

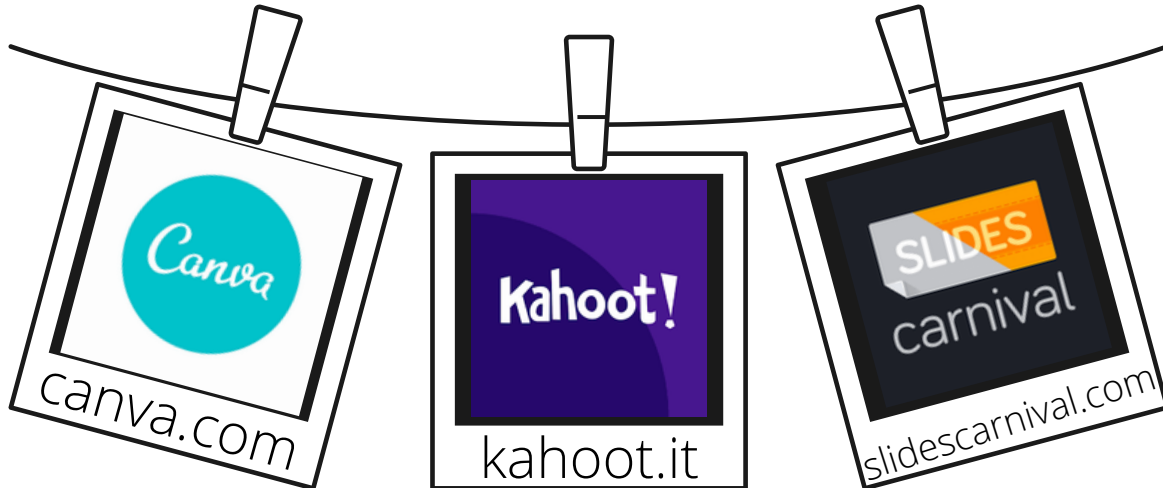


# TECH TIDBITS



## COOL FREE TOOLS

I wanted to share a few of my favorite FREE tech tools to use in the classroom. Some of these you all may already use, but hopefully there is something on the list that can help someone!



**Canva** is amazing! If you sign up with your 413 email address you get the free EDU version. I actually am using it to create this right now.

You can design almost anything. I have used it to make flyers to send home to students, spirit week schedules, invitations, and now newsletters.

The banner images on the Tech Tidbits site were also created here, all with the free resources. If you type "Google" into the search bar on it, you will find all of the personalized Classroom Banners and tools that will make your digital classroom just as welcoming as your actual one!

I am feeling a tutorial coming on, so do not be surprised if you see one in the near future!

I strongly urge you to check it out and see if it would work for you, it might just save you a little time or make your designs pop a little bit!

**Kahoot!** is an engaging way to review handle pop quizzes in an upbeat way. In my experience, even the most hesitant learners like to get involved and try their best!

Teachers love it because it engages the students, it can get competitive (which students LOVE), and it is fun! Students that are not as fast at responding do not have to worry as there are multiple settings for usernames, they can be completely random and anonymous!

You can search through already created and shared materials, or start your own from scratch. It is great for facts that need memorized and vocabulary practice. In the free version you can have T/F or Multiple Choice questions (other options are there, but not free).

**WARNING:** Administrators might pop in because they assume that learning is not happening as the students are loud and excited!

## COOL FREE TOOLS, CONT.

**SlidesCarnival** - If you are anything like me, I LOVE presentations, Google Slides, PowerPoint, whatever. Slides Carnival has TONS of free templates that can be used with the presentation software of your choice.

When you find one you like, you simply "Make A Copy" for Google Slides or "Download" for PowerPoint! My personal favorites are Composition Book and Polaroids & Notebooks.

### Polaroids & Notebooks Slides



### Composition Book Presentation



## PODCASTS IN THE CLASSROOM

Have you ever listened to a podcast? Not going to lie, I boycotted them for a while. I wanted NOTHING to do with them when my husband blared them in the car, so I definitely was not going to listen to them on my own or in my classroom. Things changed when he played an episode of, "Stuff You Missed in History Class." I was hooked! It was over something we had just discussed in my class the week before! The content was presented by someone who really knew what they were talking about and presented things from a viewpoint that I couldn't. I even learned something that day.

These are a SCREEN FREE way to integrate technology. They can be listened to as a whole group while students are working silently, or when they have had a bit too much sittings and need to walk (or dance) around the room. You could also assign them to be listened to outside of class. Most can even be downloaded so they can be listened to WITHOUT access to the internet, maybe on a long bus ride to an away event.

Here are a few of the many benefits to using podcasts in the classroom:

- ELL students get to hear content in authentic language
- practice listening comprehension skills
- learn directly from experts in the field
- multitasking saves time

I found a few curated lists of podcasts for all ages/grades. I will post the links on the "Random" section of my website so you can navigate them easily.

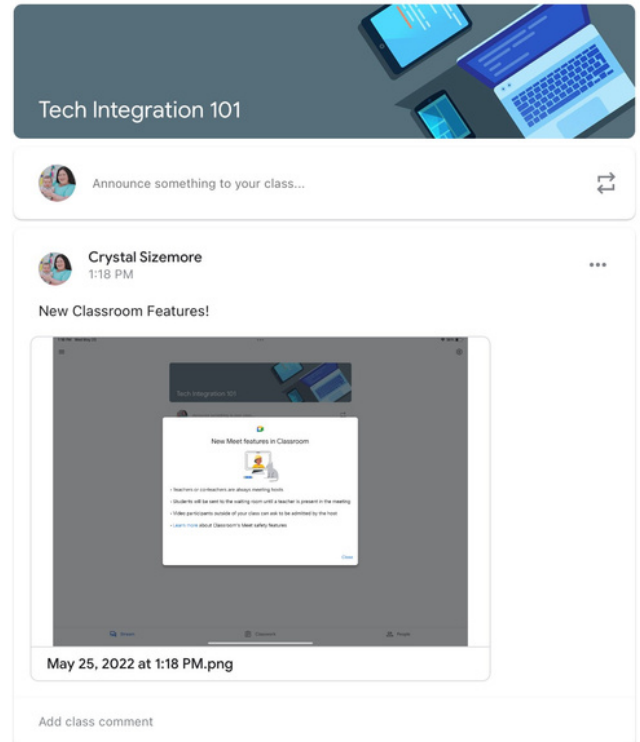


# GOOGLE CLASSROOM UPDATES

FINALLY, Google Classroom is giving us the ability to chose a picture to display when creating a post on your class's stream! I find this to be an extremely helpful tool that I wish had always been an option.

To use this feature, just create an announcement or assignment in your stream chose an image that you would like to show. Students can also use this feature when they are posting in a class stream.

Once you post it, it will look like the photo to the side. Actually have a photo appear instead of just a link to click on an image. I can see this being very handy for students as they are scrolling and looking for something specific. They can glance at it instead of clicking on each link to see if it is what they want!



Another set of update to classroom this month are new MEET features. Many of the complaints surrounding using Google Meet in the past stemmed around students being able to go into them unmonitored and there was not a good way to stop it. NOW they will be in a waiting room until there is a teacher assigned to that class present.

Also, others can ask to be admitted to the meet that are outside of your assigned class. This feature would work great if there was a distance guest speaker, and students that were not present in the room wanted to be a participant.

These are handy features in the instance of distance learning, but I can see multiple ways they would be handy for other purposes!

