

5 Ways Google Apps Backup Can Help the Modern Classroom

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The modern classroom is quite a bit different than the classroom of ten or even five years ago. Students are signing up for their classes online. Educators are more readily available to their students at all times of the day through email, social media and video chat programs such as Google Hangouts. More of the class work is taking place online and being turned in electronically thanks to platforms like Google Apps for Education. All of this is becoming the norm, the new way we do things in education.

And while more education in the cloud is a good thing, it requires us to be aware of things that we may not have been before, like backing up class work in the cloud. Here are a few ways that Google Apps backup can provide real benefits to the everyday lives of students and educators:

1. On the first day of class, a teacher can send their students email links to the syllabus, class info, readings, et cetera that are stored in Google Drive, which they can refer to throughout the semester. However, if a student's Gmail account gets hacked, they might suddenly find themselves without all of this important information. If they have backup in place, they can restore their hacked/deleted emails once their password has been sorted out and get back to work.
2. A student is more likely these days to turn in an assignment online by emailing a link to a Google Drive document. But let's say that when their teacher opens the file to grade it, they find a blank document because the assignment hasn't synced properly. In that case, the student can use backup to retrieve an uncorrupted version of the file and submit it, and both the student and the teacher are saved from having to do extra work and get IT or administration involved.
3. Teachers these days often grade and store their grades in a spreadsheet on Google Drive. If the spreadsheet of everyone's grades for the semester were to get accidentally deleted, the teacher would likely be preparing to regrade an awful lot of material while seriously reconsidering their career choice. But if backup is in place, the teacher can easily retrieve the grades, saving themselves a massive headache.
4. Group projects have long been a part of education, but with the ability to see changes and chat in real time inside a Google Doc, it's easier than ever to do it right. Students can collaborate on a document, but if someone makes a change that the group decides to throw out, they can use backup to retrieve an earlier version and move forward with that one instead.
5. Turning in an essay online via Google Drive sharing is great for students because it's more convenient than bringing it to class, and it's great for teachers because they can use online tools to immediately check for plagiarism. Google Apps backup adds another layer of benefits; if a student tries to make changes to their assignment after the deadline, the teacher can use backup to retrieve the earlier version and make sure they're only grading what was turned in on time.

In Conclusion

As we transition to a more cloud-based classroom, we must prepare for the inevitable pitfalls that accompany any new way of doing things. The benefits of having the cloud in the classroom – the convenience, the collaboration and the communication – far outweigh the risks, and as long as you plan ahead for what might go wrong, you can clear the hurdles and get back to what matters.