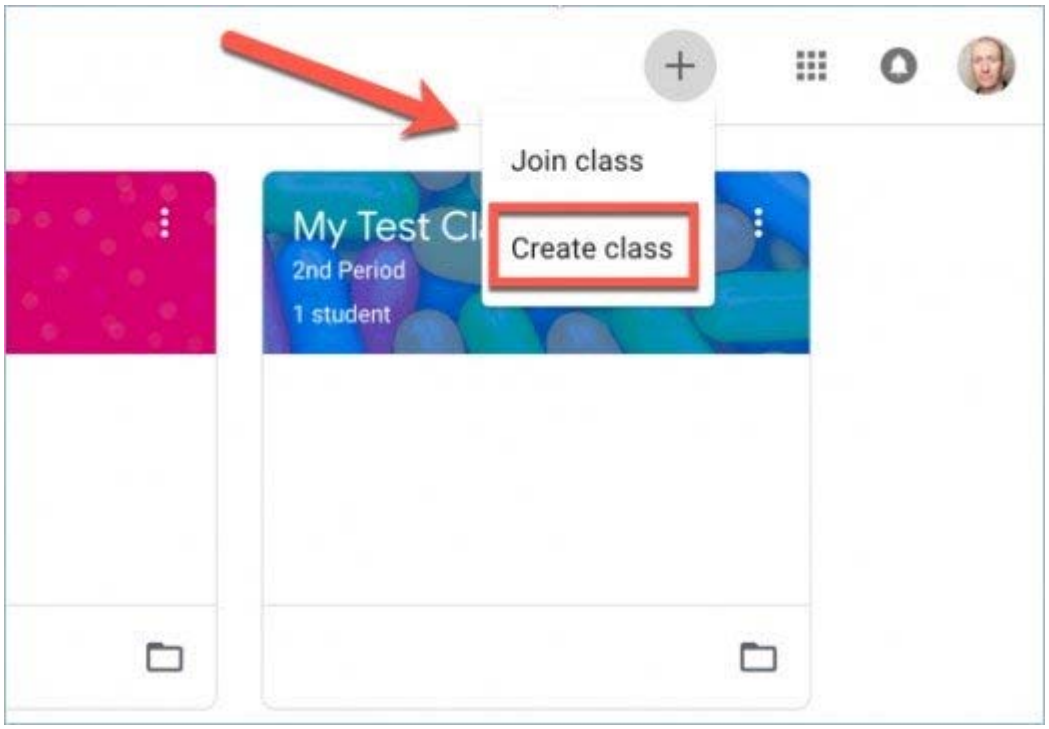
How to Create a Class with Google Classroom

Creating classes is the first step for teachers who want to set up an online space with Google Classroom. Thankfully, this is easy to do. Here's how.

1. Navigate to https://classroom.google.com
2. Choose the "I am a Teacher" option
3. Click the "+" sign in the top right-hand corner next to your Google account
4. Select "Create Class", then give it a name and a section, and click "Create"

The "Section" field is a secondary descriptor for your class, so here you may want to add something like 1st period, a grade level, or some other short description.

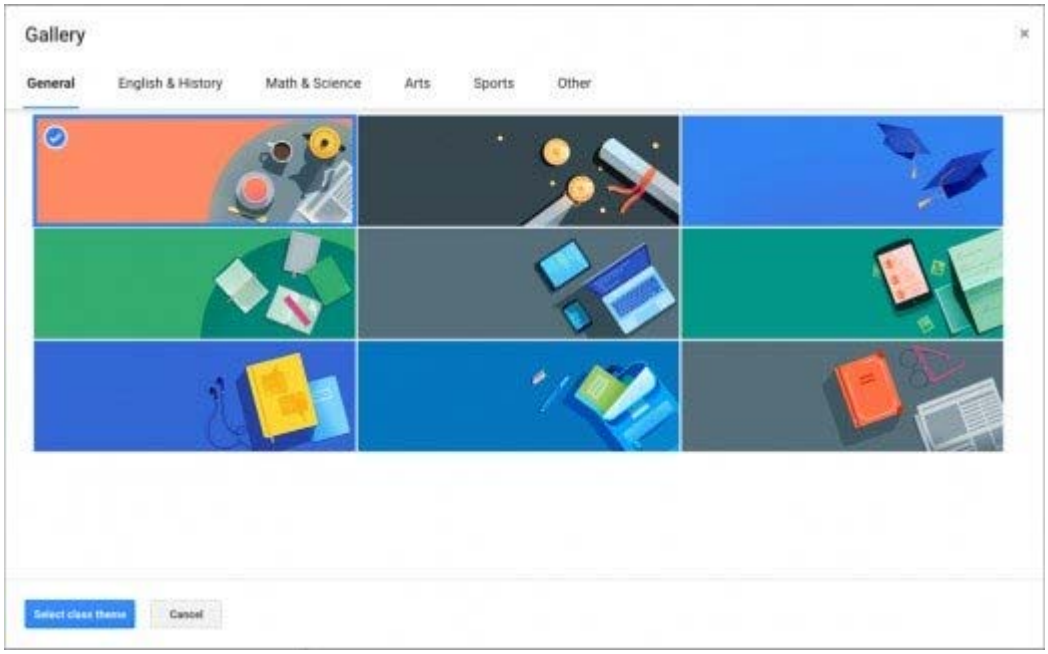


Customize the Appearance of Your Class

When you create your class for the first time, you are given a default header image. This is the image that students will see when they click on your class to access assignments and announcements. You can customize this image with a few quick steps.

1. Hover your mouse over the banner image
2. Look for the **Select Theme** link in the bottom right-hand corner
3. Click **Select Theme** to open a gallery of photos you can choose for your class.
4. Choose a photo from the gallery, then click **Select Class Theme** to change your header image.

There are a variety of images to choose from, but most are themed on some kind of academic subject. For instance, you could choose books for Language Arts classes, a piano for Music, colored pencils for Art, and so forth. You can also upload your own photo by clicking the **Upload Photo** link.



Add a Syllabus to Google Classroom

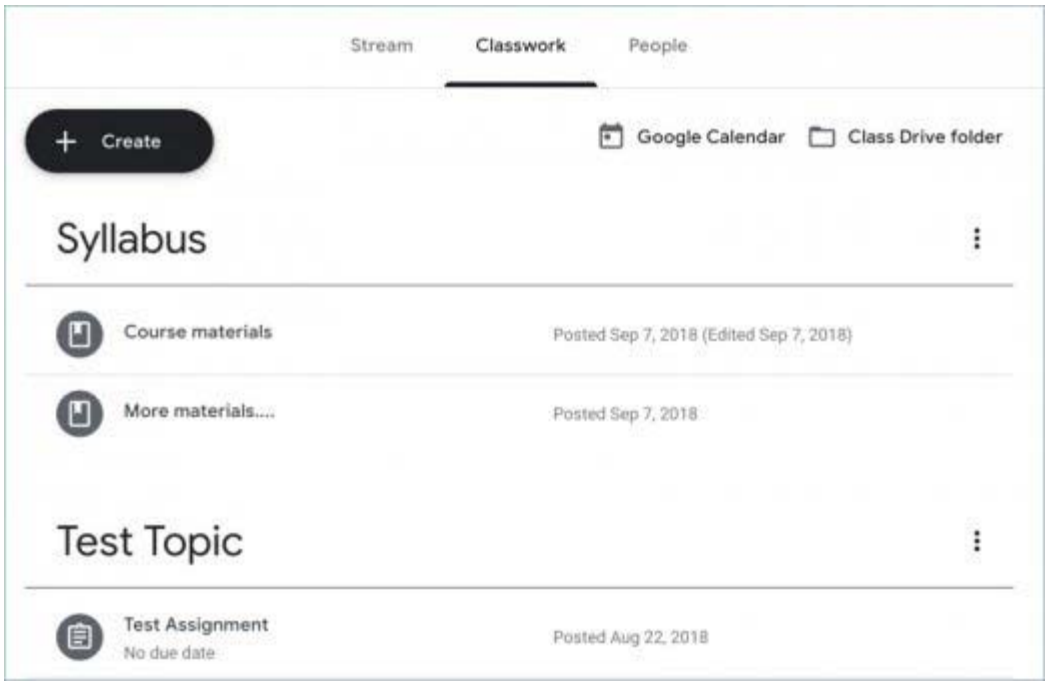
In previous versions of Google Classroom, you would use the About page to add a syllabus or other class resources. In the latest version, you use a feature called Materials, which you will find in the Classwork tab. Here's how to add what you need for your class.

1. Open the class you need
2. Click on the **Classwork** tab
3. Click **Create** and then choose **Material**
4. Add a title, description and any attachments you deem appropriate
5. Click **Topic** and assign your materials to a **new topic** called Syllabus
6. Click **Post** when you are done

Note that you can assign a Material to multiple classes if needed or even to individual students. Choose the option you need from the top left-hand corner when you are creating a new Material for your class.

If you want your Syllabus Topic to be the top of your Classwork page, click the three arrows in the top right-hand corner of the Topic and select **Move Up**. Repeat as often as necessary.

Alternatively, you can drag and drop Topics or Materials by clicking and dragging up and down on the Classwork page.



Adding Students to Google Classroom (Part 1)

Once you have created all the classes that you need, you can quickly add students to your roster. This can be done in one of two ways. The first, is to have students register themselves. You can do this by following the instructions below.

1. Click on the class that you want to students to register for
2. Click the Settings gear icon at the top of the page
3. Make a note of the class code and distribute this to students.
4. Students will then navigate to https://classroom.google.com, click the "+" sign in the top right-hand corner of the screen, and select **Join class**
5. Students enter the class code, and will instantly be added to the class

Note that the class code can be changed or disabled at any time by the teacher. Simply click the drop-down next to the class code and choose to reset or disable it as you feel the need. Resetting or disabling the code will not affect student who have already registered for your class.

Adding Students to Google Classroom (Part 2)

The second way to add students is for the teacher to add them manually. This is relatively straightforward, and perhaps not as tedious as you might think. Here's how it works.

1. Click on the class that you want to add students to
2. Then click the "People" tab at the top of the page
3. Click the **Invite Students** icon (a plus sign next to a person)
4. A search box will appear allowing you to search for the email addresses of individual students, contact groups or Google Groups.

Note that teachers using G Suite for Education can only add students who are part of their Google domain. If your students are using public Gmail accounts, they will not be able to access your online content in Google Classroom. This is intentional and is part of the security and privacy that Google wants to ensure teachers and students have when using this platform.

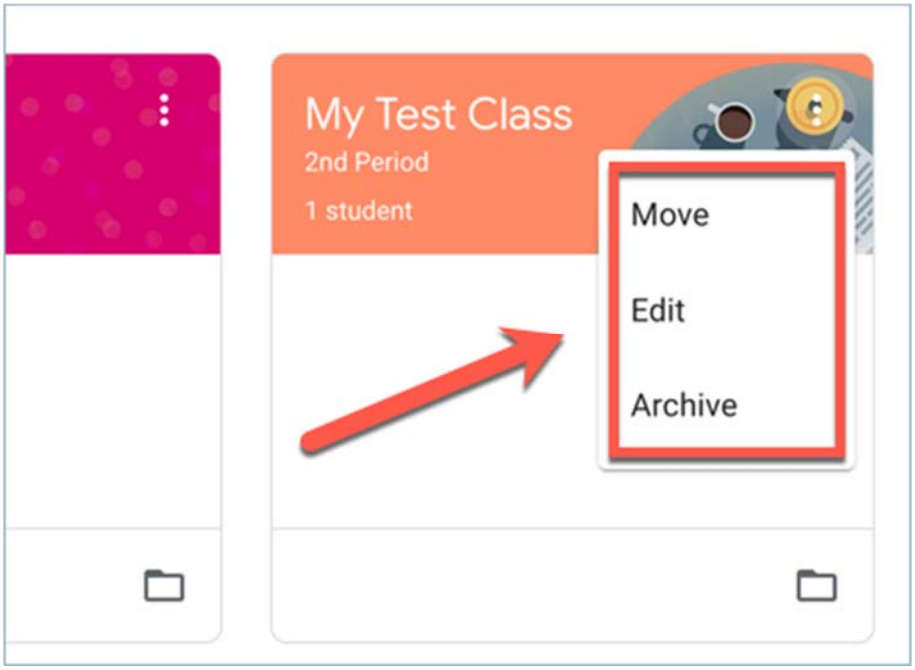
How to Add Students to Google Classroom

Move, Edit or Archive a Class

When you first try out Google Classroom, you may end up creating some test classes just to get a feel for all that it has to offer. That's perfectly natural because we all like to test out new products to see how they will work for us. However, you may want to edit the name of your test class or simply delete it altogether when you are done. Here's how to do that.

1. Click the menu button in the top left-hand corner of the screen (it looks like three horizontal lines)
2. Select **Classes** to see all of the classes you have created
3. Now click the three dots in the top right hand corner of the class you want to modify
4. Choose **Move, Edit or Archive** to make the changes you need

The Edit button will let you rename your class or change the section, subject or room number. The Move button allows you to rearrange the order of the classes in your dashboard. The archive button will remove the class from your dashboard and archive it. When a class is archived, you can still access it via the Settings by clicking on the menu icon in the top left-hand corner and selecting Archived Classes. From here, you can restore archived classes or delete them permanently.

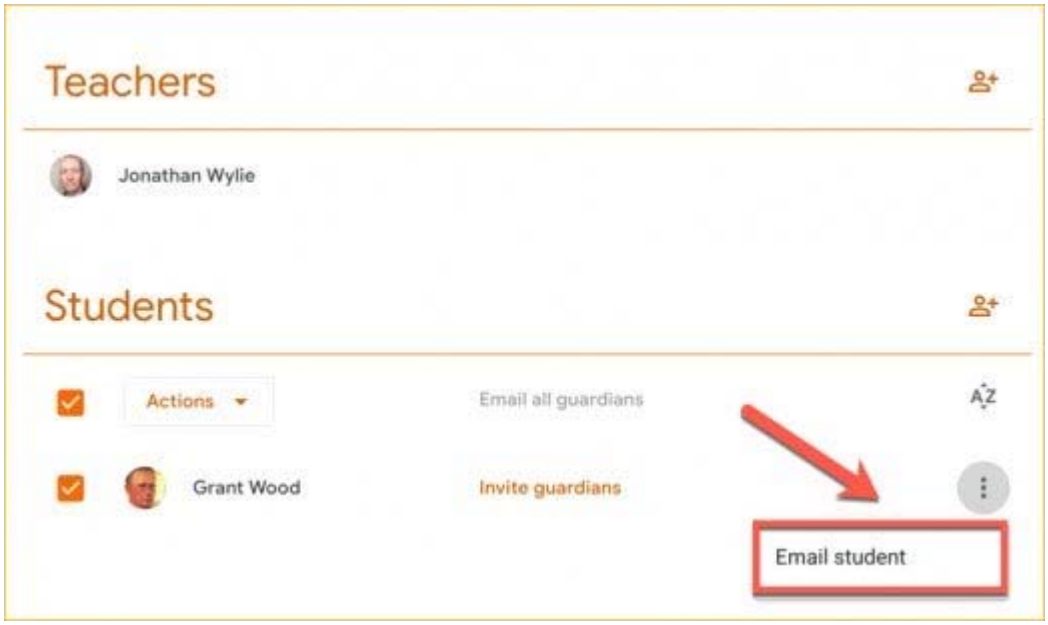


Classroom Communication

There are two ways to encourage dialogue between students and the teachers in Google Classroom. The first is the **Stream** - a Facebook-like wall of messages that can be viewed by all members of the class. This feature is available to both students and teachers.

The second way to communicate is by using email. Students can click the three dots next to their teacher's name on the class homepage to open a Gmail message that is autofilled with their instructor's email address. Students can also email each other by clicking the Students tab, and clicking on the three dots to the right of the student's name and selecting **Email Student**.

Teachers can do the same when they click on the "People" tab, however, they have the additional option of selecting multiple students and then clicking **Actions > Email** to send a message to a group of students.

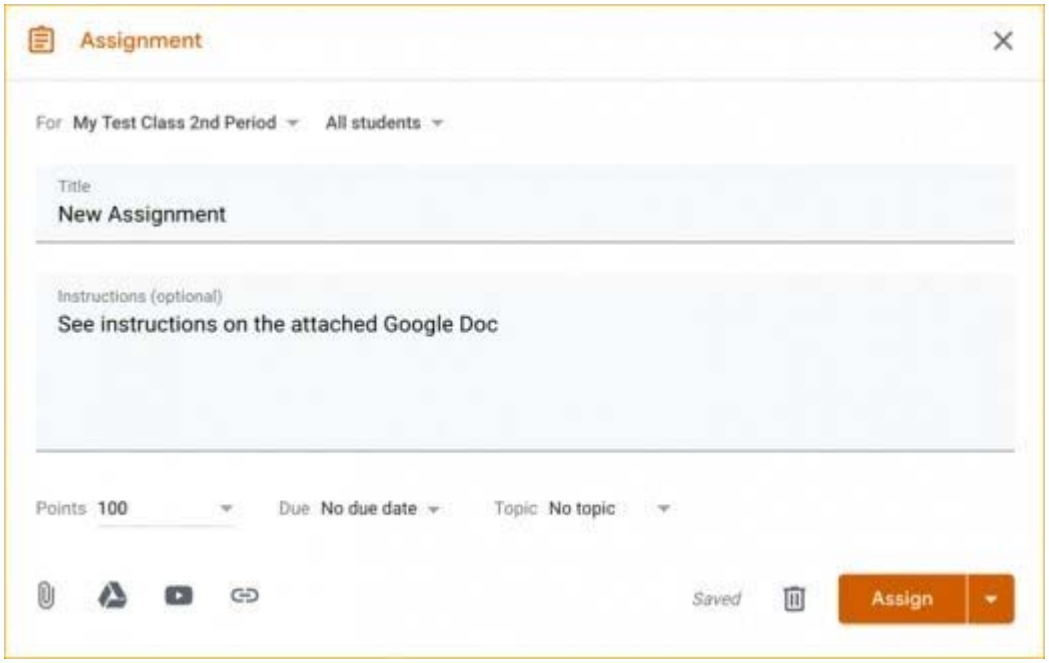


Create an Assignment in Google Classroom (Part 1)

Assignments can be created, and assigned to students, from inside Google Classroom, and there are a number of useful options here for educators. Here's what you need to know:

1. Open the class you want to add an assignment to
2. Click the Classwork tab at the top of the page
3. Click the Create button and choose to add an assignment
4. Give your assignment a title and add any additional instructions or a description in the box below
5. Click the date to choose a due date for your assignment, and add a time if you want to specify when it it due on a given day
6. Choose the type of assignment you wish to create by clicking on one of the icons next to the word Assign. Your choices are to upload a file from your computer, attach a file from Google Drive, add a YouTube video, or add a link to a website.
7. Click **Assign** to give this assignment to your students.

If you want to give the same assignment to more than one class, click the name of the class at the top left-hand corner of the assignment window and choose all of the classes that you want to assign it to.



Create an Assignment in Google Classroom (Part 2)

Many teachers who use Google Classroom will likely elect to add an assignment from their Drive, because this is likely where a lot of the teacher's resources are now stored. However, there is an added benefit to choosing a Drive resource in Google Classroom, and that becomes clear with the options you get when you select a file from Drive.

1. Students can view file: Select this option if you want all students to be able to view the file, but not be able to modify it any way. This is ideal for study guides and generic handouts that the whole class need access to.

2. Students can edit file: Choose this if you want all students to be able to edit and work on the same document. This would be ideal for a collaborative class project where students may be working on separate slides in the same Google Presentation, or where they are collaboratively brainstorming ideas for something you want to discuss in your next class.

3. Make a copy for each student: If you pick this option, Classroom will make a copy of the original file for each student in your class and give them editing rights to that file. The teacher's master remains intact and the students have no access to the original file. Choose this is you want to quickly disseminate a paper that has an essay question for students to work on, or a digital worksheet template where students fill in the blanks with their own answers.

This level of automation was possible before Google Classroom, but it is infinitely easier to manage when integrated into this new platform.

Organize Assignments by Topic

A recent change to Google Classroom is the ability to organize assignments by topic. This lets you group assignments together by unit or type in the Classwork tab. It is a more efficient way for students and teachers to find the assignment they are looking for. To create Topics, follow the instructions below.

1. Navigate to your class
2. Click the Classwork tab
3. Click the "Create" button
4. Choose "Topic"
5. Name your Topic and click Add

New assignments can be added to a Topic from the assignment creation screen. Just choose the drop-down box next to Topic before you assign it. If you have assignments already created that need moved to a Topic, follow these steps.

1. Click on the Classwork tab
2. Hover over the assignment you want to move with your mouse
3. Click the three dots
4. Choose Edit
5. Look for the drop-down box next to Topic
6. Click the drop-down and choose the Topic you want to move it to

How to Create an Assignment in Google Classroom

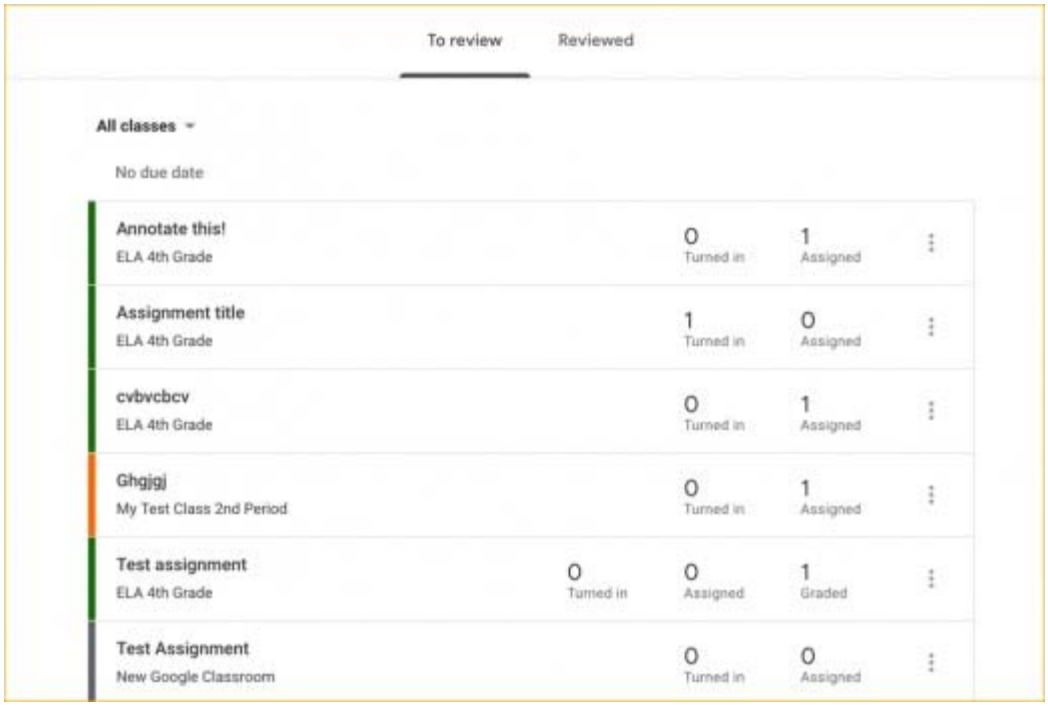
How Students Complete & Submit Assignments

Students can view active assignments when they log in to Google Classroom by clicking on a specific class they are part of and reviewing the upcoming assignments. However, a more efficient way is to click the menu button in the top left-hand corner of the screen and select **To-do** from the pop-out menu. This shows students a list of assignments for all their classes, as well as which ones they have turned in, which ones are still outstanding, and which ones are overdue. Assignments that have been graded by the teacher will also be shown here with a grade next to them.

Clicking on one of these assignments will open the relevant file for the student. If it is a Google Drive file, an additional button is added to the toolbar in the top right-hand corner, next to the

Share button. This button is marked "Turn it in". Clicking it submits their assignment to the teacher.

As of now, there is no way to "turn in" YouTube videos or URLs that have been assigned to students by the teacher, but that will likely change before too long.



Grading and Returning Assignments to Students

Teachers can find student submissions in a number of different ways. However, perhaps the most efficient way is to enter the class you are interested in grading and clicking on the assignment name from the Stream view. If you find that assignments are getting buried among student conversations, look at the sidebar on the top left of the Stream view and you should see the "Upcoming Assignments" box. Click on the assignment you want to grade and follow the directions below:

1. Click the name of the student who has submitted an assignment you want to grade.
2. When the document opens, use the commenting features in Drive to leave detailed feedback on specific parts of the student submission. Close the document when you are done. All changes are saved automatically.
3. When you return to Classroom, click to the right of the student's name where is says "No grade" and enter a points based grade for the assignment.
4. Check the box next to the student you just graded, then click the blue "Return" button to save the grade and notify the student that their paper has been graded
5. Add any additional feedback in the pop-up box, then click "Return Assignment"

How to Grade Student Work in Classroom

Grading Tips and Further Information

How do the students know that I have graded their assignment? Do I have to grade an assignment out of 100? These questions, and more, are answered below.

- When the teacher returns an assignment to a student, the teacher no longer has editing rights on that document.
- You can return an assignment to a student without grading it by simply checking the box next to the student's name and clicking Return. This could be useful for assignments submitted in error.
- When you return an assignment to a student they will automatically receive an email notification informing them of your actions
- You can change a grade at any time by clicking on the grade and then clicking "Update"
- Clicking the folder button will open the Google Drive folder where all student submissions are stored. This is useful for reviewing all the submitted assignments at one time.
- The default number of points for an assignment is 100, but you can change this by clicking the drop-down arrow and selecting another value, typing a value of your own, or even choosing the option to not score an assignment.