When we think about the tools and resources that benefit all learners, certain key attributes come to mind: multiple modalities, scaffolding, communication, collaboration, and support. While there are hundreds of tools and devices available, we have found 10 strategies to maximize the learning possibilities through creative uses of All Things Google.

1. **Google Docs**

At its most basic level, Google Docs (http://docs.google.com) provides students with a foolproof means to access their work from any device. For those who may struggle with organization or keeping track of class materials, Google Docs virtually eliminates the problem. The *I lost my assignment* can be removed from the equation since Docs automatically save and are searchable from within a Drive account.

On a deeper level, working in shared Docs also creates an almost real-time feedback loop. Rather than wait for a student to complete a draft before providing input, sharing a Doc early allows teachers and students to collaborate throughout the writing process. This not only benefits those students who need additional support, but also provides the teacher with an avenue to push faster students before they reach a point of being "done."

Docs do not have to be used only for assessments. Consider the value of collective note taking during class to create a larger body of knowledge. In a traditional setting, when each student takes notes independently, ideas and connections could be lost in a physical or digital binder – or not included at all. With shared notes, the potential exists to find those connections and then carry the class exploration in a new or different direction, as well as to support those students who may not capture all of the information the first time.

2. **Google Forms**

Imagine having the ability to know your students’ comprehension level before they walk into class or immediately after you introduce a new concept. Google Forms (http://www.freetech4teachers.com/2012/12/22-useful-google-forms-for-teachers-and-html) gives you an easy way to do just that. Whether you create a standard survey to use as an Exit Ticket or even a "mood check-in" as used by Ms. Magiera on her math blog (https://sites.google.com/site/msmagierasclass/), Google Forms provides formative assessment data. A recent update included the ability to add images (http://www.educatorstechnology.com/2013/05/teachers-guide-to-adding-images-in-html) to Forms, so questions could relate to illustrations, graphs, diagrams, maps, and more. Additionally, by using forms rather than a paper-based assessment, students who may need reading support can leverage text-to-speech features on their device to hear the questions independently.

3. **Voice Comments**

"The fact of the matter is that good writing is conversational, and the best way to help a student rethink and revise their writing is through personal conversation," writes Joe Taylor (http://joetheitc.blogspot.com/2013/05/google-drive-adding-voice-comments.html), Instructional Technology Coordinator for High School District 214 in Buffalo Grove, IL.
What if your students could hear your thoughts as you read their work and provided input? With Voice Comments (https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/voice-comments/hcdoaikeebibphibkhliedjhhbbke?hl=en), a Chrome app that works with Google Docs, that is now possible.

While some students may prefer to read your annotations, others may benefit from more of a dialog. Consider the value of having students leave Voice Comments during peer review. Google docs makes it easy to leave text comments throughout the process; however, those remarks do not include tone of voice or inflection. With Voice Comments, students can receive feedback with another dimension as well as with the modality that best fits their learning needs.

### 4. Research Tools

Especially with elementary students, working between multiple browser tabs or windows can become a difficult and distracting process. With Research Tools (http://www.freetech4teachers.com/2012/10/quickly-find-images-for-google.html#!UZqogCuG1Z8J – available in Google Docs, Spreadsheets, and Presentations – students can search from within their project to find images, video, quotes, or references. Not only can links and media quickly be inserted from the research pane, but citation information can also be added as footnotes.

To access the research tool, look in the Tools menu from inside any Docs, Spreadsheets, or Presentations. There are even options to search by Creative Commons License for images. If using either Chrome or Firefox, you can even drag images directly into place.

### 5. Write Space

Debates about the effectiveness of multitasking notwithstanding, the need to limit distraction is something that most students experience at some point. WriteSpace (https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/write-space/aimodnlfiikjjjdnlmdchihabmkdeobhad?utm_source=chrome-ntp-icon), a customizable text editor, enables students to write on a distractionless screen: no formatting ribbons or chat boxes to draw the attention away from the writing!

Written work is stored locally, as well as online, making it available any time the application is open, regardless of Internet connectivity. The actual writing space is customizable in terms of fonts and colors. With word count embedded at the bottom of each page, the need to toggle to between pages or applications is further reduced. Sometimes this simple change can enable a student to engage in the writing process and the words that he or she types onto the page.

### 6. Google Dictionary & Image Dictionary

The days of students picking up a dictionary are long gone, and the likelihood of students switching over to a new browser tab to search a word’s definition is also diminishing rapidly. Students will often rely on the synonyms or whatever is available, with the magical right-click. Thanks to Google Dictionary (https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/google-dictionary-by-goog/mgjmjaojgcfbebaocalbdgjmjfocej?utm_source=chrome-ntp-icon) and Image Dictionary (https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/image-dictionary/bibbdilejnhmpillepebbkmncnfll?utm_source=chrome-ntp-icon), this right-click will yield far more useful information than a synonym. As seen in the image to the right, the dictionary pops up in the yellow box. Students can even choose to have an image appear as well, all within the same screen. For many, this imagery provides the necessary support to comprehend what is being read. Additionally, this is also great support for science and social studies readings, saving ample time from having to tab over to another site or online encyclopedia to search for a picture of a person, animal, organism, map, etc.

### 7. Read & Write

As classroom teachers, we are eager to provide access to the curriculum for ALL students – not just those on IEPs. Assistive technology, while essential for some students, is often extremely expensive and therefore only made available to students with documented learning disabilities. Read&Write (https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/readwrite-for-google-docs/inoeonmfaipbkmadfoaoikkfajcpfchgd?utm_source=chrome-ntp-icon) is the exception! An extension that can be added through the Chrome Store, Read&Write works from a toolbar within Google Docs (see image below), and provides tools that are useful for all learners, including a robust dictionary, image dictionary, fact finder, translator, and text-to-speech tool for use within a Google Doc.

All of these tools are extremely helpful, but the utility that makes the extension the most powerful is its ability to gather, sort and extract highlighted text. Using the "text background color" button in the Google Drive formatting ribbon, students can highlight as many things as they like, with whichever colors they choose, before pressing the extract button in the Read&Write strip. Highlighted material then appears in a popup window, sorted either by highlight color or order (student choice in the popup window), so that it can be copied to the clipboard and pasted wherever the student chooses.

As an independent learning tool, Read&Write provides students with an efficient and productive means to take notes from documents (study guides, preparation for presentations, questions to ask the teacher, etc.). It also creates numerous possibilities as a teaching tool to scaffold learning: use the colors for reciprocal reading roles, create grammar and parts of speech lessons, teach the concept of more important and less important information, etc. The possibilities for this tool are extensive.

### 8. VideoNot.es

There are a few critical elements that make flipped learning a successful opportunity for students: they set the pace, chose the time & place to watch, and have opportunities to reflect on what they are intended to learn. Not always so simple! Students often struggle to keep pace with a video, and simply rewatching does not always facilitate the learning.
Students may or may not take notes. If organized, they will be able to locate their notes at a later date; however, when they review, students may completely forget the video reference, and therefore the notes are not as useful.

VideoNot.es ([http://www.videonot.es/](http://www.videonot.es/)) provides the tools to scaffold the flipped learning process. While the video appears on the left side of the screen, a notes box sites on the right – no toggling required! The notes automatically store in Drive, eliminating lost notes syndrome. Additionally, when the student takes a note, it attaches itself to a timestamp of the movie, making reviewing notes, and the correlating video segments, a snap. Students can also change the speed of the video, which can be particularly helpful when watching demos and tutorials.

9. Google Moderator

“Today, if I were to lose the devices (iPads) that that my students have, I would mourn the loss not of the technology but of the voices that my students have gained through having them.” – [Shawn McCusker](http://gowhereyougrow.wordpress.com/2013/01/08/voices-for-the-introvert-a-11-success/)

With [Google Moderator](http://www.google.com/moderator/), the potential exists to give all students a voice. Oftentimes, we miss the opportunity for thoughtful discourse within the construct of the classroom. Google Moderator empowers all students to ask questions, submit topics or ideas for discussion, and engage in thoughtful conversation. As Shawn states, through the use of technology, those who may be more introverted now have the opportunity to rise as leaders. The tutorial below offers more ideas about the mechanics of using Moderator in the classroom.

![Google Moderator](http://edtechteacher.org/index.php/summer-workshops/boston/106-google-workshop)

10. Templates

Seamless collaboration, efficient classroom management, flexible formative assessment, and creative lesson plans are all made even easier with the wealth of templates in the [Google Drive Template Gallery](https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/drive-template-gallery/edccfahmoapimcaahncqcekodjejmkg?utm_source=chrome-ntp-icon). Rather than starting from scratch by creating a blank document, spreadsheet, form, or presentation, search through the Google Drive Template Gallery to leverage the shared creativity of another. A few favorites are the Cornell Notes, Storyboard, and Plan Book templates. Since templates can easily be shared with others, especially within organizations, the gallery continues to grow. Not only does this tool provide a great resource for teachers as well as students, it is also a great opportunity to collaborate, create and donate!

To learn more about using All Things Google, come join us July 25-26 in Boston. Tracy will also be addressing Google tools in her July 15-16 workshop, Leveraging Technology to Differentiate Instruction: Creating Rich Curricula for ALL Students. ([http://edtechteacher.org/index.php/summer-workshops/boston/102-differentiated](http://edtechteacher.org/index.php/summer-workshops/boston/102-differentiated))

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