the most stressful part of my life, and that's how it should be. I should care about what I am learning and how it affects my future. I should be nervous when I turn in a big paper because I know it matters to me. I don't have a problem with working hard in school, because it does matter. It matters because I am going to college in a year. It matters because after college I am going to be a teacher. And it matters because I will need to have a passion for what I am learning so I can instill that love of learning in the kids I teach.

But sometimes it feels like I'm not learning.

To me, learning is an exploration of the topics that I have a passion for, am curious about, or haven't heard of yet. Instead of learning, though, school is a place where I am told what to do, when to do it, and how to do it—down to a T. It has gotten to the point that, when my teacher tells the class how to do a project, students near me ask, "Can I do this? What about this?" or, "Is it okay if I do this?" But I don't think you should have to ask. We have forgotten what it's like to learn and have instead taken to mindless note-taking and reading PowerPoints and hours of homework, all for a letter on a piece of paper to show people we are good enough to go to their college or work for their company. If we have to ask a teacher if something is okay, we have forgotten how to be creative and are afraid to be creative because we are afraid of being wrong.

If old adages tell us we learn from our mistakes, our teachers should help us understand the same. But we should also understand that a different way of thinking isn't wrong. I think teachers can often inhibit our thinking by inhibiting their own. They have a set understanding of how they want things to go instead of an open mind of where they could go. Instead of possibilities, they want results.

I take AP classes, and I love them. So obviously, something must have gone right, meaning the whole system isn't a disaster. But instead of being told what to do and when to do it, I would love to be given something to learn about and then do it myself. I don't want to be told what to think; I want to be given facts that can help me think for myself. And when I form an opinion, I want my teachers to have the courage to hear me out, not tell me I am wrong. Trust me, it has happened; and I regret to say that I think it will happen in the future.

School is stressful, and it should be. I get good grades. They look great on paper, but is the stress worth it if the only thing I have to show is a diploma? College is where free thinkers blossom, but freethinking shouldn't start in college. And sometimes "traditional teaching methods" prevent me from seeing the current world. My favorite teacher told me, "The difference between school and life is that in school, you're given the lesson to take the test, and in life, you're given the test that teaches you a lesson." It wouldn't be fair to say I want to take a test before I know the material, but doesn't it make sense to teach us with experience rather than words? Teach me what I need to know, but also teach me how to figure it out. The real world isn't about what's going to be on the test. The real world is a test. And we are all taking it.



HyperDocs

The Ultimate Change Agent

We want our students to be creative, collaborative, critical thinkers and communicators—and then we ask them to sit quietly while we explain everything and tell them exactly how to do a task. School doesn't have to be this way, and if we want to prepare students for life in the twenty-first century, it *shouldn't* be.

As a result of the implementation of Google Apps for Education, a new world of opportunities opened up for a shift in the student classroom experience. If used effectively, these tools provide students opportunities to critically think, create, collaborate, and connect in this fast-paced world. Gone are the days of students learning information solely from their teachers. In today's world, every student who has the access, knowledge, skills, will, and capacity has the potential to learn anything that they want to learn.

Students are curious by nature; we just need to provide opportunities for them to be curious. They are amazing problem solvers when we give the opportunity to create information, rather than consume it, and to talk to one another, rather than sit and passively listen. They just need inspiration.

Enter the ultimate change agent in the blended learning classroom: HyperDocs—transformative, interactive Google Docs that replace the standard worksheet method of delivering instruction. We invented the term HyperDoc to describe the digital lesson design and delivery of instruction that was happening in our classrooms. A HyperDoc is the teaching pedagogy involved when making important decisions about what to teach and how to teach with technology to redefine the overall student experience. As a result, HyperDocs were born and we were able to make a concrete shift in the student experience. Instead of writing lesson plans in a book for us as teachers to implement, we started designing lesson plans for the students using a variety of web tools, and a ripple effect of positive personalized instruction began to happen in our classrooms.

By building multiple, effective educational philosophies into each HyperDoc, each digital lesson has the potential to upend the way you instruct with technology. The reason HyperDocs work is because each one begins with a strong lesson design, curates quality instructional content, and packages learning in a way that

engages learners. A HyperDoc shifts the focus from teacher-led lectures to student-driven, inquiry-based learning, allowing students to actually learn through exploration.

HyperDocs encourage collaboration, giving every student a voice and a chance to be heard by their classmates. HyperDocs ask students to create and share authentic products, helping them develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which means the teacher isn't stuck in the front of the classroom explaining every step of a lesson. It also means that teachers have more time to work with small groups and personalize the learning process to fit each student's needs.

In short, HyperDocs bring innovation into classrooms and transform the student-learning experience by answering the question, "What is it I can do now that I couldn't do before?" Our hope is that this book will become a helpful guide as you incorporate HyperDocs into your instruction and discover what's possible for your students.

Before we get into the how-to of HyperDocs, let us share a little about how and why we started using them in our classrooms. Perhaps our stories will spark an *aha* moment for you. If nothing else, we hope they'll help you see how these digital lessons can transform the learning experience in your classroom.

Our HyperDoc Aha Moments

Searching for Solutions

As an instructional technology coach, I (Lisa) was thrilled when the Common Core nationwide assessment began requiring the use of technology in classrooms. But I was also concerned that the devices schools were purchasing would only be used for testing. I knew we needed to create a way for teachers to instruct effectively with technology while simultaneously accomplishing all they are required to do. Out of this need came HyperDocs.

When I initially started using HyperDocs, I saw how my students were more independent, thinking at a higher level, and actively engaging with the lesson. My role in the classroom had changed from lecturer to facilitator. Instead of walking a student through a lesson, I suddenly had time to spend with small groups and offer personalized instruction while the rest of the class continued working its way through a HyperDoc.

When I started introducing teachers to the HyperDocs method of delivering lessons, I witnessed how the ease of creation allowed the content to be the most important part of the HyperDoc. I saw teachers reintroduce the creative process into their lesson planning and exercise the craft and skill that had drawn them to teaching in the first place. The excitement teachers experienced while creating quality learning experiences for their students fueled their energy to do a job that can seem impossible at times. Seeing that shift inspired me.

HyperDocs aren't the one-size-fits-all answer to everything we need for great instruction; they do require time, energy, and thinking. But they are a concrete solution that we, as educators, have been in dire need of for a very long time—a solution that anyone can create and implement.

From PDF to Possibility

As a teacher, I (Kelly) received an email one day from my principal letting the staff know that we had an upcoming assembly. It was going to be hosted by Cheza Nami, a non-profit that promotes global citizenship through African song-and-dance demonstrations. Attached to the email was a PDF of lesson plans for before and after the experience.

When I opened the PDF, I discovered that while there were several valuable lessons, I knew I wouldn't get to them all; and like most teachers, I was concerned about how much class time the lessons would take. However, I wanted to maintain the integrity of the Cheza Nami content, so I quickly calculated how much time I would need and realized the lessons required several forty-five-minute blocks of time. Overwhelmed, I needed a solution.

At that point, I realized I could take each lesson's objectives from the PDF and package them into a single HyperDoc. The learning process shifted from teacher-directed to inquiry-based and collaborative. I even added an option for extended thinking. When I brought my students into the computer lab and they began exploring my HyperDoc, I watched as they became engaged and motivated to learn. Excitement filled the room with a delightful hum. It was then that I knew we were onto something special. I realized I could provide higher levels of understanding in less time, something that felt like a huge accomplishment to a busy teacher like me.

Cheza Nami HyperDoc



goo.gl/Scx22U



goo.gl/yR1aro

From Curriculum Consumer to Creator

As a literacy coach, I (Sarah) have learned two critical things about myself: I love designing curriculum, and I have a nagging desire to stay organized. The curriculum designer in me takes comfort in knowing where I've been in my teaching and where I'm going, while my inner designer enjoys creating visually engaging content. So when I created my first HyperDoc, a digital storytelling mini-unit, I thought through the whole unit and designed a series of lessons in a sequential, logical order, all living in just *one* HyperDoc. With just one click, I could push out an entire study unit to my class. No more stapling packets together, no more photocopies, and no more project-management issues. It was *my* HyperDoc *aha* moment!

So how did my digital storytelling mini-unit transform my students' learning experience? Students learn in a multitude of ways using different organizational systems. Some students need to have all of the content in one place, so they can go back and reference (and re-reference) prior learning, while others prefer to work ahead or have a sense of where the unit is going. Both groups can simply scroll to a section in the HyperDoc and either "preview" or "reteach themselves" as needed. By preparing an entire unit in one HyperDoc, I provided the opportunity for *all* of my students to work at their own pace, creating a class of independent learners.

Once I saw my students' success, I used Google's *Share* button to share my mini-unit with my colleagues so they could see how simple it was to get kids going on the HyperDoc. With embedded videos and directions, they could set students up for independence without a lot of time or hassle. With one digital storytelling HyperDoc, even more students beyond my classroom could begin to create digital content. I'm happy to see my love of curriculum design spread to more classrooms.

Each of us, after enjoying the experience of designing and delivering instruction for students using HyperDocs, began to share lessons with our colleagues. HyperDocs became a part of our daily routine in the classroom. This book is a guide to digital lesson design and delivery of HyperDocs. It is a handbook. So keep it close as a reference guide for ideas and implementation. We've created HyperDocs.co to accompany this book and provide you with access to the digital lessons we introduce and explain. Use the links and QR codes throughout the book to further explore these lessons. Once you find a lesson you want to try in your classroom, make a copy of the document and revise it to fit the needs of your students. You can also share original HyperDocs you create on our website at Teachers Give Teachers (teachersgiveteachers.net). It's time to explore the new change agent that is transforming classrooms around the world and learn how to design and deliver your own personal HyperDocs!

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Point, click, explore, create, apply, learn.

Twenty-first-century teaching is not simply about incorporating technology in our schools. After all, it isn't the Chromebook, iPad, laptop, or any other hardware, software, or app that makes teaching fun and learning engaging. It's how you use tech tools that makes the magic happen in your classroom.

In *The HyperDoc Handbook*, Lisa Highfill, Kelly Hilton, and Sarah Landis show you how to use some of today's best tools to spark students' curiosity and get them involved as creators—of content and learning—rather than simply consumers. If you have fully embraced the Digital Age, you'll glean exciting ideas for using HyperDocs—interactive digital lessons—to push to new levels of learning in your classroom. And if you *don't* consider yourself to be “tech savvy” this guidebook and its templates will make creating and using HyperDocs easy.

Here's What You'll Find Inside

The **HyperDoc** Handbook

Ideas and step-by-step instruction for how to create digital lessons

Tips on apps that make your HyperDoc lessons rich and relevant

Links and QR codes to lesson plans and templates that you can adapt for your students

The confidence to create your first HyperDoc!



“The HyperDoc Handbook is an indispensable guide for any educator interested in effectively embracing and integrating HyperDocs into the learning process.”

Cindy Johanson, Executive Director, Edutopia

“The HyperDoc Handbook gives educators a how-to guide to create authentic learning experiences—utilizing Google Apps—that allows them to shift their role from knowledge-disseminator to facilitator and guide.”

Kelly Mendoza, Director of Professional Development, Common Sense Education

“The models and ideas presented can help you boost creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking in your classroom, while allowing students access to all the resources they need at the same time!”

Kathy Schrock, Educational Technologist,
KathySchrock.net

“We all want our students to be creative and collaborative problem solvers who have a passion for inquiry and lifelong learning! HyperDocs is a way to help students build these skills...”

Jaime Casap, Google



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