

A Blog for Busy Teachers

FREE LANGUAGE-BASED TEACHING STRATEGIES

Suggestions for Materials Organization in Google Classroom

While Google Classroom has made it easier for teachers to pivot their in-person classes to online platforms, the student view in Google Classroom is not easily accessible to teachers. This situation makes it challenging for teachers to understand exactly what students see when they log in. Below are a few tips for helping to ensure your students can effectively manage their materials on Google Classroom.

Google File Organization Challenge	Tips, Takeaways, and Strategies
<i>Students are confused by the location of their digital files.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Google Classroom automatically creates a folder for each student. Any document created by the teacher and posted or shared with students via Classroom lands in this folder.• To streamline the number of files students are required to manage, educators should direct students to use and organize the Classroom created folder and not to create a separate class folder in Drive as this can create multiple versions of files and can lead to confusion. If there are multiple folders for the same class, students may not be sure which folder to access or unknowingly toggle back and forth between different versions of the same assignment.• Because Google Classroom automatically adds documents to a student's class folder, it is important to explicitly teach students to create and maintain an organizational system. They should be directed to create subfolders for new units or "topics" and should rename and organize documents as a first step to any assignment.



Students can't find class documents or assignment in Drive and/or Classroom

- As stated above, the first thing educators should do when cueing students in a new document is to help the student rename the document. When teachers assign work in Classroom and "Make a Copy for each student," the files are automatically named. The naming convention is Student First Name Student Last Name and then the file's name that the teacher created. This can seem clear at first, however, when students are looking at the thumbnail images of all their files in their Classroom Drive folder, this naming convention makes it so that students will only see their *first name* on all their files and not the *name of the assignment*. The seemingly identical file names make it hard to find the file they are looking for, especially if they cannot remember the exact title of the assignment.
- Please also keep in mind that if the student wants to change the name of a file to match their organizational system, they need to do so BEFORE they "Turn In" their assignment.
- To help students keep their files organized, teachers can also align assignments to a physical binder organization system by using naming conventions that mirror the physical binder sections. Below is an example that outlines an Algebra I course. The "Topics" in Google Classroom could be set up as "Units" for the course. The naming conventions for the "Assignments" in Google Classroom can then replicate the sections of a binder. For example, if you had a "notes" and "homework" section in your physical binder, you could use a naming convention like:
 - Course: Algebra 1
 - Topic: Unit 1: Linear Equations
 - Notes_U1_1: Slope
 - Homework_U1_1: Slope practice

Students can't organize, locate, or edit their work once they've submitted it to Classroom.

- Educators should cue students to move files prior to submission, as students can only move documents into subfolders *before* they "Turn In" the files. To allow students to move or access the document after submission, the teacher must click "unsubmit" to grant student access.
- Once a student turns something in, they can no longer edit it. They have to return to Classroom, click on the assignment, and click "Unsubmit" to resume editing. Alternatively, if a student does not know how to "unsubmit," then they might request editing access from the educator for an assignment they have previously created and submitted. If students are not responding to edits, they might be doing so because they no longer can. Cue them to "unsubmit" their work in order to make edits.