How To Create an Interactive Google Slide

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What's An Interactive Google Slide/Google Classroom?

An *Interactive Google Slide* is an engaging presentation slide that features a number of visible items that are linked to a 'hidden' resource activity. When viewers click on each of the visible items they find on the presentation slide, a new window opens up with an attached file to interact with. Through an Interactive Google Slide a participant might be taken to a video of a bible story or their youth leader sharing a message. Or, they could find themselves taken to a game they can play online, instructions for a recipe to test out, or clues for an outdoor adventure to enjoy etc. What you attach to the Google Slide is only limited by your imagination.

In essence Google Slides are merely a means of delivering a variety of teaching opportunities in an engaging and non-linear way. Participants can go to the slide whenever they wish and do as much or as little as they wish and in any order (more or less) as they wish.

If you hear anyone talk about *Google Classroom* they are referring to a particular programme that Google provides for public school teachers through which they can upload their interactive Google Slides and deliver them to the students of their classes. Google Classroom is not the platform on which you build your slides, it is instead a second layer of programming through which school board subscribers can create a safe place to deliver virtual classrooms to their students and follow their interactions with the assignments. So, if you hear someone refer to Google Slides (the presentation slide programme) as Google Classroom they've just picked up a common way of referring to the presentation slides. Don't worry, no need to correct them.

The Back Story

I learned how to create a Google Slide by following this youtube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-P_WdQWPc8&t=945s.

There are plenty of videos uploaded by very creative teachers on youtube that teach you how to create Google Slides, and you could use any one of them, this just happens to be the youtube video I clicked on and understood.

To create my first Google Slide I essentially opened two windows on my computer and ran the Katherine Panczner's youtube video in one window while I did what she told me on my Google Slide in the other window. I went back and forth, starting and stopping the video one instruction at a time, while enacting her instructions on my own slide. I also kept a pad of paper beside me jotting things down as I went so I wouldn't forget for the next time. Since then I've learned something new every time I've made a new slide, and know I still have so much more to learn.

The following steps are what I've learned along the way

Dream A Little

Before you create your Google Slide dream a little.

Imagine the files you intend to link to your slide.
• Will you be using this slide as a means of delivering a specific pre-existing lesson plan?
• Is the slide itself to be a part of the teaching content (ie does it need to be a map of Jerusalem with site locations for Holy Week?

- Do each of the items on the Google Slide need to represent the contents to be discovered within the slide when they click on the individual items (ie a musical instrument to represent a song to learn) or is each image on the slide to be a bit of a mystery?
- Where would you find these items in real life? Do you want something realistic or something completely imagined?
- How might this initial slide draw participants in wanting to discover more?

Think about the tone you'd like your slide to project.
- What is the tone and mood of your project (ie 'it was a dark and stormy night)?
- Are there colours/moods that represent this well?
- Are there places users might imagine themselves at to fulfill this theme?

Imagine your audience for this slide.
- What is the age range of your potential participants?
- Is there a particular area of interest for this audience?
- Would a realistic looking slide or animated slide best suit this audience?

This process of imagining gets you thinking about the possible look of your slide, narrowing down the focus of your slide. You'll still be playing and revising your look along the way - this imagining just gets you started.

Open Your Google Account

- Go to Google.
- Click on the box made up of nine small dots you see in the upper right corner of the page.
- Scroll down and click on the yellow link to 'Slides'
- When the slide page opens, click on the first file option on the upper left entitled 'Blank'. This will open a new Google Slide presentation upon which you will create your interactive slide.

How To Create Your Slide's Background

Your background will be permanent on your slide and should not include any items you want users to click on once your slide is complete. It could be as simple as a wall, or might include additional items like a chair, desk, or bench. Just remember the background is the place your clickable items will be presented on, but no clickable items should be added at this point.

- Delete the two text boxes that are already on the first slide.
- Click on 'Background' in the toolbar above your slide. Then click on 'Choose Image'. If you wish to search the internet for a background image(s) then click on the 'Google Image Search' option. If you have a photo or image in your own files you'd like as your background click on 'Browse' or simply drag your image onto the page.
- If you've clicked on 'Google Image Search' insert words that best describe the background you envision for this slide, ie 'floor and wall background' (or any other background you desire - eg. forest, garden, beach etc.) in the search window.
- A number of options will pop up. Click on the image of your choice and then click on 'Insert' and then on 'Done'. Your background will upload onto your slide. You can always delete it if it's not quite right and start again. Have fun playing with the options.
- To add permanent pieces of furniture or other permanent items to your slide, click on 'Insert' in the upper toolbar, then scroll to 'Image' in the window that opens and then scroll over to 'Search the Web' and click on this. This will pull up a Google sidebar to the right of your classroom slide.
- In the Google search window type the word 'transparent' first (the word 'transparent' is your new best friend for this process) and then follow 'transparent' with the word(s) for the item

you want for your slide. The word 'transparent' means your item should have no background to it - it will just be the item itself. You will soon discover that some of the images that come up are not transparent at all. Just ignore those items and look for items that will work for you.

- Scroll through the images that pop up and choose your item by clicking on its picture and then by clicking 'Insert' found at the bottom of this window. Your item will appear on your slide. You can then increase or decrease the size of your item, and move it around as you want on your slide. Continue to add items to your slide according to what you desire for your permanent back drop.
- If you find that an image has additional separate objects that you really don't want on your slide, go ahead and upload it anyway. Once you've got it on your slide double click on the object and a black frame will pop up around the full image including the bits you'd like to eliminate from your slide. Click and hold your cursor on the side(s) of the black frame and drag it in to 'cut out' the unwanted image(s). When you then click on your image again the unwanted images will have been eliminated from your image.
- Once you're happy with your background and all of the additional items you've added, and you're confident that everything has been placed on your slide exactly as you want them to be you will need to take a screenshot of your slide. This screen shot will be used to create a new slide of your finished background upon which none of your background images can be moved around or be made clickable. I use a Mac and so I would click on 'shift, command, 4', and then I would use my cursor to frame my entire slide. This screen shot then pops up on my computer desktop. For a PC you will need to Google how to take a screen shot of your slide for this step.
- Once you have your screen shot, create a new slide by clicking on 'Slide' in the upper toolbar of your Google Slide. Choose the 'New Slide' option. A new blank slide will pop up below the slide you have already created. Remove the text windows from your new slide. Then click on 'Background' in your upper toolbar and click on "Choose Image' or you can click and drag your screen shot from your desktop onto your slide.
- Your background is complete and this second slide is now ready for the next steps in your creation.
- Keep your original slide though. If you discover you need to tweak your background image it will still be there for you to play with and then take a new screen shot of if needed.

How To Insert Clickable Items On Your Slide For Participant Interaction

If you added additional items to the background of your slide, the process of adding clickable items is exactly the same.

- Click on 'Insert' in the upper toolbar, then scroll to 'Image' in the window that opens and then scroll over to 'Search the Web' and click on this. This will pull up a Google sidebar to the right of your classroom slide.
- In the Google search window type the word 'transparent' and then type the word(s) for the item you want to include on your slide that users will click on to discover a new file 'hidden behind' the item. The word transparent means your item should have no background to it - it will just be the item itself.
- Scroll through the images that pop up and choose your item by clicking on its picture and then by clicking 'Insert' found at the bottom of this window. Your item will appear on your slide. You can then increase or decrease the size of your item, and move it around as you wish on your slide. Continue to add items to your classroom according to what you desire for your permanent back drop.
- If an image you place on your slide has a wide clickable range around it that overlaps another image you can reduce the frame around your image by double clicking on your image. When a black frame appears around your image click and hold your cursor on the sides of the black

frame and drag the framing in tight around your image. Click once again on your image when you're done and the framing will disappear.
- Images will enter and be placed in your classroom in the order in which you download them. You may add something, let's say a guitar, early in your room development, and then discover it is covered up by something you'd prefer to sit behind the guitar in your room, let's say a painting. The 'Arrange' button in the upper toolbar helps you layer your classroom items by moving items from the front to the back. You can also flip them horizontally or vertically to bring good balance to your slide.
- You can also rotate items to rest on furniture or fit more appropriately in your space by clicking on the dot that sits at the top of the box around your item. Hold down your cursor and you can spin the object around to rest in the space the way you desire. You can also stretch and shrink the length or height of your object as well by clicking and dragging the frame around it.
- To add a white board to your classroom click on the 'Shape' icon from the upper toolbar, and then click on the square shape. Then use your cursor to draw your whiteboard on the wall or item of your choice. Frame your whiteboard with a 'border colour' and a 'border weight' found in the toolbar. To write on your whiteboard choose the 'Text box' from the toolbar and draw it to fit the size of your whiteboard. I also like to use sign posts and easels I find as images and then place the text over these.
- Some additional places to find great photos and images that are curated with permission for you to use are www.unsplash. com, www.pixaby.com, & www.freepik.com. Don't forget to give credit to the photographers, illustrators and websites you use.
- Have fun creating your interactive space!

How To Link Files To The Items On Your Slide

Now you want to add links to the items you have placed on your slide.

- *For pdf files -* Create your document in whatever programme you typically use. Once you are satisfied that it is as you want it to be, export your file to pdf.
- Open your Google account once again by clicking on the nine small squares found in the upper right hand corner of Google. Scroll down to the 'Drive' icon and click on that. Now click and drag your pdf file into your Google Drive page and a window will pop up to say that it has been inserted in your Google Drive.
- Scroll through the files to find the pdf file you want to link to an item on your slide. Right click on the file and a window will open asking for what you want to do with this file. Click on 'Share'.
- A new window will open for you to copy the link. Go to the lower window entitled 'Get Link' first. Make sure you choose 'Anyone on the internet with this link can view'. If not, change 'Get Link' to this. Then click on 'Copy Link' and 'Done'. You now have a link to attach to your Google Slide.
- Go back to your slide and click on the item you wish to attach this link to (ie a pdf of a recipe to the cookbook you've placed on the bookcase of your slide). A box will pop up surrounding your item. Now go to the toolbar and click on the 'Insert Link' icon. It looks like a broken link of chain. Click on this icon. A box will pop up attached to your item with a line for you to drop you link into. Right click on this line and paste your link.
- *For videos*, I edit my MP4's in iMovie. With completed videos in iMovie I then click on the square with the upper arrow found in the upper right hand corner of iMovie titled 'Share'. I then click on the youtube icon. iMovie will take a bit time to download my video and then place it on my desktop.
- With a video in hand go youtube and click on 'Your videos' found halfway down the left hand sidebar. You want your video to be held in your personal youtube account. Once you've clicked on 'Your videos' a new page will open with a new sidebar on the left. Click on

'Dashboard'. You will find a large square on the dashboard page with a person holding a camera and a button titled 'UPLOAD VIDEOS'. Click on the button. You will then be invited to upload a file or click and drag your video file for download into the circle. As a part of the download process you will be asked a number of questions about your video. In my case I make sure my title is appropriate, and then I click on button declaring my video is suitable for kids found a little further down the first page. Then click 'NEXT' found on the bottom right corner of this page. With the next page I just click on 'NEXT' and move onto the third page. With the third page you will need to wait as your video is downloaded and scanned for copyright concerns. When all of this is completed (go grab a cu of tea while you wait) click on that page's 'NEXT ' button. The next page will ask you one last question and this one is important to get right. You will be asked if you want the video to be 'Private', 'Unlisted' or 'Public'. I want users of the Google Slide to be able to open the file, but I do not want someone Googling the name of the video to be able to access it through youtube directly. So, I click on the 'Unlisted' button. You can also choose to 'Schedule' your video if you would like images to only become openable on a certain date (ie an Advent Calendar with windows closed until the date stated on the window). Then click on 'Save'. Your video will be uploaded onto your private youtube site.
- Once it is there, click on the three dots to the right side of the picture of the youtube video. This will open up a window. Click on 'Get Sharable Link' from this window.
- Go back to your slide and click on the item you wish to attach this link to. A box will appear around your item. Now go up to the toolbar and click on the 'Insert Link' icon. Paste your link into the box that appears below your item and click on the curved arrow beside the box you put the video url into.

How To Upload Your Presentation Slide

Once your slide is exactly as you want it to be you'll want to upload it to your website, facebook page or send it in a an email to users.

- First drag your final presentation slide to the top spot among your slides.
- Click on 'File' in the upper left corner of your page. Scroll down and click on the link, 'Publish to the Web'. Click on 'Link' and then 'Publish'. You will be asked if you are sure you want to publish your file. Click 'OK'. A page will pop up containing the link to your file. Copy the url.
- Open a new window for your church's webpage. With my synod website I paste the url onto into a new blog posting. Click preview to ensure that your file is uploaded properly and test the links attached to your Google Slide.
- You may wish to include a screen shot of your final slide with your link to draw people in, or even attach this url to the screen shot itself so that when people click on it they are taken to the presentation slide.
- Resist using an 'url shortener' with your Google Slide. Sometimes some participants won't be able to open files if you do. Besides, no one will see your urls anyway.

GREAT WORK! (It get's easier every time)

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