bit.ly/nmcomic

Get your Comic on!

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How and why should I have students create comics?
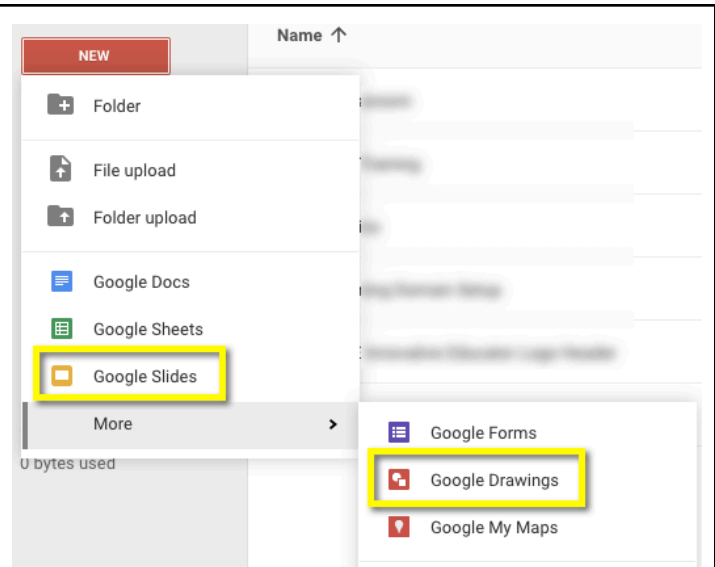
Session slides

Access Google Slides or Drawings

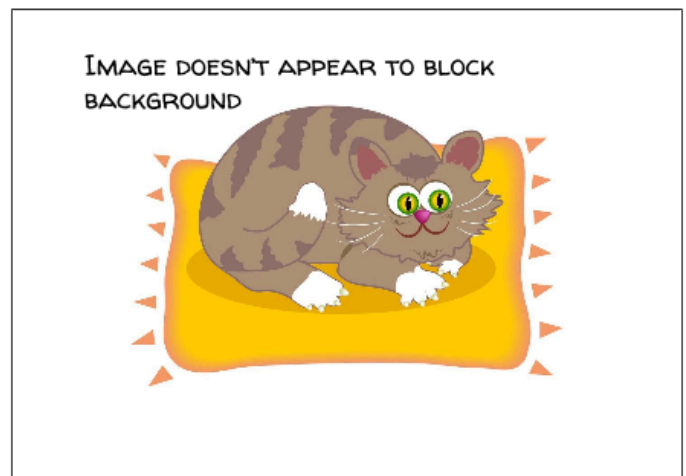From Google Drive:
New > Google Slides
OR
New > Scroll down to More > Google Drawings
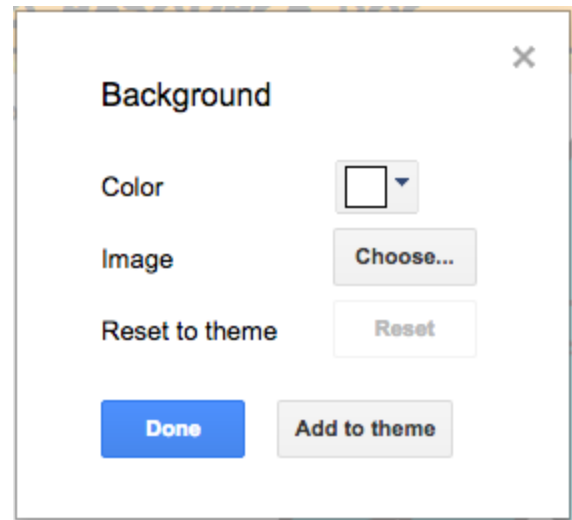

Choosing a background

If you are using images that do not have a transparent background, you should use a white background so the image doesn't block the canvas..
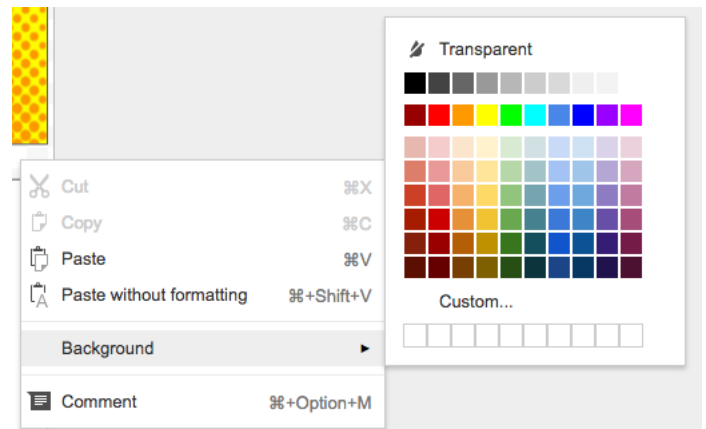
Customize your background: Slides

Google Slides allows you to change the color of your background or use an image as the slide background.

Background: Click on Slide > Change background OR click the Background link in the toolbar.

Customize your background: Drawings

Right-click (control-click on a Mac) to change the color of your background. Google Drawings does not support using an image as a background, but you can accomplish the same thing by adding an image to your canvas and sending it to the back (see below).
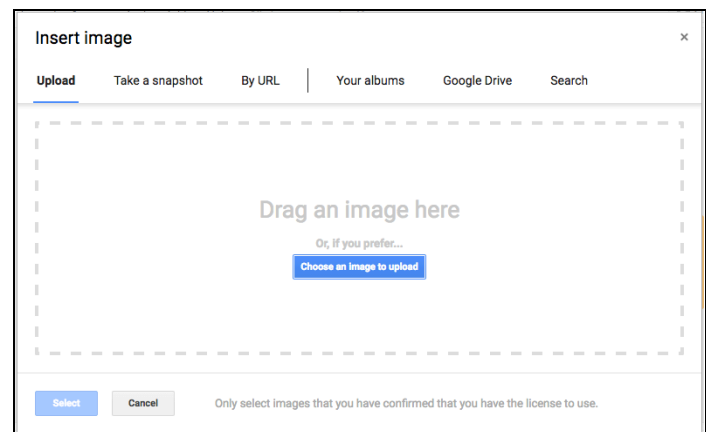
Insert images

Your characters and objects will be images unless you choose to draw them yourself. You can also use an image for your background.

Click on the Image icon OR Insert > Image OR Tools > Research > Images

Image options:
- Upload from computer
- Take a snapshot
- By URL
- Google Drive
- Search (searches Creative Commons licensed images; citation may be needed)
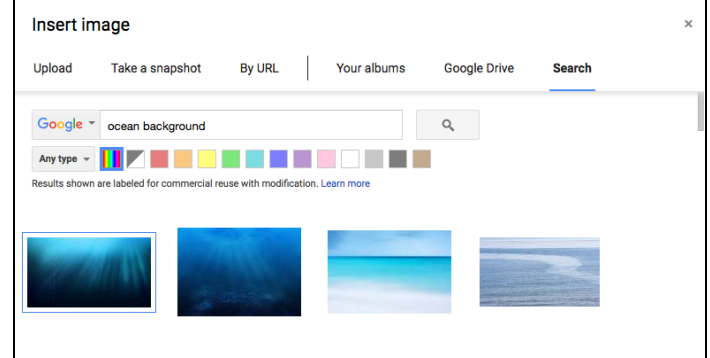
Finding/creating images

For backgrounds:
- Search for what you want and add the word *background* or *wallpaper* (ex. "ocean background")
- Draw your own using simple shapes and a few meaningful images (ex. cactus for a desert scene)

For characters and objects:
- Draw your own using shapes.
- Use pictures of Lego characters, stuffed animals, or other items acting out your story.
- Draw, color, and cut out puppets and props. Use pictures of them.
- Use pictures of yourself or your friends (especially fun if you use a tool like Webcam Toy or Photo Booth to create a comic book look)
- If adding characters or objects to a scene, images with transparent backgrounds are preferable. Look for images in the PNG format (resources below).

Character created with shapes in Google Drawing

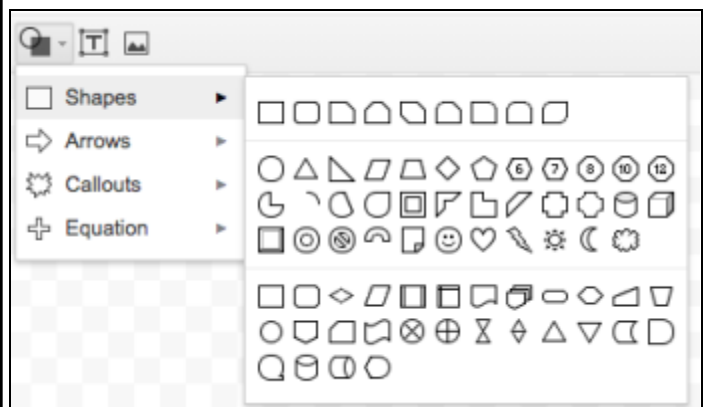# Insert Speech bubbles and other shapes

Click on the Shapes icon OR Insert > Shapes

Options:
- Shapes
- Arrows
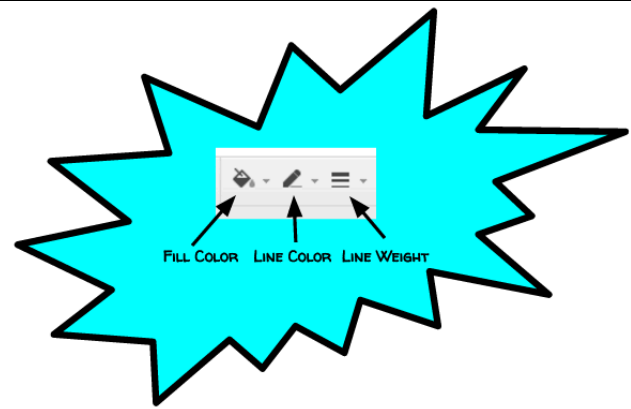- Callouts (explosions and speech bubbles)
- Equations

Double click on a shape to add text.

Use the fill and line options in and the top menu to make your shapes stand out and look more "comic-like."

Click on any shape to see its handles. Square handles resize, round handles rotate, and yellow handles reshape. Use the shift key to maintain proportions or rotate at 15° increments

Kick a solid color background up a notch by adding a shape on top of it.

FILL COLOR LINE COLOR LINE WEIGHT

OVAL ADDED; THE PART THAT EXTENDS BEYOND THE BORDER WILL NOT SHOW UP WHEN DOWNLOADED OR PRESENTED

INSERT TEXT
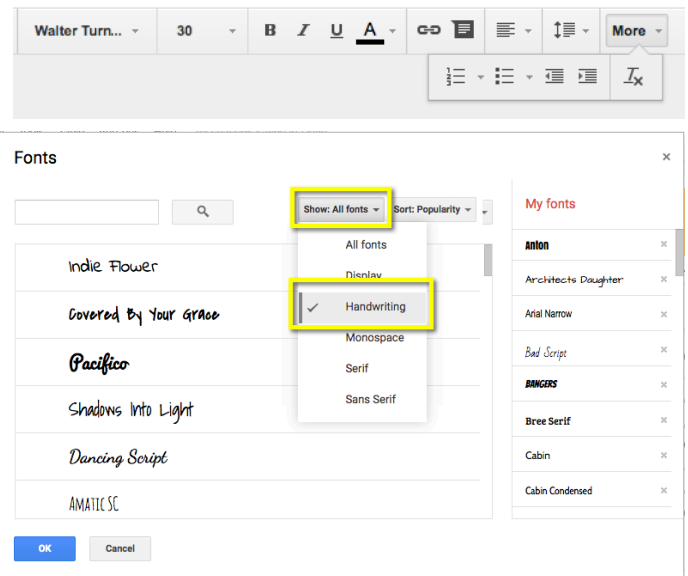
Most of the text you will add will be inside a speech bubble or another shape, but you can also use a text box or freeform text.

Click on the Text icon OR Insert > Text box. The same fill and line options are available for text boxes as for shapes.

Options available for all text:
- Font choice
- Font size
- Bold, Italics, Underline, Font color/highlight
- Link, Insert comment
- Alignment, Spacing, Indent, Lists

Recommendation: Use "handwritten" fonts in your comic. If they are not installed, click the name of the current font, scroll to the bottom, and select *More fonts*. Sort by "Handwriting." Click the fonts you want to select them, then click OK.

Walter Turn... 30 B I U A More

Fonts

Indie Flower

Covered By Your Grace

Pacifico

Shadows Into Light

Dancing Script

AMATIC SC

Show: All fonts   Sort: Popularity

All fonts
Display
Handwriting
Monospace
Serif
Sans Serif

My fonts

Anton
Architects Daughter
Arial Narrow
Bad Script
BANGERS
Bree Serif
Cabin
Cabin Condensed

OK   Cancel

Word Art

Word art is outlined text that can be manipulated like an image.

Click on Insert > Word art. Type your text, then select the font, color, and outline color and thickness. Size is adjusted using the item handles.
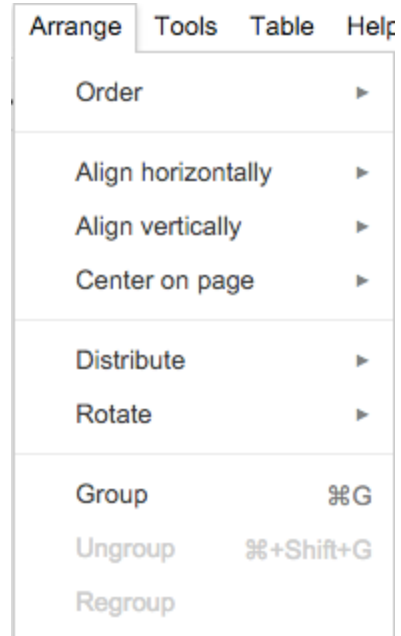
Arrange menu

Click on item(s), then go to Arrange.

Options:
- Order to move in front of or behind other objects
- Align multiple items horizontally or vertically.
- Center object(s) on page
- Distribute spaces objects equally
- Rotate or flip objects
- Group multiple objects to treat as one
- Ungroup to take the group apart
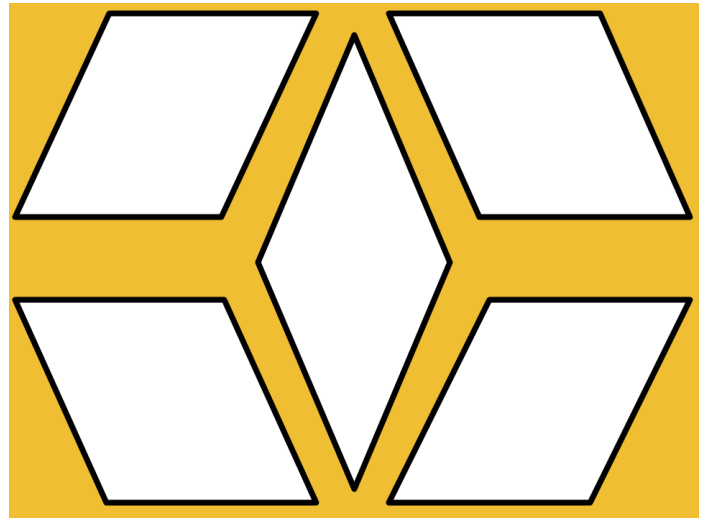
Create frames

Use the shape menu and a wide line. Use different shapes for a more interesting look.
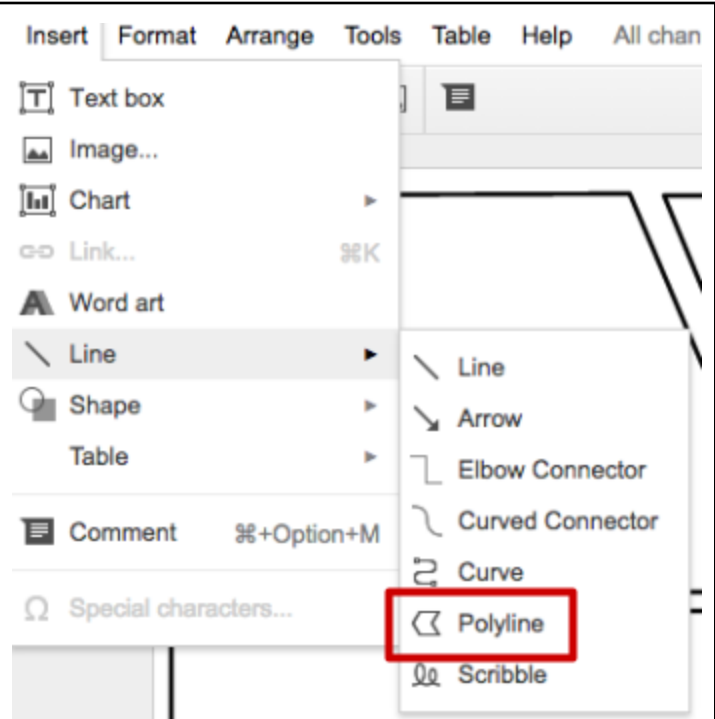
If you can't get the look you want using the provided shapes, create your own using the polyline tool.

Insert > Line > Polyline

The polyline tool allows you to create polygons of any shape and with any number of sides.

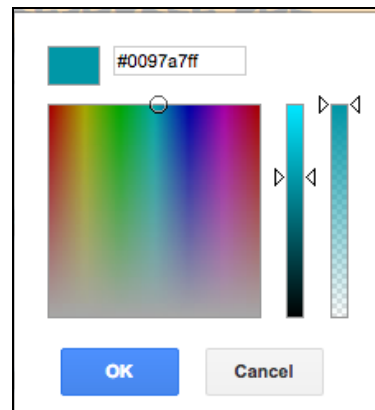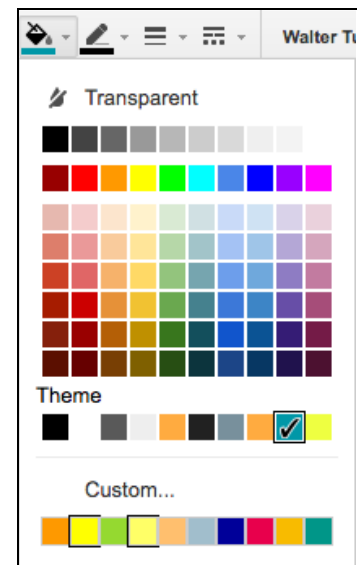You can also just insert a rectangle and draw wide colored lines across it.

Color and Transparency

Double click on a shape and choose the Fill Color OR Line Color.

Pick a color from those displayed OR click on Custom and pick a color of your choosing.

Adjust the vertical sliders to change the color value and transparency.

Custom colors you have already used in your slide or drawing appear at the bottom of the menu.
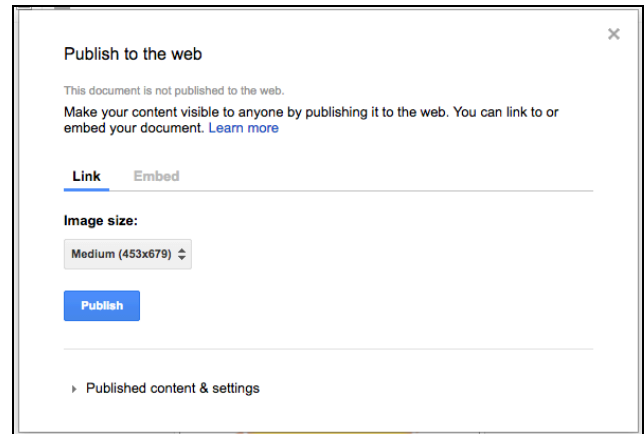
Download/share options

File > Download as:

- Powerpoint (Slides only)
- PDF
- Plain text (Slides only)
- svg
- png (transparent background)
- jpg

File > Publish to the Web

- Publish to the web to get a URL or embed code
- Anyone can view
- Choose the image size (Drawings) or auto-advance (Slides)
- New changes reflected

Share to specific people

- Blue share button
  - Share with specific people or
  - Use *Get shareable link* option to share with groups (default is anyone in your domain)

More resources

Other good web-based comic creators

- [ToonDoo](): Requires account to create comics. Terms of service prohibit use by students under 13.
- [Comicshead](): Requires account to create comics. Can sign in with Google Apps.
- [Pixton]() Requires account to create comics. Parental consent needed for students under 13 to create a personal account. Teachers can use Pixton for Schools, but it is a paid platform.
- [Marvel.com]() allows login and saving. Parental consent needed before children under 13 can create an account.

Comic apps for the iPad

- Apps to create comics on an iPad by Richard Byrne
- Free iPad apps to create comics (most have no drawing tools):
  - Seedling Comic Studio (most flexible, has cutout tool, stickers, no ads, no log in; no drawing tools)
  - Make Beliefs Comix (add characters, backgrounds, speech bubbles; can't save drafts)
  - Comic Maker HD (has ads but don't seem to appear during comic creation;; easy to close)
  - Phobble iPad app Android app (add text bubbles only, can't save drafts)
  - Pixton Comic Maker (app is rated 12+, requires account at Pixton.com; see notes above)

More info on how to create and use comics with students

- Making comics with Bitmojis and Google Slides by Sylvia Duckworth (includes directions and some templates)
- Comics templates by Sylvia Duckworth
- Creating comics with slides by Eric Curts
- Lesson plans for using comics by Laura Chaffey
- Nancy's cheat sheet for creating comics in Google Drawing:
- Strategies for using comics in the classroom by S. Hendy
- How to make people using shapes in Google Drawing by Nancy
- Creative comics using Google tools by Mike Petty
- Rock cycle comic strip lesson plan by Andrea Aeschlimann

Copyright-friendly PNG Image sources

- openclipart
- wpclipart
- clker.com
- Pixabay (may contain images inappropriate for younger students)

Google Drawing/Slides Templates

- Basic 6 panel comic by Devin Dignam
- Biography Comic Template By Amber Houslet
- Comic Book Template for Middle School, 5-Page By Jack Ganse
- Nancy's shared folder (To use any of the templates, you will need to open the folder in Drive, then make a copy of the one you want to use)

Avatar Makers

- Avatar Makers Symbaloo webmix