

How to spice up your Google Site

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Here you can find my [Basic Sites Tutorial](#) to give you a basic overview of Google sites and how to create them. Please read this in conjunction with below :)

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Purpose

Before you start setting up your site, ask yourself: **What is the purpose of my site?** This will determine to a certain degree what your site will look like, e.g.

- My site will be displayed on the projector and will show my students what we are doing for the day, e.g. for young students - this site might have more images and less words, and few pages.
- My site will have collections of links that my students will sometimes use to get to learning sites, e.g. for blended classes - images are still important, but the site might include several pages.
- My students are older and more independent, and my site will be the platform for their learning which they will navigate independently - depending on age and reading levels, there could be more text. The site will probably require several pages with subpages.

What works...

...depends on you and your students. Here are a few tips other have found useful:

- To show a timetable (e.g. overview over the whole week, or rotations in different subject areas), embed a [Google Presentation](#): Your slide 1 is the timetable for week 1, slide 2 is week 2 etc. Why? You have all your weeks in a one document. You can easily duplicate a slide and make changes. You can merge cells, fill them with different colours etc. (which you can't do in a Google Doc).
- When creating links to subpages for your Reading / Writing / Maths groups, link out of their group name as well as the image (catering for different needs).
- If the members of a group stay the same all / most of the year, you could type into an image you have created. If they change regularly, name the group members in a table row below the image.
- When you create a new page you get the option to open it in the same or a new tab. Think about the needs of your learners - are they better at dealing with one tab or with multiple tabs? How will they find their way back to your Site if they close the tab by accident?
- To get to the pages within your site, younger children often find it easier to have tabs or boxes at the top rather than in the sidebar.

Page Templates

You can select from preset templates or you can create your own.

- **Webpage** is the most versatile template
- **Announcements** is a bit like a blog, you put up posts, and the newest one will always be on top. You can also insert your announcements to be displayed on a different page, e.g. your first page.
- Use **File Cabinet** is when you want to make a collection of files from your computer or Google Drive or of links available to your students for downloading etc.
- A **List** can be useful for all sorts of things, a collection of links, topics throughout the term etc:

Week	WALT	Topic	Links	Extras
Term 4 Week 8	To produce a piece of writing that demonstrates the aspects that make effective paragraphs.	Personal choice - Account an experience, narrate a story, Report or inform on a topic.	Click Writing Template - Make a copy and file in your Writing collection	Show Student Resources
Term 4 Week 7	Account our experiences.	Camp Devon and Ambury Farm	Writing Brief	
Term 4 Week 5	write effective paragraphs.	Free Blog Writing		
Term 4 Week 3	write a narrative using the paragraph rubric and punctuation guide.	Farming K2	Writing Prompt... make a copy and file in writing	
Term 4 Week 2	write a narrative using our punctuation progressions.	Farming	Prompt - Make a Copy	
Term 3 Week 8	Investigate and report on the origins of the Fairytales, Fables, Myths and Legends we have been learning about.	Investigating Fairytales, Fables, Myths and Legends	Your Brief	
Term 3 Week 7	plan for a piece of writing and create an introductory paragraph.	Narrative - Retelling of a Myth	Planning Doc... Make a copy and file in your Writing Collection	
Term 3 Week 5	Follow a recipe.	Baking	Group Notes	
Term 3 Week 5	Purchase our writing using the writing progression.		My Punctuation List	
Term 3 Week 4 & 5	edit writing for correct punctuation.	Fairytales - The Boy Who Cried Wolf	Punctuation Work - Editing Writing	
Term 3 Week 4	restate the moral of a fable to our own life.	Fables and Fairytales	The Moral of the Story	Sentence Work
Term 3 Week 3	write the moral of a fable to our own life.	Fables, Fairytales, Myths and Legends	A Bit of Fables, Myths and Legends	Sentence Work
Term 3 Week 2	restate the moral of a fable to our own life.	Fables and Fairytales	The Moral of the Story	Sentence Work
Term 3 Week 2	add detail to sentences.	The Lion and the Mouse.	Sentence work template	
Term 3 Week 2	plan for our writing to help us have clear ideas and a path to follow.	re-telling of a Fable/Fairy tale in your own words.		Sentence Organizer
Term 3 Week 1-4		Fables Website link	Link to Fables website	

You might find it useful to have the different pages of your site follow the same outline, e.g. Reading, Writing, Maths might all have images for the different groups on the top level page, our students click on their group and get taken to the subpage with their tasks. For this you create and use your *own template*.

1. **Create a page.**
2. **Insert a table** (no. of columns = your number of groups)
3. **Insert an image** into each column; you can use an image from the Internet (check you have permission to use this), an image from your computer or you can draw an image.
4. Edit the page to a basic level - as this will become a template, you want it rather generic.
5. **Save**
6. Now click on **More**; about half-way down you find **Save as Page Template**.
7. Give your template a **name**, e.g. Rotations, **save**.
8. Next time you want to use this template, just select this name from the drop-down menu instead of Webpage etc.
9. To apply this template to an existing page, go to that page and select **More**.
10. Go to **Change Page Template**. Select your template, and click on **Apply default content from template**. **Change** and you are done!

Page Layout

Younger children do better with fewer words. It is generally better to try to keep most information on one screen without the need for too much scrolling.

Page Layout

Your page can easily get cluttered. Under **Layout** in the menu you find a selection of layout options, e.g. one, two or three columns, with and without footers, headers or sidebars.

Inserting Tables

Tables can help keep your page tidy. To insert a table, just select **Table** from the menu, select how many rows and columns and just edit as you would with other tables. Note: No merging of cells.

Inserting Google Docs / Spreadsheets / Presentations

You might want your students to see or work on a Google Doc, a Spreadsheet, a Presentation etc. For this just select Insert, then Google Drive, and from there the relevant file type.

Inserting Images

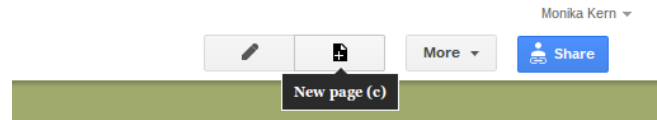
1. Ensure you have the right to use your chosen images!
2. If you want to create a simple shape to insert, you could try the following:
 - a. Go to your Google Drive. Click on Create and select Drawing.
 - b. From the tools available, select and draw your chosen shape. You could also create Word Art (under Insert).
 - c. Edit as desired, colour shape etc.
 - d. If you would like to write into your shape, double click into the shape. Select the font, size etc., then click into your shape and start typing.
 - e. Don't forget to give your drawing a suitable name. You will find it in your Google Drive.
 - f. Note: If you are drawing several shapes, put them in separate documents and try to keep them approximately the same size.
3. On your page click the **pen symbol** to edit, then click on **Insert** and select **Image**.
4. In the new window, **select your image**, **upload** it and then **select it to be inserted** into your page.
5. Your image can be **edited**: Click on the image and you can select the size, if you want it centred or aligned to either side, and if you click on the X you delete it.
6. Always remember to click **Save** when you are finished.



Site Layout

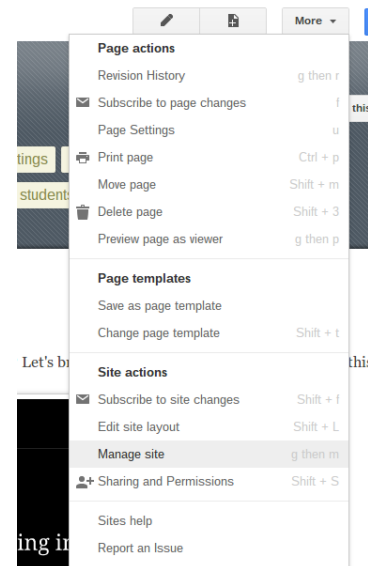
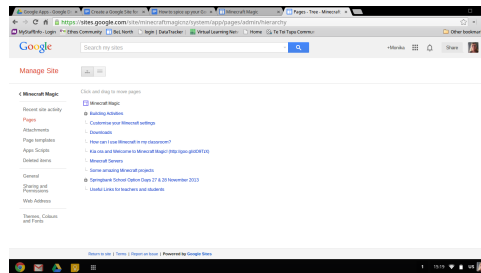
Structure

Different people work differently. You might find it useful to set up the skeleton of your pages up first and then spice the pages up - you can always make changes to this later. Add any pages you think you need via the 'Add Page button, and don't worry about where they are located.



Once you have got most / all your pages, here you can sort them in the desired order.

1. Click on **More**, then select **Manage Site**.
2. Select **Pages**. Here you can move pages to sit wherever you want them - just click and drag.
3. You might find you have a page you don't need anymore. Open the page, Under **More** you select **Delete Page**, and on the next window you confirm this choice.



Site Layout

★ Themes

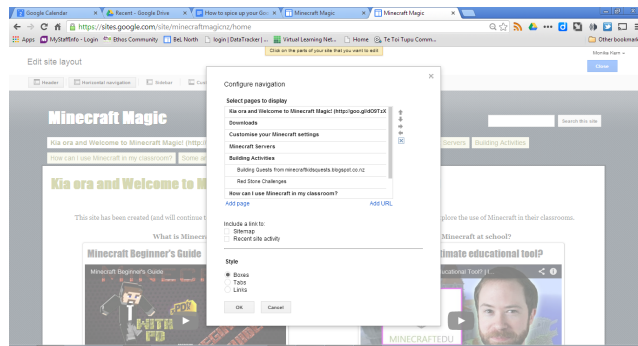
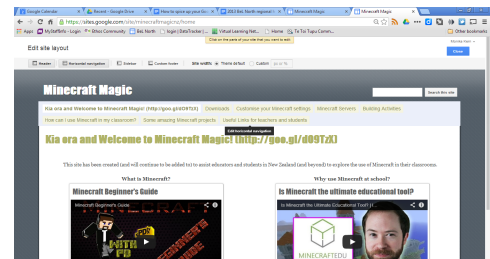
Think about the audience for your site: What will appeal to them? Under **More, Manage Site, Themes, Colours and Fonts** are a wide range of Themes and Customisations you can use. Consider adding your own Site Header - an image you or your students have created. For this, select **Side Header**, click on the **Picture icon** (far right) for **Image**. Select your image and upload.

★ Layout

To edit sidebar, header and footer of your site, go to **More**, the **Edit Site Layout**. By clicking on **Header**, **Horizontal Navigation**, **Sidebar**, **Custom Footer** you can enable or disable them.

To further edit these individual parts of your site, click on them within the site you see below the buttons.

E.g. clicking on the Horizontal Navigation Bar (at the top), opens a new window where you can select which pages you want to display in the boxes / tabs.



Use **Add Pages** to add tabs / boxes to your site. By using the $\updownarrow$ arrows to the right you can change the order in which your pages appear. By using the $\rightarrow\leftarrow$ arrows you can show a subpage nested under their higher level page - e.g. Maths might have sub-pages for Triangles, Squares and Circles. Note: In this case you will see a tab / box Maths, and when you hover over the box with the mouse, you see Triangles, Squares and Circles (simplified than it is, just try it out!).

Comments

By default your pages have a commenting option at the bottom. To change this go to more, then select Page Settings. Here you can enable or disable comments, showing of sub-pages etc.