G Suite /Google Apps for Education

The benefits of implementing technology integration into the classroom is an active engagement taking place and entails collaboration among peers, and connections to the real-world. It is for this reason that Google introduced the *G Suite* Tool for education which aims to make teaching and learning more meaningful and fun.

G Suite for Education previously known as *Google Apps for education* offers free productivity educational tools around the world enabling teachers to explore their creativity by customizing the tools to enhance students' learning process. Institutions have a great task of selecting appropriate ICT tools and supporting students in the use of such tools. In addition, teachers should be in the frontline in using ICT to promote learning activities, developing new methods of facilitating learning, and evaluating student performance. The tools in G Suite range from classroom, sheets, slides, docs, calendars, forms and drawings all which are prerequisite for teaching and learning.
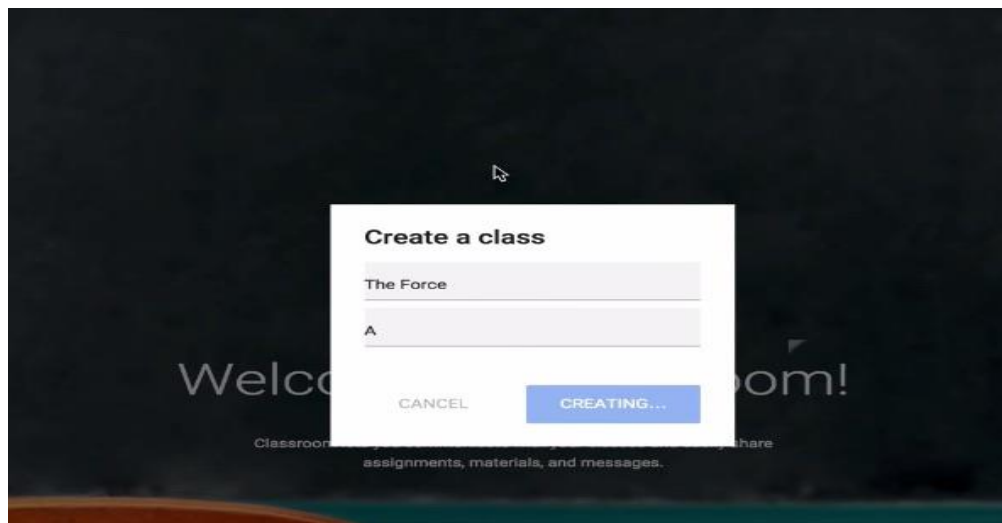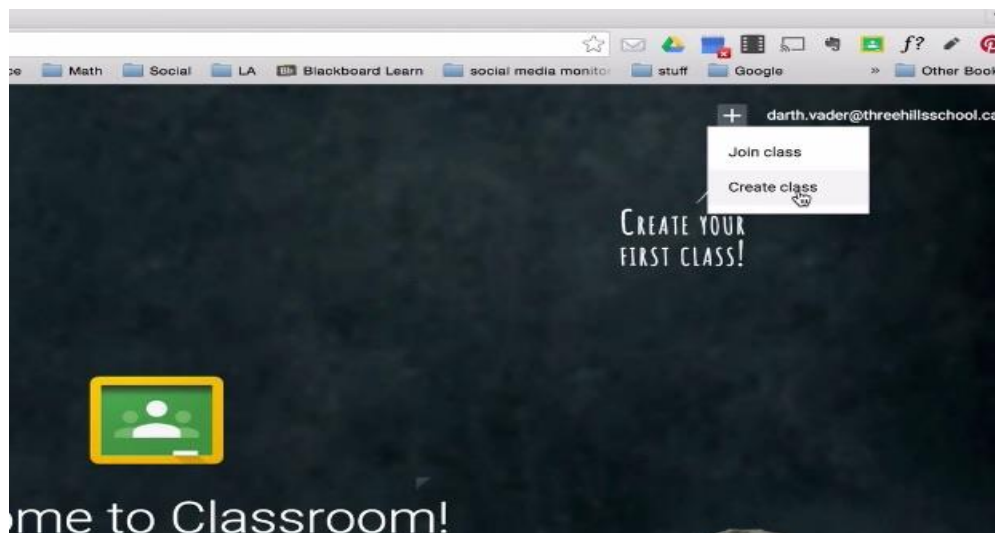
Google Classroom

Google Classroom is designed to help teachers and administrators save time, keep classes organized, and improve communication with students. Teachers can easily set up a class, invite students and co-teachers, as well as share information; - assignments, announcements, and questions. Students can be able to see assignments on the To-do page, in the class stream, or on the class calendar. All class materials are automatically filed in Google Drive folders which helps teachers to see who has or hasn't completed the work, and give direct, real-time feedback and grades.

When a teacher wants to create a classroom; he/ she will open a Web browser and go to *classroom.google.com*. On the Welcome screen, click the plus sign at the top and choose 'Create Class'. In the 'Create a Class' dialogue box, type in the Class Name and Section. Click 'Create'.

How to create your first class

Click on the "+" button in the right upper corner. Choose for "create a class". Here, you fill in some detail information about your class. Write down a good class name and section. The class

name should be the title of your class, so you can find it back in a few seconds. Then click on "create".

How to Invite students to your class

Once you have created your class, you can invite your students. Let them sign using the Google Classroom app by entering the unique code you gave them. You'll find the code in your created class. Go to the tab "students". Another option is to invite your students one by one by entering their e-mail address. Now your online class is ready! At least, it's there, and everyone can access it. There are a few other things you must do before you can take off for real.
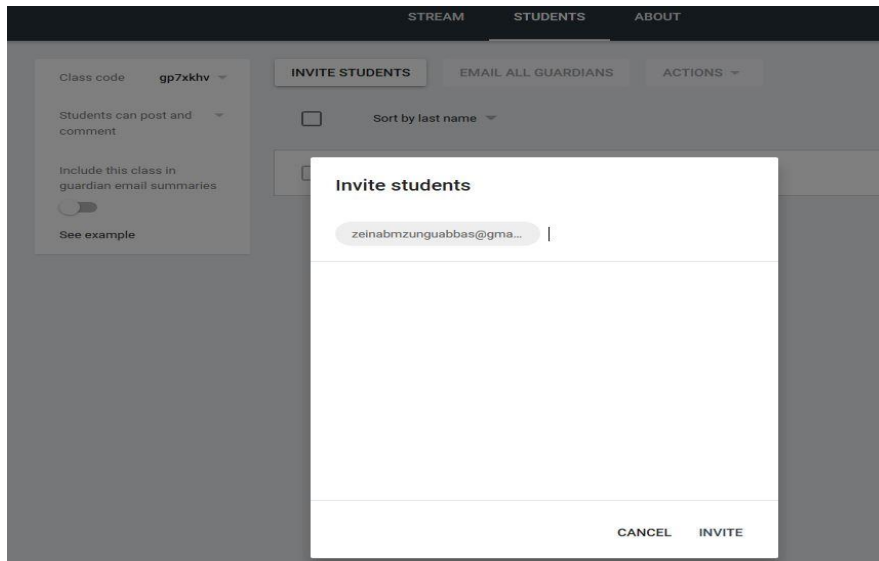
Creating your first assignment or make an announcement.

Click on the "+" button at the bottom in the "updates" tab. Don't forget to number your assignments. It's easier for your students to see which one comes first as you are unable to reorder assignments in the stream. Click on the title to see if any students have handed in the assignment and to give grades and feedback. Afterwards, you can return the assignments to your students, so they can start editing again.

Adding some lesson material to your assignment/ class.

Add material from Google Drive or add a YouTube video, a file from your computer, a link, etc. You find these options right beneath the due date. If you just want to share a presentation of your class, which is not linked to an assignment, you can go to the tab "about". Here you can add some lesson material like slides, interesting articles and examples.
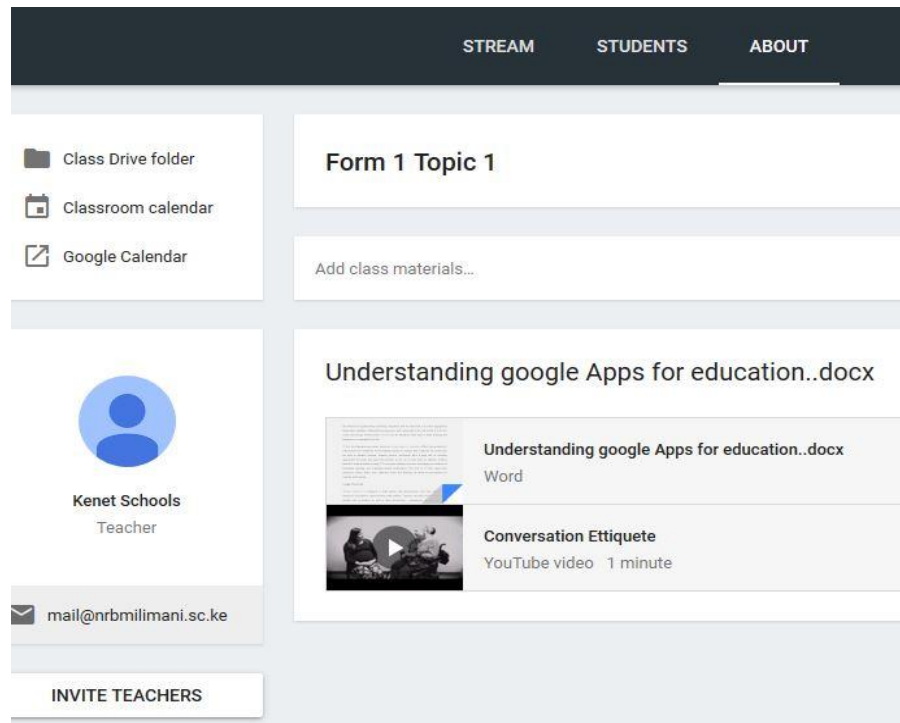
Accessing the Drive folder

Every time, you create a new class, Google Classroom creates a Drive folder for that class. You can access the folder by going to all your class tiles. On each tile, you'll find a folder icon. Click on it, and you're in the folder. Here you can add class materials too. All your student's assignments automatically end up in the Google Drive folder, so you'll find it back whenever you want.

Google Docs, Sheets and Slides

This tool enables instructors and students to create, edit and share their work with others simultaneously. This brings about team work in the institution as teachers and learners in the same faculty/department can share ideas on a given topic.
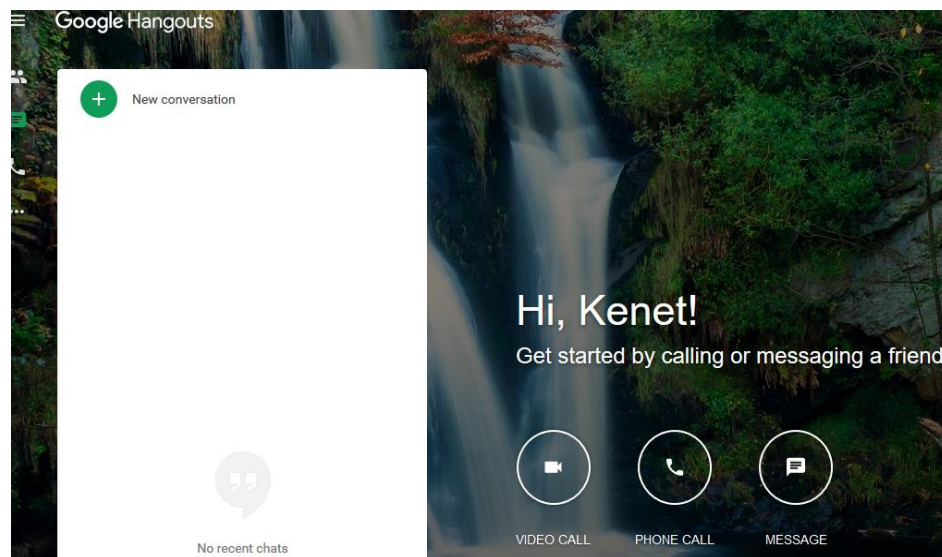
Google Forms

There are many ways that *Google Forms* can be used that benefit teaching and learning. Not only can the Forms be used to build quizzes and surveys but can be used for many classroom tasks such as managing assignments, collecting student feedback, writing book reviews, and collaborating on group projects.

Google Mail and Groups

There are many ways in which users of G-suite for education account do communicate both formally and informally. The users get personalized emails as of the domain. With the "groups" tool, the group administrator can create mailing lists and forums, share files with team members using one address and more. This will help in collaboration and participation in online discussions.

Google Hangouts and meet

With hangouts, one can send chat messages and make video calls anytime, anywhere. This makes it easier for users to hold meetings on the go, virtual training classes, remote interviews and more. Meet was introduced not long ago, and it functions more so like hangouts though there are differences such as hangouts video calls is limited to 10 people where the recent meet supports high definition video meetings with up to 30 members. When working with a class/team that's spread across campuses or globe, these tools keep the team connected and collaborate seamlessly.

Google Sites

This feature of google sites enables G-suite user or group of users to build public sites, internal project sites and resume sites. Forms and surveys can be added to the sites to collect needed data. You can choose whom you want to view the sites, either by sharing or publishing the site. Schools need to train and onboard new members effectively. Google sites makes it easy for orientation to the projects hence they become productive fast.

Google Drive

This is mainly for storage, syncing and sharing files with ease. This makes it easy to keep your work in one place, view different file format without extra software, access your files from any device and of any size. Google Team Drives are shared spaces where teams can easily store, search, and access their files anywhere, from any device.

Unlike files in My Drive, files in Team Drive belong to the team instead of an individual. Even if members leave, the files stay exactly where they are so your team can continue to share information and get work done. This is suitable for researchers who have lots of data and need it to be shared to all team members. One can give different permissions to different users hence protect the work being done.

Google Drawings

With *Google Drawings* you can easily create, share, and edit drawings online. The learners can chat with others who are editing their drawings, using the drawings editor. The drawings can be published online as images or downloaded in standard form. The drawings can also be inserted into other Google documents, spreadsheets, or presentations using the web clipboard, then tweaked accordingly.

Google Calendar

Teachers can use *Google Calendar* to add and organize all their classes, time tables or upcoming events. Their tasks can be either shared with selective users or kept public for the class to subscribe.

It is worth noting that applying modern ICT- enriched teaching methods such as G Suite requires teachers who are self-motivated, eager to learn how to demonstrate skills and have an ambition to attain educational goals. They should be prepared to use ICT-enriched techniques in teaching-learning process. It is necessary that a school nurtures a culture on the use of ICT in education.