

GOOGLE: MUSIC TEACHER TIPS & TRICKS

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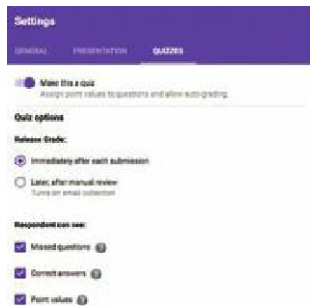
So many music educators are harnessing the power of Google Tools for organization, collaboration, student engagement, and assessment. Gmail, Drive, Calendar, Forms, Sheets, and Slides have transformed the way we work and share information. Some teachers are creating Sites (websites), and have YouTube channels. A large number of school districts have embraced Google, and are providing teachers with *Google Classroom* for blended learning and organization. While *Classroom* is a subscription-based service that your district must sponsor, Google is constantly adding and updating free features, and has some “experiments” available for trial. Here are a few tips and tricks that may help with your classroom, at zero cost to you.



Students can use almost any phone, tablet or Chromebook to record performances. For assessment purposes, students can record audio and/or video of themselves and share it with you via Google Drive. No emailing and downloading files is necessary, and each file has an automatic timestamp of when it was shared. Many middle and high school choral and instrumental teachers are using this method to check student progress and for assessment. Students can make the recordings during school or at home. As the teacher, be sure to set parameters to make sure that students are giving an authentic performance, such as including an audible metronome, tuning the instrument, and that the camera angle includes fingering, bowing, or body posture.



Google Forms is an amazing tool for gathering information or creating surveys. If you have never created a Form for students using Google, the quiz feature is a great reason to give it a try. When creating a Form, click on the cog to get the settings menu and make it a quiz.

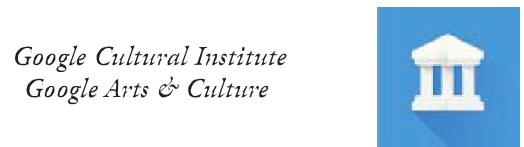


After entering questions, click “answer key” at the bottom of the screen. You provide correct answers, and add feedback about why

that answer is the best choice. Importantly for music educators, you can add audio, which is hard to find in an online quiz maker. Save the audio clips to Google Drive, then link the audio in the question. The quiz taker will get a new tab in which to listen to the clip before answering. Like all Google Forms, once results are in, you have the option to review one quiz at a time, or to have Google generate a spreadsheet of results.



Simply search “google doodle archive” or go to <https://www.google.com/doodles/>. All of the previous Google Doodles, including interactive activities will be at your fingertips. Searching “theremin” brings up Clara Rockmore and an online interactive theremin. Among the results for “guitar” is Les Paul, and an on-screen strummable guitar. “Piano” brings up Bartolomeo Cristofori with an animation of the action inside a piano. Searching for “synthesizer” brings up an on-screen miniMoog and recording tool in honor of Bob Moog. All of the games are available too, in case you missed the addictive Halloween cat game!



The Google Cultural Institute is still in beta (testing phase), but it promises to bring museums and performances to everyone through the web. By navigating to <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/project/performing-arts>, an array of world-class performances are a click away. Current offerings include a backstage tour of the Sydney Opera House, dance, jazz, and classical music performances. There are links to resources including the sheet music collection of the British Museum and music from around the world. As with all things Google, expect this library or resources to continue to grow.



JAM with Chrome is an interactive web application that allows friends in different locations to play music together in real time

through their Chrome browser, making it an ideal tool for teachers with access to Chromebooks. Users can choose from one of 19 instruments and up to 4 people can JAM together in a session.

Chrome Music Lab
(Chrome Experiment)



Chrome Music Lab was developed for Music In Our Schools Month. It's a collection of simple online apps that let anyone of any age explore how music works. As collaborations between musicians and coders, they include open-source code and use web audio. Users may encounter some flaws, since it's an "experiment"--not a fully tested app. Some aspects are not working properly as of this writing, and there are errors including a Circle of Fifths that names D# Major and c minor as equivalent. The apps themselves are more appropriate for elementary and middle school students. Older students may find the visual explanation of harmonics, the jumping oscillators, and piano roll useful as a starting place. For some fun, try the voice spinner--record clips into the interface, and run them faster, slower, or backwards.

Peanut Gallery (Chrome Experiment)



Peanut Gallery provides an online library of video clips from silent films, and a simple record button. This Chrome Experiment can provide a fabulous, easy to use intro to film scoring, especially for elementary music teachers. Students simply click the record button and play or sing their film score to record. Suddenly, one or two Chromebooks plus classroom instruments and voices can turn general music class into a film score studio.



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