

Improving Writing with Google Docs

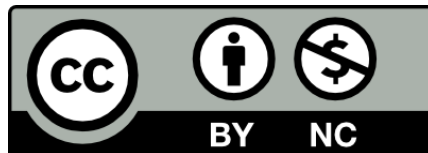


by Eric Curts

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Improving Writing with Google Docs Student Writing

by Eric Curts

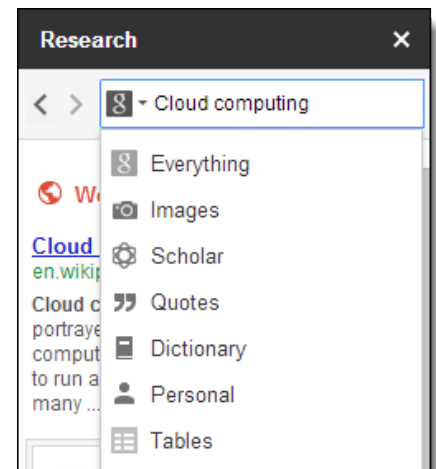
In this section we will look at Google Docs tools and features that a student can use on their own to improve the writing process.

Research tool

The Research tool built into Google Docs allows students to investigate and add information from the Internet to the document they are writing. This includes web results, images, quotations, scholarly articles, dictionary definitions, and more. Additionally the Research tool will add citations to the document for items chosen.

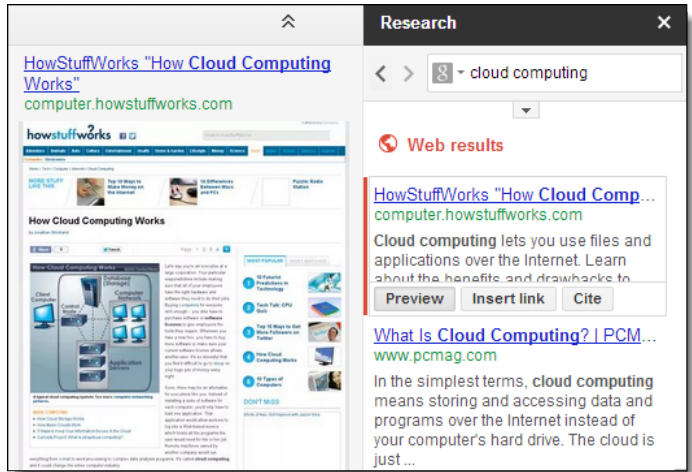
To use the **Research tool**:

- Click **Tools** and then **Research**, or **right-click** on a word and choose **Research** from the pop-up menu.
- By default many types of results will display, but you can narrow down to just the type you want by clicking the **down arrow** in the search term box and choosing types such as **Everything**, **Images**, **Scholar**, **Quotes**, and more.
- You can also determine which **citation format** you wish to use by clicking the **down arrow** below the search term box. The choices are **MLA**, **APA**, and **Chicago**.



If you choose **Everything** you will get Web results as well as others

- If can click on any of the Web results, you will get a pop-up preview of the website, along with a link to visit the site.
- You will also get an **Insert link** button to add a hyperlink of the site to your document.
- You will also get a **Cite** button to add a footnote to your document for that website.

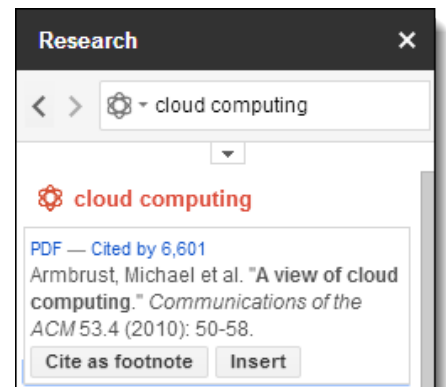


If you choose **Images** you will get thumbnails of pictures related to your search term.

- To add an image to your document, simply drag and drop the image where you want it to go.
- A footnote will also be added to your document to cite the image.

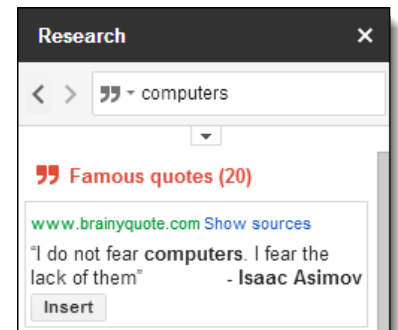
If you choose **Scholar** you will get a list of scholarly articles.

- If you click on an article you will get a **Web** link or **PDF** link to view the article, along with an indication of how many times this article has been cited.
- You can also click the **Insert** button to add a citation of the article to your document wherever you want.
- Or you can click the **Cite as footnote** button to add the citation as a footnote.



If you choose **Quotes** you will get a list of famous quotes related to your search term.

- If you click on a quote, you can then click **Show sources** to see where the quote is referenced.
- You can then click the **Insert** button to add it to your document.
- A footnote citation for the quote will automatically be added.

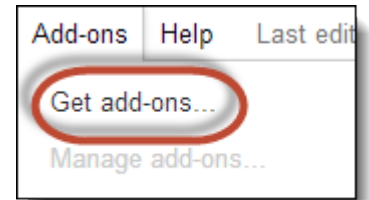


Bibliography tool

Although the research tool can be used to add footnotes to your document, the **EasyBib add-on** can be used to create a detailed bibliography page.

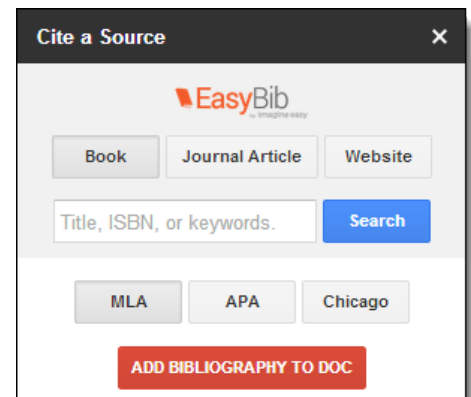
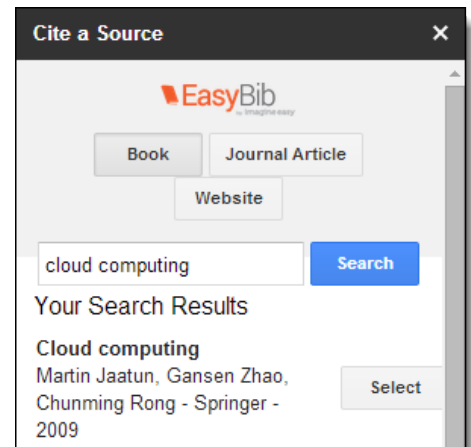
First you need to **install the EasyBib add-on** if you have not already done so. This is a one-time procedure.

1. Click **Add-ons** in the Google Docs menu bar and then choose **Get add-ons** in the drop down menu.
2. This will open up a window with available add-ons for Google Docs.
3. Scroll down or search for the **EasyBib Bibliography Creator**.
4. Once you find it, click the **+Free button** to install it.
5. You will get a pop-up window asking for permission and you will need to click **Accept**.
6. The add-on will now be installed and available for use.



To use the EasyBib add-on:

1. Click **Add-ons** in the Google Docs menu bar and then click EasyBib Bibliography Creator and Manage Bibliography from the drop down menu.
2. This will open the EasyBib tool in a side panel.
3. You can choose to search for a **Book, Journal Article, or Website**.
4. You can type in **title, ISBN, website, or other keywords** in the **Search** box
5. When you click the **Search** button you will get a list of matching results.
6. When you find the result you wanted, click the **Select** button to add it to your bibliography list.
7. Repeat this process as needed to add more items to your list.
8. You can choose the format for the citations by clicking the buttons for **MLA, APA, and Chicago**.
9. When you are ready click **Add Bibliography to Doc** and a **Works Cited section** will be added to the end of your document.
10. As needed you can return to the EasyBib tool to add and remove sources, and to update the Works Cited section of your document.



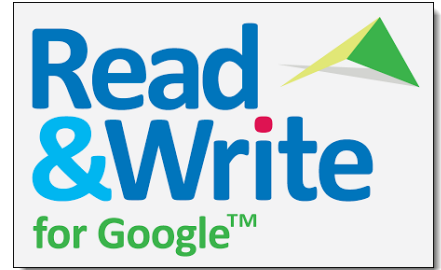
Read&Write for Google

Read&Write for Google is a powerful Chrome extension that adds lots of tools for use within a Google Document. One of the tools is a text to speech feature that will read aloud your Google Document. This can be very helpful for a student to hear what they have written to check for mistakes, clarity, and flow.

There is a paid version with all the tools and a free version with a subset of the tools. The text to speech tool we will be looking at is available in both the free and paid version.

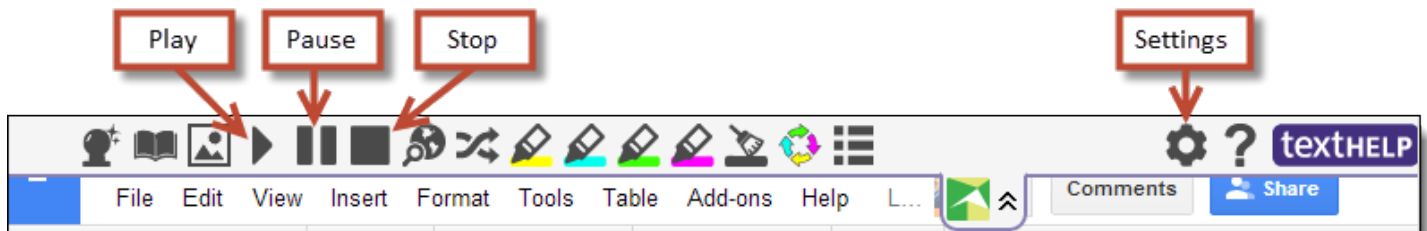
First you need to install the Read&Write for Google extension for Chrome if you have not already.

1. In Google Chrome, go to the **Chrome Web Store** at <https://chrome.google.com/webstore>
2. Next search for **Read&Write**.
3. Note: Alternately you can go directly to the Read&Write extension using this web address: <http://tiny.cc/readwrite-app>
4. When you find Read&Write for Google in the Extensions section, click the **+Free button** to install it.
5. Read&Write for Google will now be installed for your Chrome browser.



To use Read&Write for Google:

1. Open any Google Document and you will now see a **pull down tab** at the top of the screen.
2. Click on that pull down tab and the **Read&Write toolbar** will appear.
3. There are many features included with Read&Write for Google including word prediction, dictionary, highlighting, and more. The feature we will focus on is the text to speech tool.
4. To have your document read to you simply click the **Play button** in the Read&Write toolbar. You can likewise use the **Pause** and **Stop** buttons as needed.
5. If you only want certain text read, **select** the text first and then click the **Play** button.
6. If you want to change the **speed** or **accent** of the voice, click the **Settings** button on the right of the Read&Write toolbar.





Improving Writing with Google Docs

Student Collaboration

by Eric Curts

In this section we will look at Google Docs tools and features that a students can use with other students to improve the writing process.

Peer review with comments

One powerful way to improve the writing process is for students to get feedback on their writing from their peers. Google Docs makes it easy to accomplish peer review.

First, the student needs to **share their document** with other students, and only give them **Comment rights**.

1. Begin by clicking the blue **Share button** in the top right corner of the document.
2. This will open the **Sharing settings** window.
3. At the bottom in the **Invite people** box, add the email addresses of the students to share with.
4. In the drop down box to the right, be sure to choose **Can comment** for the permissions, rather than **Can edit** or just **Can view**.
5. Optionally add a message.
6. Finally click the **Send button** at the bottom.
7. The document will now be shared with the other students. It will show up in their **Shared with me folder** in Google Drive and they will receive an **email** with a link to the document.

Sharing settings

Link to share (only accessible by collaborators)

<https://docs.google.com/a/apps.sparcc.org/document/d/1UbwzC666NBrd5AQD7YG-\>

Who has access

Private - Only you can access [Change...](#)

Eric Curts (you) eric.curts@apps.sparcc.org Is owner

Invite people:

"Test User01" <testuser01@apps.sparcc.org> **Can comment**

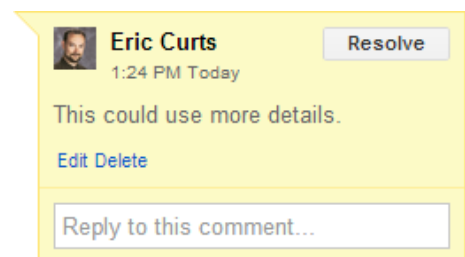
Notify people via email - [Discard message](#)

Here is my story for peer review. Thanks!

Send Cancel Send a copy to myself Paste the item itself into the email

Now that the document has been shared with the other students, they can open it, read it, and leave text comments as feedback.

1. To insert a comment, click in the document or select the words where you want the comment to be linked.
2. Next click **Insert** in the top menu bar, then click **Comment** (you can also press **Ctrl - Alt - M** on your keyboard if you prefer).



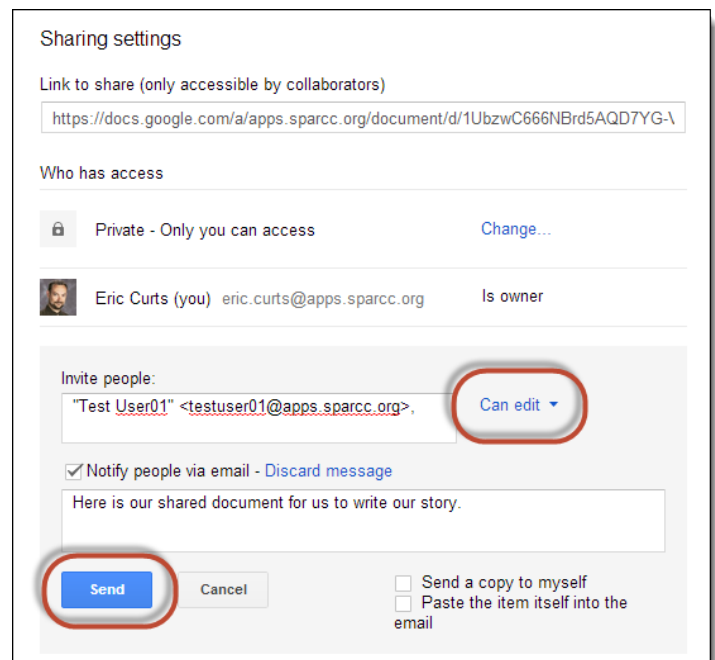
3. A comment box will appear to the right of the document, where you can type in your comment.
4. This comment will now be visible to others who share the document, although the comments will not display when the document is printed.
5. If desired the student can reply to any comment by typing in the box labeled **Reply to this comment...**
6. Finally you can click **Resolve** to close a particular comment.

Collaborative Writing

Beyond just adding comment for peer review, students can also work together collaboratively on a writing project. The process is similar to peer review except the document is shared with Edit rights rather than just Comment rights.

First, the student needs to **share their document** with other students, and give them **Edit rights**.

1. Begin by clicking the blue **Share button** in the top right corner of the document.
2. This will open the **Sharing settings** window.
3. At the bottom in the **Invite people** box, add the email addresses of the students to share with.
4. In the drop down box to the right, be sure to choose **Can edit** for the permissions, rather than **Can comment** or **Can view**.
5. Optionally add a message.
6. Finally click the **Send button** at the bottom.
7. The document will now be shared with the other students. It will show up in their **Shared with me folder** in Google Drive and they will receive an **email** with a link to the document.



Now that the document has been shared with the other students, they can all open it and collaboratively write in the document.



Improving Writing with Google Docs

Teacher Input

by Eric Curts

In this section we will look at Google Docs tools and features that a teacher can use to help improve the writing process for his or her students.

Feedback with text comments

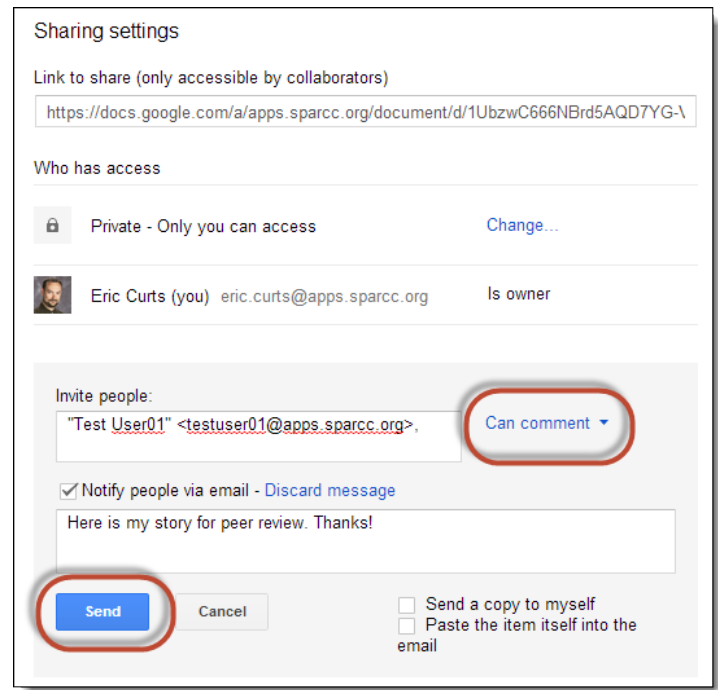
One powerful way to improve the writing process is for a teacher to provide feedback on student writing. There are several ways to do this with Google Docs. One option is through text comments.

First, the student needs to **share their document** with their teacher, and give their teacher **Comment rights** or **Edit rights**. This can be done in several ways. For frequent sharing it is best to have the student share a folder with the teacher and then simply drop documents into that shared folder. This keeps files much more organized for a teacher with many students and many shared documents. Full details on best practices for sharing can be found here:

- The Paperless Classroom with Google Docs
<http://www.appusergroup.org/presentations/paperless-classroom>

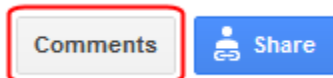
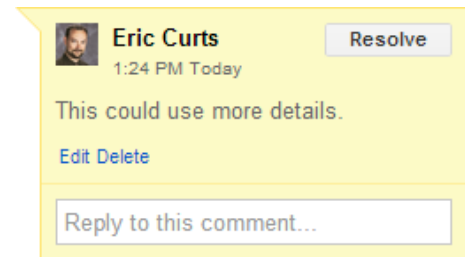
However, if needed the student can simply share the document through the blue Share button:

1. The student should begin by clicking the blue **Share button** in the top right corner of the document.
2. This will open the **Sharing settings** window.
3. At the bottom in the **Invite people** box, the student should add the teacher's email address.
4. In the drop down box to the right, choose either **Can comment** or **Can Edit** for the permissions.
5. Optionally add a message.
6. Finally click the **Send button** at the bottom.
7. The document will now be shared with the teacher. It will show up in their **Shared with me folder** in Google Drive and they will receive an **email** with a link to the document.



Now that the document has been shared, the teacher can open it, read it, and leave text comments as feedback. This provides a digital, asynchronous way for a student and their teacher to discuss the writing assignment, offer suggestion, give feedback, and track what has been said.

1. To insert a comment, click in the document or select the words where you want the comment to be linked.
2. Next click **Insert** in the top menu bar, then click **Comment** (*you can also press Ctrl - Alt - M on your keyboard if you prefer*).
3. A comment box will appear to the right of the document, where you can type in your comment.
4. This comment will now be visible to others who share the document, although the comments will not display when the document is printed.
5. If desired the student can reply to any comment by typing in the box labeled **Reply to this comment...**
6. Note: You can also leave general comments that are not tied to a specific part of the document by clicking the **Comments** button in the top right corner of the document or presentation.



Feedback with voice comments

Beyond just text comments, teachers can also record themselves to add voice comments to a student's document. This is a powerful and easy way to provide personal feedback to a student on all parts of their writing.

To do this you will use a tool called Kaizena. Kaizena is a free third-party app that allows you to highlight text, then record and attach voice comments to any shared Google Doc.

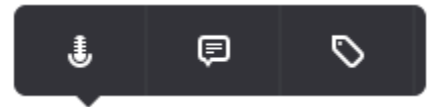
You can access Kaizena in three ways:

- Go directly to the Kaizena **website** at <https://kaizena.com>
- Install the Kaizena **Chrome Web App** - [link](#)
- Install the Kaizena **add-on** for Google Documents



To use Kaizena do the following:

1. Go to the Kaizena website and then open a shared document from your docs list, or open the shared document first and then launch the Kaizena add-on from the **Add-ons** menu.
2. On the left side of the screen you will see the users who have access to the document. **Click on the user** you wish to share the comments with (such as the student who shared the document with you).
3. Next **highlight any text** in the document you wish to leave a comment for.
4. You will get a pop-up menu with three options:
 - a. **Voice comment** - Click to record a voice comment. You may need to grant Flash permission to your microphone.
 - b. **Text comment** - Click to type in a text comment.
 - c. **Resource** - Click to add a helpful web link.
5. Repeat as needed for other text in the document.
6. When you are done adding comments, click the **Send Feedback** button on the left side of the screen.
7. You can choose to alert the user of your comments in two ways:
 - a. **Share via Comment** - Click this to add a traditional comment to the Google Doc which will contain a hyperlink for the user to click to open the doc in Kaizena and access the comments.
 - b. **Send Email** - Or click this to send the user an email with a hyperlink for the user to click to open the doc in Kaizena and access the comments.



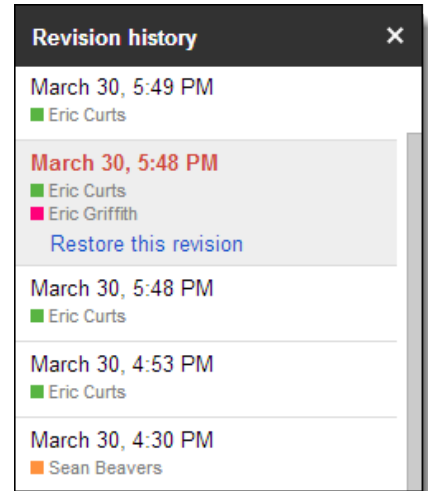
Note: As a user makes changes to the shared document, you can access the different versions of the document and leave comments specific to any particular version. Simply click **Versions** in the top right corner of the doc when opened in Kaizena to see the different versions.

Document revisions

Another teacher tool to improve the writing process is **Revision History**. Google Documents keeps a record of every change made to a document over time, along with who made the change. This allows a teacher to be able to view earlier versions of a student's writing document to see what changes the student has made and how they have implemented your text or voice feedback. This can provide a teacher with more feedback for the student on how to continue improving their writing.

To access the Revision History for a Google Document:

1. Click **File** and then **See revision history**.
2. This will open a **side bar** on the right side of the screen where a **history of changes** will be listed by user.
3. If you click on any **time stamp** on the right, the document will **show what changes** were made, highlighting the changes by color based on the user.
4. If you want to go back to an earlier version of the document, click **Restore this revision** on the time stamp for the version you want.
5. If you need to see smaller, more detailed changes, you can click the button at the bottom that says **Show more detailed revisions**.
6. To exit the revision history mode, just click the **X** next to **Document history** at the top of the side bar.





Improving Writing with Google Docs Sharing Student Writing

by Eric Curts

In this section we will look at Google Docs tools and features that allow for a student's writings to be shared for viewing by a larger audience.

Many times a teacher may be the only person to read a student's writing. The student writes it, the teacher grades it, and then that's the end. However, a student's motivation to write more, write better, and revise their work can be greatly influenced by the audience that will be reading their work.

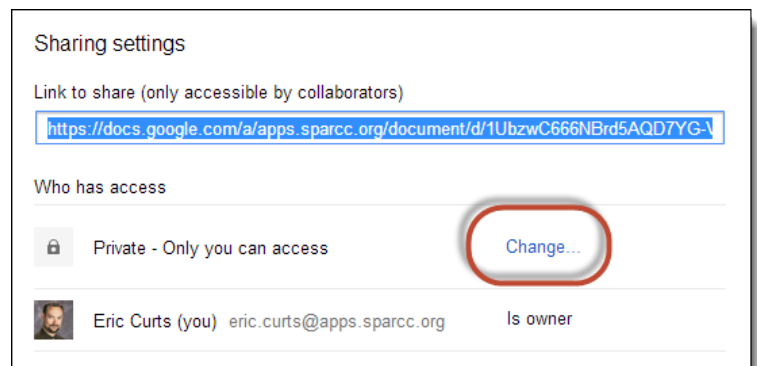
With Google Documents and the power of the Internet, student's can write for a much larger audience that includes their peers, their community, and even the world.

Public Access with View Rights

One simple way to expand the audience for a student's writing is to change the visibility settings on the document to make it viewable by their school or the entire world.

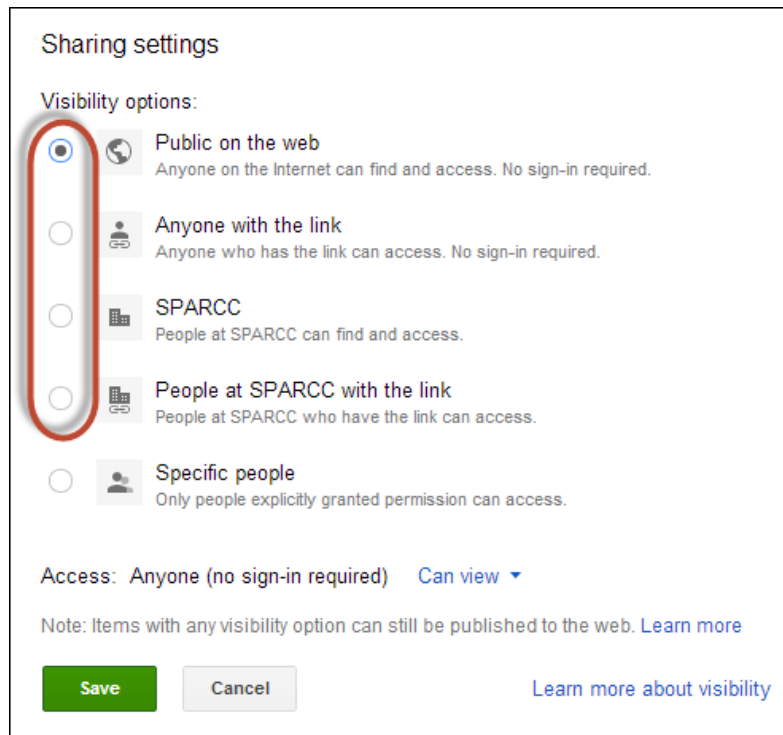
To change the visibility settings for a document, the student needs to do the following:

- First click the blue **Share button** in the top right corner of the document.
- This will open the **Sharing settings** window.
- At the top you will see **Private** - Only you (or the people listed below) can access.
- Click the **Change...** link next to that line.
- A new window will open up where you can change the privacy settings.

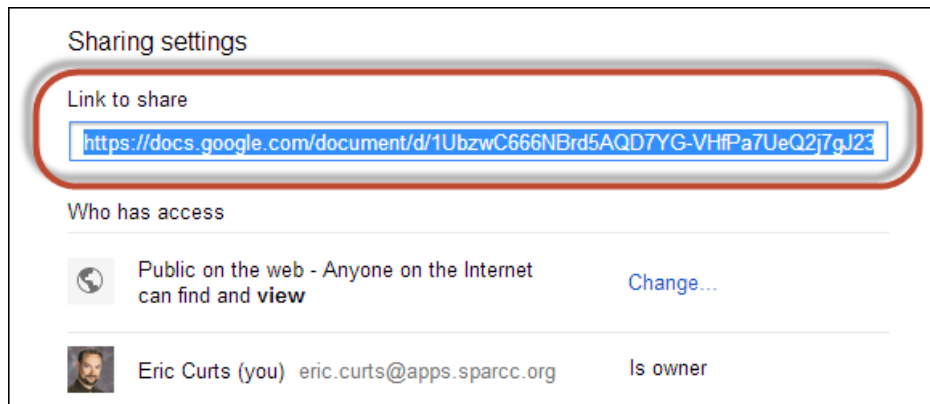


- You can now change the privacy to one of four new sharing settings:
 - **Public on the web** - Anyone can find and view the document.
 - **Anyone with the link** - You will get a web link for the document to share with others (through email or posting online). Anyone who has that link can click it and view your presentation.
 - **[your school domain]** - Anyone logged in with their school Google account can find and view the document.
 - **People at [your school domain] with the link** - Only people with the link who also are logged into their school Google account can view the document.

- Click Save when done.



You will now return to the **Sharing settings** window but now you will have a **link for the document** that can be shared with others.



Since the link for the document will be very long and confusing, you will need to consider how to make it available to others so people can easily find and read the student's writing. Options might include:

- Include the link in an email sent out from the school.
- Post the link on a school website, blog, forum, or other online source.
- Turn the link into a QR Code, and then include the QR Code in other media. (A good QR Code generator can be found at: <http://qrcode.kaywa.com>)
- Use a URL shortener to make the link smaller such as: <http://tiny.cc> or <https://bitly.com> or <http://tinyurl.com> or <http://goo.gl>

Publishing to the Google Play Bookstore

To really expand the audience, student writing can be published in the **Google Play Bookstore** for worldwide access. This could include a compilation of student essays or short stories or poetry. Or the entire class could work on writing a themed book. The Google Play Bookstore allows ebooks to be sold for free, making it very easy for the widest possible audience to have access to the students' writings.

Note: You must 18 years or older to publish to the Google Play Bookstore, so this is something a teacher or the school in general will need to sign up for on behalf of the students.



The basics steps for publishing to the Google Play Bookstore are:

1. Go to the **Google Play Books Partner Center** at <http://play.google.com/books/publish/>
2. **Create an account** - This will use an existing Google account, either a teacher's account or an account for the school.
3. **Agree to the terms** - This will be the standard terms and conditions.
4. **Add a payment profile** - This will include basic contact information.
5. **Add sales territories** - This determines where the ebooks can be sold. You can enter "**WORLD**" for all countries.
6. **Add a book** - Provide bibliographic information for the ebook.
7. **Set prices** - You can enter "**0**" to make the ebook free.
8. **Configure distribution and preview settings**
9. **Upload the book** - You can use **PDF** and/or **ePub** format.
10. **Enable the book for sale**

For much more details, see Google's help sites:

- <https://support.google.com/books/partner/?hl=en#topic=3424344>
- <https://support.google.com/books/partner/checklist/4489282>

The Google Play Bookstore allows for files to be in either PDF or ePub format. You can convert a Google Document in both of those formats as follows.

PDF - To convert a Google Document into a PDF:

1. Click **File** in the top menu bar.
2. Choose **Download as..** and then **PDF document**.

ePub - To convert a Google Document into the ePub format:

1. Sign up for an account at **Liberio** at <http://liber.io>
2. Once you have an account, it will connect to your Google Drive.
3. Add a Google Document from your Google Drive.
4. Tweak some optional settings as desired.
5. Click the **Create** button and Liberio will generate an ePub version of your Google Document.

