Sep 16, 2025

Ask Me Anything session with Google Certified Experts (online)

Invited Kelly Hollis GEG Sydney Clare Willemse Chris Betcher GEG Sydney

Attachments Ask Me Anything session with Google Certified Experts (online)

Meeting records Transcript Recording

Summary

Chris Betcher, Clare Willemse, Kelly Hollis, Mr. Cameron, Ryan Noonan, Julian Ridden, Paul Meldrum, and Greg Miller attended the GEG Sydney group's second meeting. During the meeting, attendees discussed Google Workspace updates and new AI tools in education, including the integration of Gemini and Google Classroom AI features. The group also explored various collaborative tools like Google Sites, Google Vids, and Google Docs, as well as AI tools such as Gemini Storybook and Nano Banana for image generation.

Details

- **GEG Sydney Group Objectives** Clare Willemse welcomed attendees to the GEG Sydney group's second meeting, explaining that the group aims to learn and share knowledge about Google for Education tools, foster connections, and inspire new ideas (00:14:34). Chris Betcher encouraged participants to use the chat for questions and contributions, emphasizing an open, conversational format (00:16:28).
- **Acknowledgement of Country and Introductions** Clare Willemse led an Acknowledgement of Country, paying respect to the traditional owners of the lands and honoring Indigenous communities (00:16:28). Kelly Hollis introduced themself as a science product manager at Education Perfect, with 14 years of classroom experience and a Google community connection with Chris Betcher and Clare Willemse (00:17:24). Clare Willemse shared their role as a primary teacher and e-learning leader, focusing on digital learning and supporting teachers in embedding technology (00:18:14).
- **Google Certification Program** Chris Betcher discussed Google's certification program (Level 1 and Level 2 exams), which validates users' knowledge of Google

tools and opens doors to higher-level certifications like Google Certified Innovator and Trainer (00:44:45). The exams are changing in September to reintroduce scenario-based questions, making them more authentic and application-focused (00:46:34). Clare Willemse expressed excitement to retake their Level 2 certification, which is required every three years to remain active in the community (00:47:33).

- **Google Sites for Collaborative Learning** Clare Willemse praised Google Sites as an effective collaborative tool for students to share learning beyond traditional slide decks. They described a project where students created digital learning portfolios, which were then showcased to parents during student-led conferences, allowing students to share their work with a wider audience (00:19:57). Chris Betcher and Ryan Noonan noted the utility of embedding JavaScript code from Gemini Canvas into Google Sites to run interactive apps and games (00:20:59).
- **Google Vids for Video Creation** Clare Willemse expressed excitement about Google Vids as a collaborative tool for video projects, noting its ease of use, modern stock images, and templates (00:22:45). They highlighted its integration with Google Classroom as an assignment feature, enabling teachers to create templates for student completion (00:23:40). Paul Meldrum pointed out that Google Vids has a shallow learning curve for those familiar with Google Slides, making it accessible even for younger students (00:25:38).
- **Collaborative Tools for Engagement** Clare Willemse shared various collaborative practices, including using Google Classroom for clubs and groups to share performance videos and song lyrics (00:27:15). They also described a photography lesson using Google Slides for a collaborative image gallery, and leveraging Google Drawings for art projects that foster digital skills like screenshotting and sharing (00:28:29). Chris Betcher suggested using Google Slides to create collaborative class magazines and Google Sheets for group data collection and analysis, emphasizing the visualization of data through charts (00:30:31).
- **Classroom AI Features for Teachers** Julian Ridden detailed the new Google Classroom AI features, which their schools are adopting even in Microsoft environments (00:32:22). They particularly praised the "adjust reading level" tool, which simplifies text for different grade levels while identifying changed words (00:34:06). Julian Ridden emphasized that these tools offer pre-built interfaces, simplifying AI use for educators who may not be comfortable with complex prompts (00:36:25).
- **Using Version History and AI Detection** Clare Willemse highlighted the importance of Google Doc's version history for tracking student work and identifying the use of AI tools, particularly with the "Bruce Teaching Inspect Writing" Chrome extension which replays document creation (00:39:13). Chris Betcher demonstrated Draftback, a Chrome extension that visualizes the revision history of a Google Doc, allowing teachers to spot large blocks of text appearing suddenly, which could indicate plagiarism or AI use (00:42:06).

- **Emerging AI Tools: Gemini Storybook and Notebook LM** Clare Willemse showcased Gemini's pre-made "Storybook" gem, which generates illustrated stories based on user prompts, complete with page-turning visuals and audio narration (00:48:23) (00:50:10). Chris Betcher noted the potential for this tool to combine with Google Read Along for personalized learning experiences (00:51:59). Chris Betcher also highly recommended Notebook LM, an AI tool that processes uploaded resources to provide insights, create mind maps, and generate audio overviews, reducing hallucinations by relying on a source of truth (00:54:37). Paul Meldrum and Clare Willemse discussed its potential as a study tool for high school students and a well-being resource for staff (00:57:45).
- **Notebook LM Features** Chris Betcher explained that the sharing function in Notebook LM is restricted to one's domain, allowing users to share either the full notebook or just the chat. They also highlighted the ability to define custom chatbots with specific contexts and share only the chat within a domain, ensuring the chatbot stays within defined guardrails. Paul Meldrum added that they used Notebook LM to transcribe audio from a video file, noting its effective transcription capabilities (00:58:49). Chris Betcher further described how Notebook LM cites source material with clickable numbers, allowing users to trace information back to its origin within the document (00:59:41).
- **Google Tasks and Google Docs Integration** Clare Willemse shared that Google Tasks is now linked with Google Calendar, allowing users to view all their tasks directly within the calendar interface. They also demonstrated how to assign tasks to individuals within a Google Doc by using "Shift + 2" to bring up a menu, which then saves the assignment as a task with the assignee's picture (01:00:41). Chris Betcher added that for schools using Google Workspace Plus, tasks assigned within a Google Doc checklist appear on the assignee's calendar and task list, and completing the task in either location automatically updates it in the Google Doc (01:02:30).
- **Smart Chips and Connectors in Google Workspace** Paul Meldrum emphasized the importance of smart chips and shortcuts, like the "@" shortcut, as powerful connectors between various Google products such as Sites and Sheets. They noted that these connectors facilitate quick and efficient linking between different tools, enhancing productivity. Clare Willemse and Chris Betcher agreed, highlighting the amazing capabilities of these integrated features (01:03:26).
- **Nano Banana in Gemini for Image Generation and Editing** Chris Betcher explained that Gemini is a multimodal generative AI tool, capable of processing and generating text, images, and videos. They noted that Gemini's image generation, powered by "diffusion modeling," has significantly improved and is particularly adept at creating imaginative images from prompts (01:04:14). Chris Betcher demonstrated that Nano Banana, the latest iteration of Gemini's image generation model, excels at editing existing images, transforming a photo of a person with a deer into a scene with a cheetah in the African savannah through a series of iterative edits (01:05:12).

- **Educational Applications of Nano Banana and AI Studio** Julian Ridden showcased a "World War I poster generator" app built using Google AI Studio and Nano Banana, which allows students to upload their photos and integrate themselves into historical propaganda posters, fostering a personal connection to the subject matter (01:08:41). They highlighted that images generated via an API call in Nano Banana do not display the AI-generated star, providing a seamless experience (01:09:26). Julian Ridden also emphasized the importance of developing guardrails for AI tools to prevent inappropriate content generation, sharing examples where their staff intentionally tried to "break" the system to identify vulnerabilities (01:11:32). Chris Betcher mentioned building a similar tool in AI Studio that places objects into various advertising contexts like billboards or bus stops (01:13:19).
- **Automating Tasks with Gemini's Code Generation** Chris Betcher shared how Gemini can generate App Script code to automate tasks, such as creating a set of Google Slides where each slide is topped with a name from a Google Sheet. They noted that Gemini can even debug its own code, demonstrating its utility in streamlining complex processes. Paul Meldrum briefly inquired if Chris Betcher had explored Opal, a beta workflow tool in Google AI for managing multiple AI tools, indicating ongoing developments in AI integration (01:15:09).
- **Upcoming GEG Sydney Events and Community Engagement** Chris Betcher announced upcoming events for GEG Sydney, including a deep dive into AI with Gemini on October 23rd featuring Julian and Ryan, and an end-of-year wrap-up in December (01:16:02). Clare Willemse expressed interest in hosting a "back to school" event in January in person at Google's Sydney office (01:16:59). Chris Betcher also shared that they are starting a GEG Canberra group and invited attendees to follow GEG Sydney on their website and social media platforms for updates and resources (01:18:00).

Suggested next steps

No suggested next steps were found for this meeting.

You should review Gemini's notes to make sure they're accurate. Get tips and learn how Gemini takes notes

Please provide feedback about using Gemini to take notes in a short survey.

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Clare Willemse: All right. Well, welcome everyone to our um GEG Sydney group. This is our second meeting um since we've nearly reformed recently. And our topic today, we're going to have an ask me anything segment where we've put together some um topics that have come up from discussion or through our Google form that we're going to share some of our insights. But we're very open to having people in the call jump in and share your wisdom, too.
Chris Betcher: I I like how when we called it ask me anything, it was meant to be like uh open and inclusive, but it just sounds arrogant. We don't know everything. That's for sure. Back to you.
Clare Willemse: All right. We go to the next slide. All right.

00:15:37

Clare Willemse: So, yeah, a big part of um our GG Sydney group is that we are here because we want to learn and up learn all the up-to-date Google for education tools. We'd love to share, which is what today is all about. Sharing our ideas and strategies with each other, making new connections with people we may not have um met before, and inspiring each other, finding new ideas and possibilities.
Chris Betcher: Yep. And we've got a website with all the stuff on it and you can scan it with that code or just go ggscdney.com.
Clare Willemse: Very exciting.
Chris Betcher: All right. This is what we're going to do, right?
Clare Willemse: Yeah. So, we're going to start with our acknowledgement of country and then we'll have our ask me anything section. Then we've got we'll open it up to the um everybody else. So, anyone who might have a question um anyone like to share what's been working for you? That was a really great one last time. And um little wrap-up and what our next event's going to be.

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Chris Betcher: All right. And can I encourage everybody to use the chat? There is a Q&A feature in here, but I think there's we're a small enough group today that we can just use

the chat. So, if you if you have questions or things as we go through, just chuck them in the chat. If you want to talk, like I said, this is much better as a conversation than than us talking at you. So, um, you know, if you want to talk, put your hand up or just wave at us and we'll open the mic up and feel free to contribute. That'd be great. Uh clear.
Clare Willemse: All right. Acknowledgement of country.
Chris Betcher: Oh.
Clare Willemse: GG Sydney acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional owners of the lands upon which we meet. We honor their connection to land, sea, and community and recognize the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and toouristrate islander communities in the face of colonization.
Chris Betcher: All right. Um Kelly, you can do this slide.
Kelly Hollis: Sure.

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Kelly Hollis: Um, so hi everyone. I'm Kelly. I am the one in the middle there. So I am currently um the science product manager at Education Perfect after being in the classroom for 14 years. Um, I was lucky enough to meet Chris and Claire through gosh many Google events and this is where GG Sydney was born. So um, Chris, I probably won't do your bio any justice. So do you want to give a quick intro for anybody that doesn't know you?
Chris Betcher: I think everyone in the call knows me, so I'm not too worried about that.
Kelly Hollis: Cool.
Chris Betcher: But okay, but for anyone who's watching this in the recording, yes, my name's Chris Peter.
Kelly Hollis: Easy. Clear.
Chris Betcher: I used to be a teacher for many years. I now kind of sort of work for myself or I sort of don't work for myself. I don't know. Semi-retired sounds good, but um notionally I run a little company called Krux Learning and I do still work with some schools and some teachers and CLA

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Clare Willemse: And um yeah, hi, I'm Cla. So um yeah, I'm a teacher, a primary teacher in CSPD. Um I have been in a mix of roles, but um my big passion is um digital learning as well as creative arts um for students and finding great ways to support teachers and students with embedding digital technologies into their learning and um that's a big part of my role. I'm currently teaching year four back in the classroom again after an 18 month stint out of the classroom and I am also the K to4 e-learning leader and the AI and digital learning coach for 5 to 12. So it's a bit of a challenge trying to share um the love across the

whole K to2 school but I'm enjoying it.
Chris Betcher: Nice.
Clare Willemse: And I've also done my yeah all my Google credentials and met these wonderful people and that's why we're here.
Chris Betcher: All right. Um, and so those Google credentials uh that CLA mentioned is things like becoming a Google certified innovator or Google certified trainer or um just being part of that Google community.

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Chris Betcher: And we've all all three of us have been part of that for a very long time. Um and so you know we we've picked up a thing or two along the way. Um although the uh the things keep changing so um you know we're learning all the time. Um but yeah this session is called an ask me anything session. We have got some questions from people in advance. Um we might have made up some as well. We're not telling you which is which. We're going to try and dig into some things. So um we're gonna start with this one. Uh first one was uh we had a question about um how to use these collaboration tools and because Google's always been you know the collaboration piece has really been part of Google's DNA right from the day one. Um and so you know someone asked how how do you use these tools to do collaborating in ways that really boost engagement or learning outcomes and I think CLA you threw some things in here didn't you?

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Clare Willemse: Yes. So, um I'm a big fan of all of these and I've used them many times for a number of years, but good old Google Sites is um an oldie but a goodie. And it's just such a great way for students to share their learning in a bit of a different way rather than just the good old um Google slide deck um that you know a lot of people tend to go for. But I love that it is a collaborative tool. the different ways I've used it. Um the students had to like as a group project on a shared interest but also as a way to make the learning visible for parents as well. So I did it that students um created or had to do their own digital learning portfolio and then I made like a like a dock with all the links for the whole class on it. So it was easy for us to get put things up and share things with each other. But the best part was that we were able to um during student led conferences, the students showed their parents their site that they had made and with all their work samples and great work and um on there and the parents were just like, "Did you make this? This

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Clare Willemse: is like a real website." And they're like, "Yeah." So that was um they were very proud of that. But it was also great that they could share it like beyond the classroom in a sense. Like they could make their site public if they wanted to. So that was a cool one.
Chris Betcher: Hey CLite thing um and I I first saw Donna go lightly from the from New Zealand do this the very first time and I hadn't thought of it before and now I've seen Ryan who's in the call with
Clare Willemse: Um Google. Yeah. Yeah.
Chris Betcher: us today do this a lot um and it's such a great thing which where you can use um Gemini canvas to actually create apps or games or flashcard things or like you can do all sorts of coding stuff inside canvas which is really cool. Um but then it spits out all this JavaScript code and I always thought that's what do you do with the JavaScript code and honestly you just cut and paste it into an embed box in sites.

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Clare Willemse: You can Yeah.
Chris Betcher: Suddenly you've now got this app running in the web page in sites. Um and Ryan you're nodding.
Paul Meldrum: Chris
Ryan Noonan: Yeah, for for some reason I didn't even consider that as an option until I presented on Canva AI to New Zealand colleagues and one of the things they were sharing was what do you do with these apps once they're created and they said oh embedded in a Google site and I'm like of
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Clare Willemse: That's a great idea.
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Clare Willemse: That's my next thing.
Chris Betcher: It works really well. I've done made little flashcard games and all sorts of things and it and then like especially on mobile like it works great on mobile which is where most of the audience is.
Clare Willemse: Awesome.
Paul Meldrum: I was just going to say just also the other one that works really well when you want to do that is just making them as as as Chrome apps.
Clare Willemse: Um, I know
Paul Meldrum: So Google Chrome apps um works really well.
Chris Betcher: Oh, nice.

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Chris Betcher: Nice. Sites is so underrated and it's such a powerful I I I there are there are whole companies that exist that do nothing but build commercialrade websites in sites that emulate all the features of things, not all the features, but a lot of the the high-end features, the stuff you'd use WordPress for. And the thing is with sites a lot of the times if you just use it straight out of the box it looks like a Google site which often is not super fancy but if if you really start to understand how sites work and and be able to tweak it you can build some really beautiful sites.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: Yeah. Anyway, sorry. Betty.
Clare Willemse: No, it's all right. Um well, Google Vids like it's only fairly still in a new stage, but on I think we are planning to do I know Chris wants to do a session just on that um coming up, but it's was actually on my wish list from the very first um Google Energizer I went to.

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Clare Willemse: We all had to write on a post-it note, well, Alexa, what's something that a Google tool you would want? And as a teacher trying to get my students to create video projects all on the one iPad trying to make iMovies, I was like, "Oh, if only they could all be on, you know, something at once." Like, and when Google Vids came out, I was very excited for that reason.
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Clare Willemse: And such a great collaborative tool that really has boosted um engagement with the students. and they love that they've got the really great stock images and videos that you can import and are much more modern and um the templates that you can pick from make things a lot easier. But I love that it's an assignment feature now in Google Classroom. So you and as a teacher I've created a template for the students to complete and um I did a lesson with um some year sixes last week where we set up using brisk um an AI chat to um like a Carlo Audis who's about to be who just became a saint and then it was like to engage the students more in a religion lesson and um so they did that and then I set up a template they had to like make a little video of their what they had learned from that chat in Google Vids and Um, yeah, it was so good and so engaging.

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Clare Willemse: The teacher was like, "Oh, never would have thought of something like this." So, yeah, that was really cool.
Chris Betcher: We we've been doing uh the Google community is actually having a a

couple of meetings over the next couple of weeks called Energizers and I know there's people in this room that will might be there. Um but we we've been running a Google Vids challenge like a like a film festival kind of thing where we're asking people to make a make something in Vids. And the overwhelming feedback I'm getting from people is like, "I've never used it before. I've never really looked at it, but oh my god, it's so easy to use and it it does such great work." So, you know, that's we're trying to encourage people to look at it obviously. So, if you haven't looked at Vids yet, it is super useful.
Clare Willemse: Mhm.
Chris Betcher: I do remember years ago when I was still in the classroom. I got a phone call one day from um Swan Yo, who some of you know from Google.

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Chris Betcher: And Swan called me and he said, "Would you be interested in doing a Chromebook project with in your school like a Chromebook pilot?" And my first question, because I was a media teacher, was, "Can I do video editing on it?" And he went, "Not really."
Clare Willemse: Wait.
Chris Betcher: And I went, "Then I'm not interested." And um and I'm so glad now that there's a legit, usable, good um productive video tool and it's collaborative.
Clare Willemse: H. That's good.
Chris Betcher: That just ticks every
Paul Meldrum: I just just add in too that CLA your um when you talked on your blog about Google Vids I think the good point the good point you made there was that for teachers and and children in particular that
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Paul Meldrum: it's not much of a step from Google Slides Hey,
Clare Willemse: No, it isn't. Yeah, thanks Paul. Little side plug for my podcast up a notch. That was um our first episode was on Google Vids. Thanks Paul. But yeah, you're right. And it's so it is it's similar to slides.

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Clare Willemse: So it is a good transition and I didn't have to really show the students in U6 at all. They figured it out very easily. It was really good and they like to they teach you stuff anyway.
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Paul Meldrum: well, I think you mentioned you said year one and year two students can use it as well.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.

Paul Meldrum: Oh, Rachel then.
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: Yeah. I just say that the design team that built Vids I think did something really clever in just borrowing so much of the UI from slides because it just means people who might have been intimidated by making a video
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: but are quite comfortable with making slides can jump into it and just feel this like very shallow learning curve.
Julian Ridden: In fact, it's also worth noting it also integrates really nicely with slides because I've been using it to take presentations and turn them into cool online things.
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Clare Willemse: No. Yeah, I saw Ryan's question or any Google tools used in the creation of my podcast.

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Julian Ridden: And again, you just choose your slide deck, bring it straight in and hit record. So again, part part of the the Vids fan group. It's an amazing tool.
Chris Betcher: Yeah, cool.
Clare Willemse: Be honest, no. So, we re we actually because we're just doing it ourselves and um we're just using Garage Band actually and then we're editing in a um I'm not the one doing all that that work. Rachel is, but yeah, she's using some outside tools, but yes, if Google had one, we would be using it.
Chris Betcher: Adobe podcast. I'll give a thumbs up for that, Jules.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: Great tool.
Clare Willemse: Um other just ideas I've just wanted to share was like in Google Classroom obviously we know that's a huge collaborative tool and um but other ways I've done it in a different way was I I'm do using it for like clubs and um groups that I'm doing at lunchtime as a way to connect with those students that I don't necessarily see all the time every day and I'm sharing like when I had a rock band and the choir we it was ways we could share videos of like um song lyrics with each other or students were sharing videos of performances they done in their lessons outside of school together which was very cool.

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Clare Willemse: So sort of like our own little separate blog that we could share with one another which was cool. Um and slides as well like some a different way of using it I

guess. Um I had like a slide that I shared with my students and we did a photography lesson and they had to upload all their images into the slide. So then it ended up being a really cool like collaborative um piece that we worked on together and a way you can set up like a gallery walk. you can go along and look at students work and they can um add to that which and obviously good old group presentations it's a great one there and um I just wanted to Google drawings I love Google drawings and it's one of those things that a lot of people forget about or don't it's a bit underutilized as well but um you it is collaborative a lot of people don't realize that so um and I've done some awesome art projects with it before and there's some really great lessons on there with mosaic artworks and um then even the students learning how to those skills of screenshotting and uploading and sharing like we're linking it with like

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Paul Meldrum: Perfect.
Clare Willemse: we use like seesaw at my school and things like that. Um but you're building all those digital um tools as well. Yeah. So little plug for that.
Chris Betcher: Nice. Um, there was a question from the chat where Ryan said about Google needing to have a audio enhancer like podcast or Canva enhance AI. Um, it's not quite exactly the same thing you're talking about, Ryan, but I will just give a little plug to um uh on if you've got a Chromebook plus um the there is an audio enhancer built in at the hardware level in Chromebook pluses now. And so in the audio settings there's a little switch that says studio quality or studio studio studio recording studio quality I think it is and you turn that on and your mic sounds amazing. Um so that's built in at hardware level. So not quite what you were saying but similar. Uh all right I was just going to throw two things in. I used to do a great project when I was doing PD work with teachers, but it would work fantastic in a classroom as well, where I'd come in with magazines and we'd pull the magazines apart and I'd get kids to analyze the structure of magazine pages in terms of, you know, where are the images, where are the columns, where are the headings, where are the

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Chris Betcher: logos, that kind of thing. And they'd dissect they they'd reverse engineer the pages and then build them in Google Slides by changing Google Slides into an A4 format by just changing the numbers in the in the settings. Um, and then we'd create u, I mean this is just a sample of pages that teachers did when I do these sessions with teachers, but just that idea of being able to collaborate together in one magazine. Um, you know, you could do like a class magazine or a school magazine in slides by everyone collaborating together into one document. So, I'll throw that in as an idea. And then this too as well. Um,

just another project I've done with kids in terms of collaboration, which is what we're talking about. uh you know I walked in class one day with that box of blocks and said oh what sort of questions could we ask about this like how many are there and which is the most common color and you know what's the average number of colors and so on and you pose all these sort of data driven questions and then you go right well your job is to open this up and but there's too many blocks there for one group so I'm going to split you into groups and each of you get a couple of handfuls of blocks and then I'd give them this spreadsheet and they'd have to go and enter all the data they'd

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Chris Betcher: count the blocks enter it all into the spreadsheet and when they finished up they'd something like that. So, you know, this idea of you you give kids things to work on to collect the data and bring the data into one place and um we did it as group work and then split the group work up into individual work by turning off the group settings. So, there's a lot you can do in terms of collaboration and and managing that sort of flow of work in in a collaborative environment.
Clare Willemse: I love being sheets showing them that button that just turns it into like a chart or a pie chart and they're like what?
Chris Betcher: Nice. Nice. Um, oh, by the way, we'll release these slides at the end there. There's a learn more at the bottom there. There's a whole slide deck that takes you through this if anyone's interested. Um, okay. Another question we had was, "What new AI features in classroom are you excited about? How might they change the way teachers and students interact?" Uh,

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Chris Betcher: anyone want to pick up on this one?
Clare Willemse: I haven't I don't think I have access to them to be honest. So yeah, keen to learn.
Paul Meldrum: I I'd actually take it one step further and I know you Chris you talk about this but um Notebook LM I mean it's just had some recent up it's had some recent updates AI updates It's and um yeah
Chris Betcher: Oh, we're going to get to that. Don't you worry about that.
Julian Ridden: Yeah.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: No, it's fantastic.
Julian Ridden: Well, look, I I like on on this one only because I'm actually rolling this out in our schools in fact to be really contentious. Um, most of our for those who don't know me, so I'm Julian. I work with the Angland Schools Corporation. I have this wonderful new role

of head of AI. So I'm responsible for head A across our 20 schools. Um most of our schools, more than threequarters are Microsoft schools who don't have Google ecosystems. Uh I've started in my three months here doing something contentious.

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Julian Ridden: We're turning Google back on in Microsoft environments. So we're not turning on everything, you know, they're Microsoft, so they're using one drive, all those things. But I have turned on specifically Google AI. They're using Gemini and they're using the new classroom AI features. Uh yeah.
Chris Betcher: Oh, Julian. Just when I thought I couldn't love you anymore.
Julian Ridden: No, and it gets better because I've discovered and again, you know, we just talk realities, right? We're a group here. We're not we're not all, you know, Google files. I mean, apart from Chris, we're not all Google files. Um you know, yes, we use Canvas LMS, so I couldn't turn on Google Classroom. What I've discovered is I can turn on the classroom AI features, but disable what we now call Google Classroom teaching. They've got this new brand which is the LMS. Anyway, my we now have it turned on in four schools that used to be pure Microsoft and they are loving it and they're loving the most simplest of tools at the moment.

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Julian Ridden: Things that you kind of go, "Oh, couldn't use Gemini for that." things like uh adjust reading level because what they've done is made a really cool interface that you put in your text. You choose your reading level. You can tell it what words you want to keep and then it gives you this output which actually identifies for you which words were changed, which words were kept. It's these little tools in AI classroom that are having a huge impact. I don't have to learn how to have a conversation with an LLM. Doesn't matter you know for people like us who live AI it's easy for a teacher to go well you know what do I have to ask how do I prompt it the uh classroom AI just by creating either pre-built interfaces and if you haven't played with it I won't screen share now but it even will trigger oh you look at that so what I love is where you see a round icon it has a custom pre-built
Chris Betcher: is is I can do better than that, my friend.

00:34:58

Julian Ridden: interface which is amazing so if you want to create a re uh a rubric you're screen sharing can you click on just rele text just for my example.
Chris Betcher: I'll go over here and share this tab instead. Now we're live. Uh, so you want

to go rele text.
Julian Ridden: Yeah, just rele text. Let's just cheat. Just copy the the opening paragraph and paste it down because I want people to see this. The the impact this has on teaching is just so it's un it's misunderstood by those who don't teach. Underneath it, let's just tell it to keep a couple of words.
Chris Betcher: Yep.
Julian Ridden: Let's just keep levels and grade. So, type in levels, hit enter, grade, hit enter. Um, and let's choose a target grade. And let's take this down to year three.
Chris Betcher: Uh, yep. Sure.
Julian Ridden: Now, when you hit generate, not only do I not have to learn how to prompt, but the interface is so wonderfully designed.
Chris Betcher: Okay.
Julian Ridden: It's identifying what's shifted, what hasn't shifted.

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Julian Ridden: It's underlined the words that it's kept, and it's just given me a copy button. So, it doesn't matter if I'm using this in Canvas LMS. It doesn't matter if I'm using this in Google Classroom. It doesn't matter if I'm using this in in in Microsoft PowerPoint. They've designed it so that this works everywhere. It's not locked to an ecosystem. Let's go back to classroom AI because I won't go through all these tools. I'll I'll encourage people who have access. You get access to this on every single Google education tier. You don't need to be on paid. We're not on paid for most of our schools.
Chris Betcher: Yeah, let's jump.
Clare Willemse: Yeah, I think it's turned off for me because I can't I don't have it.
Julian Ridden: Make sure you speak to your admin team because they just need to turn it on.
Paul Meldrum: speak to Christian and it's not turned off. It just wouldn't be turned on.
Clare Willemse: Yeah, that's right.
Julian Ridden: Yeah.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.

00:36:25

Chris Betcher: It is. It it used to be a paid feature and then about month and a half ago they opened it up to everybody now. So everybody has this unless your admin's turned it on.
Julian Ridden: So, the only other thing I wanted to bring people's attention to is all the ones that have the the star, the Gemini icon. Rather than teaching people how to write a prompt, which again, most educators going, I don't have time for this. You've highlighted craft engaging discussion prompts, Chris. Why not? What this does is it loads Gemini, but it's

now preprompted for you. All the work has been done. If you just want to open up the top there, you can see that it's automatically added the prompt. So now I just have to answer the question. Uh, in fact, we just minimize it back down because most teachers don't look at this.
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Julian Ridden: It's just it is pre-prompted so that hi, I'm helping you get started with a discussion point. So you can use the power of Gemini without the fear of having to learn how to prompt.

00:37:19

Julian Ridden: So yeah, look, as you can hear from how I'm talking, I am a huge fan of this. I'm pushing it into as many of our schools as I can. Um, Microsoft aren't going to go down this path. This isn't me bagging Microsoft. They're rebranding an enterprise tool where Google are building for education. So, this is why I'm enabling it. And, you know, I'm now presenting at an IT conference that I'm going to about how we're now becoming a dual ecosystem again. It's no longer A or B. It's how do we get the best out of both worlds to support our teachers.
Clare Willemse: Amazing.
Julian Ridden: So, I hand back to you, Chris. But yeah, a huge fan of of the uh classroom AI and it is very much worth playing with and talk to your admins to turn it on. No cost.
Chris Betcher: Nice. Nice. Thanks for thanks for jumping in. That's awesome. Um, anyone else want to say anything about I mean I I I I do love the fact that uh if I go back to it's really grown and and I think you know if if you've been watching this

00:38:12

Clare Willemse: It's a quite a big menu. Yeah.
Chris Betcher: space for a while you've seen things like magic school bus and is it no is it not magic magic school magic school and like there and and even quizzes did this kind of thing where you know it's this
Julian Ridden: Magic School Bus.
Clare Willemse: I think I am quizzes is called way ground now.
Chris Betcher: modularized kind of thing and I think they've done a really job of this and it's just free inside classroom. So if you haven't checked it out, you definitely should. There's some really cool stuff in here. So don't get me started.
Clare Willemse: Yeah, because they're more than just quizzes apparently.
Chris Betcher: Um, all right. Uh, back to slides, which is somewhere here. I'm going to move some things around so I know what I'm doing. Clearly, I don't know what I'm doing. Things have gone astray. Where's everything gone?

Julian Ridden: here. I thought you had Google me.
Clare Willemse: You're on Gemini.
Julian Ridden: Oh.
Chris Betcher: Uh, there we go.

00:39:13

Chris Betcher: I have too many tabs open. That's the problem. Um, right. Um, share this tab instead. I think we're back to business. Okay. Uh so another question we had was how can teachers make the most of the version history when it comes to understanding and supporting the way students uh create refine their work particularly with AI tools now in the mix and I know CLA you put a slide in so you must have something to talk about
Clare Willemse: Yes. So, um it's definitely a great way um to look back at a student's work in a doc in the version history to see yeah this like how they got there and what the their path was and there are definitely great teaching points for going back and um looking at where they went and going from there. But um I'm a big fan of the Bruce Teaching Inspect Writing tool and if you haven't got that, it's a Google Chrome extension and my fourth episode was just all about that recently. But it's a really great tool that you can actually go on a student's piece of writing and it will actually give you like a a replay of how they created the doc.

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Clare Willemse: So it's actually a really good um way to see how they used AI to create their writing as well. You can see like um this example one I had there was one pace but it had they took them 12 minutes and 128 edits to do it. So it looks like they've probably done one big thing but then they've sort of um fiddled with it a little bit. I tried it on um one that with my student that she wrote herself in my year four class and yeah it said that strongly it wasn't um AI detected but it was interesting to see the process of how she came up with it and what how she put that um piece of writing together. Um and yeah so yeah there's definitely um some things there that you can do. At um my school, we actually use this as one element in terms of our AI detection policy for students if we've suspected have used AI. And this is one element that we can use to just to see as an extra piece of evidence.

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Clare Willemse: Have they used it or not before, you know, asking the students a bit more comprehensive questions, comparing it to a cold, right, they've done and that sort of thing. But it's a great way, yeah, to go back and see them um put the the dock together.

Chris Betcher: Um, I'm just going to back up a little bit here because I know there will be people watching this recording or or or seeing this who go, "What's a version history? I don't know what you're talking about." Right? I just want to back up a second because uh in every Google Doc uh and this is this is just Oh, sorry. Share this tab. Um here's a Google doc. This is just a document that uh Claire and Kelly and I have been using to sort of plan out our activities for GG. Um I've blanked out the password so no one can see it. Um but uh you know we've been building this document over a period of some months now. But if you go to the file menu and down to where it says version history, you can see the version history and you can actually go back in time and see all the different edits that people have made over time.

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Chris Betcher: Right now, that's actually tracked in a sort of a I guess an internal database that other systems can tap into. And just to sort of show you what this looks like. Now, I'm going to show you something that's not it's it's a free tool for a month and then you got to pay for it. So, I'm not advocating for it, but it's interesting to see. It's a little tool called Draftback. It's a Chrome extension. And if you if you turn on Draftback, it processes the change log that it finds in that version history. Right? So, it's just processed uh where is it? If I go I come out of there now. It's just found 2,662 revisions.
Clare Willemse: No. Heat.
Chris Betcher: So, this document's had changes made to it. And that they could come down to individual keystrokes, right? But it's had over two and a half thousand revisions. If I click this draft back button and say play that, what it'll do is it'll replay this document.

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Chris Betcher: Um not in real time unless I click this docu this tech check box that says play at actual speed, right? But it's showing how this document was created. And as a teacher, if you see things like s big blocks of text suddenly appear, I mean, that's a big red flag for things, right?
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: It's pl either plagiarism or AI or something. Um, so just being able to to know that that's how documents are created in the Google world, um, I think is a, you know, thing to know.
Clare Willemse: And it it's I came in, Andy, the other day with um a student that deleted everything and didn't understand how to get it back and all that, but I'm like, "Oh, we can just go back and find the
Chris Betcher: It's kind And the other thing that I I never realized this in the beginning was if if you I always thought if

Clare Willemse: version history and restore that." And they thought I was a genius. I'm not really, but Yeah,
Chris Betcher: you had revision A, B, C, and D, and then you rolled back to C, you actually came back in time to C. But what you're doing is you're moving forward in time to E that happens to look exactly like C, right?

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Clare Willemse: that's right.
Chris Betcher: And the implication of that is if you've if you've got something in a document that you've since deleted but you want to keep, you can go back in time, copy it, move forward in time again, and paste it again. So you can essentially step back in time and sort of get things from the past. You're not it's not a it's not a linear timeline in the sense that if you go back in time, you lose everything back to that point. You don't. So anyway, useful to know, I think. Um, let's here. Uh, all right. Um I this was a legit question someone asked about uh about the level one and level two exams. So Google has a certification program of exams and I'm just and and they are changing in September and someone asked a question about how are they changing. Um so let me just go into this other tab here.
Clare Willemse: cuz they were um Yeah.
Chris Betcher: Yeah. Yeah. And I'm switching.

00:44:45

Chris Betcher: There you go. So this is just the Google website. It's just edu.google.com. And if you come on to this website, look in the resources tab. there's a thing that says certifications. Um, and so this is where you'll find all the information on the Google certifications. They they do a thing called level one and level two. Um, and for anyone who's sort of wanting to sort of, I guess, validate what they know or certify in what they know. Like it's a good place to start. You do your level one, you do a level two. For anyone that gets a level one and two, that then opens the door to things like Google certified innovator, Google certified trainer, Google certified coach. um and some of those higher levels. Uh that's where really the interesting stuff starts to happen. And the reason Google structure it this way is because they want as people come into this community like what we really want to do is get the conversation about tools off the table.

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Chris Betcher: Let's stop talking about which button to press, right? Let's start talking

about interesting things you can do with this technology. And I think by put by structuring it with like a level one and a level two, then it it's that's laying the foundation for people to understand how the tools work. Great. Now that we all understand that, we can stop talking about it and move on to much more interesting things. What do you do with the tools? So, that's kind of the rationale behind it. Um, there are a bunch of courses to to support those. Um, and these are some of those higher levels I was talking about, innovator, trainer, coach, and GG leader. Um, and so that's that's how that's structured. Now, the level one and level two, how it's changing in September. Um, it used to be what was called a scenario-based exam. In other words, they would fire up an actual Google um uh account for you with a with a a live environment and you'd go in and it would say like, you know, create a folder, make a Google doc, uh create a Google form, export the documents from the form, put it in a spreadsheet, blah blah blah.

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Chris Betcher: Like it would ask you to do things and you get graded on actually completing those tasks. Um the history of it is is at some point they wanted to expand into a whole lot more languages as Google opened up to the world and it was just too hard to do that in that environment. So they went back to a multiple choice exam. I don't think that was the best decision but that's where it went. Um but it did allow them to open it up to dozens and dozens of languages around the world and that's that was the rationale. Starting in September they're bringing back the scenario questions. So if you do a level one or level two after I think it's September one I believe is the date. It keeps changing. Um so the exam will be I think it's 45 multiple choice or maybe 35 multiple choice questions and then three scenario questions where it dumps you into uh I know I did level one the other day. It dumps you into Google Drive and then Google Classroom and then Google Forms and asks you to do things with those three environments.

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Chris Betcher: So um that's how it's changing. I think it's a much better version of the exam. It's much more authentic, I think.
Clare Willemse: Well, you're applying the tools.
Chris Betcher: Yeah, exactly.
Clare Willemse: Yeah. And it kind of a nerd that I am. I actually found it fun before. So, I'm going to redo my level two. You have to redo it every three years if you want to stay active in the community. So, I'm up to doing my Yeah. level two again in December.
Chris Betcher: Yeah, you can do level one and two at the moment. Just go to this website, click the register now button, and you can do it. but it'll be the old exam like the multiple choice only exam. If you do it in September and beyond, it'll be the new exam with the new

scenario questions in there. Um, the champion community has been beta testing the new questions and I think we found quite a few bugs and they've taken it offline temporarily while they fixed some of those things um because we'd rather find them before we launch it to everybody rather than after.

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Clare Willemse: There.
Chris Betcher: Um, but yeah, that's how that works. So, for that question, that's how they're changing after September. Um, mom, how can emerging AI tools be used to spark creativity and make learning more engaging for students. Uh, and I don't know what's in here, but look, it's CLA.
Clare Willemse: So, I might get Chris to demo while I talk if you like because you got me.
Chris Betcher: Oh, really?
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: Oh, okay.
Clare Willemse: So, a gem that um well, Chris showed us this the other day. You might have noticed in Gemini there's one a pre-made gem called story book. So, if you click on that, it's actually Yeah, it's amazing.
Chris Betcher: Yeah. Sorry.
Clare Willemse: So, you can choose the characters, you can choose the setting, and it will make an actual book like online book for you.
Chris Betcher: So, I just I was just just again just for anyone who might not even know what this is because I'm sure there will be people.
Clare Willemse: It's really cool.
Chris Betcher: Um, gems are like little customized versions of Gemini where you can preload it with context.

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Chris Betcher: Basically, you can come up with the who am I and what do I want to do and how do I want to do it and this is the context and you can load it into um a little package called a gem and then you ask questions or prompt the gem rather than what I call big gemini right and then it's much more specific to that use case so uh Google make a few gems in here in the gem manager it explains if I go show more there's a whole bunch of gems that are already pre-made for you and CLA's about to tell you about this one called story book but there's a whole bunch of them and then if you want you can actually make your own. I give my names for some reason. I don't know why but um the Pluto one's a cracker.
Clare Willemse: the Pluto one.

Chris Betcher: I love the Pluto one. I think I've people that before but um but yeah. So CLA's going to talk about this one. So CLA I'll do it while you talk about it if you like.

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Clare Willemse: Yeah, sure. So, um we can create like a a book like for students in our class or for any um scenario that you like. I've seen examples online of people writing them for like how long they've been like dating their partner, like a little story about their relationship as a present.
Chris Betcher: I didn't watch my daughter's website um a girl called Elise.
Clare Willemse: Yeah. Yeah, you did. That's right. Yeah. So, um So, yeah. All right. So, we've got a little prompt there using create a story about what was one we did the other day.
Chris Betcher: I'm just making this up.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: who loves cats and uh goes on a crazy cat adventure.
Clare Willemse: And we said
Chris Betcher: I don't know. I'm just making stuff, right?
Kelly Hollis: It remember back in the day where you would sit in a circle and each person would say a word to add to the story.
Paul Meldrum: Screw the sol.
Kelly Hollis: You could just get the kids to do that as you're typing it in and then turn that into a story book.

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Clare Willemse: Yeah. Imagine it. That would be fun.
Chris Betcher: This will take a few moments to do. So, Claire, you can tap dance for a moment. Off you go.
Clare Willemse: Yeah. Don't tempt me. I actually will do. But yeah, so but I could I was already thinking um I want to try showing my year fours this. But how cool for them to create or even base it on a story they're writing themselves and then you can see it come to life. Um because I know in Google readalong that's within Google classroom you do have that option of making your own book and but this is goes that next step further with the incredible um image generation from Gemini and you actually see it when it loads. It looks like an actual book and that the pages can turn and the audio will read it out to you as well which is a really cool feature and I think can you download it Chris or share it embed it?
Paul Meldrum: share.

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Clare Willemse: I think you can.
Chris Betcher: I don't think yet.
Clare Willemse: There we go.
Chris Betcher: Uh I see uh Julian's put a thing in the chat saying that um you can now use storybook without going to the gem you can use it straight in big gem and I think it's smart enough to know
Clare Willemse: Ah, there you go.
Chris Betcher: that if you ask for a story book it knows to invoke the gem. Yeah.
Clare Willemse: Oh, that does look
Chris Betcher: So so this is what it's given us. Um and you can you can flick through and look at the pages and it's nice little now right now as far as I can tell this only exists here in Gemini. Um I don't see any way of exporting out other than uh there is the option to export it out as a PDF but nobody wants that right. Um I it seems to me like the next logical step would be to combine this with readalong. So readong tool inside classroom where where you know to be able to make a custom book for a child and the child reads that book that either you know has their name or their interests or words they need

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Clare Willemse: I think so.
Chris Betcher: help with or whatever. It'll custom make the book for each individual child. Um, but it there is also a button up here. If I go back to the beginning, let's go back to the start. Um, there is a play button and with two voices. Right now, it's either a high pitch voice which sounds female and a lower pitch voice which sounds male. But, um, you know, we'll just call it high pitched. Uh, and if you say listen So, it goes on like that.
Chris Betcher's Presentation: Alisa's Great Cat Adventure. Elise lived in a world of purr and paws. Her house was a haven for cats of all shapes and sizes, each one a treasured friend. One evening, a
Chris Betcher: And I must admit, the first time I saw this, uh, Ryan, who was in the call before, he posted something on LinkedIn about it. And I I got to admit, cynical me, my first reaction was, well, that's great, but like the story is going to be rubbish, right?

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Chris Betcher: But the stories are actually pretty good.
Clare Willemse: I was thinking you could really link it in with a literacy lesson on language features as well. Like yeah, it's really good.
Chris Betcher: It it feels like that this is like a like a first step that once you can generate

books that the the things you can do with that that are coming down the pipeline in terms of um you know identifying literacy aspects and listening to the kid read it or identifying the nouns or like all of that sort of stuff becomes possible.
Clare Willemse: Very cool.
Chris Betcher: Now we've got this first step done I think. I don't know just so now. So that's the books. I thought that's pretty neat.
Clare Willemse: It's an engaging AI tool for sure.
Chris Betcher: Um yeah, if I can go back to the slides. Here we are. Okay. Did you want to say anything else about that? Cla Kelly, you've been conspicuously quiet.
Clare Willemse: No, I know. I just did some screenshots of like yeah if someone's looking back at these slides how what that what it looks like and what they do to get there.

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Clare Willemse: So yeah, it's great
Chris Betcher: I I I don't want to feel like we're talking over you but leaving you out. So, jump in. Um I threw this in as well because the question was what was the I forget the question now. Uh emerging AI tools for creativity and learning. Um so I just threw this in and uh Jules mentioned this before. Notebook LM like it is an amazing tool and it just keeps getting better and better and even this week they they've launched two new things this week flashcards and quizzes which I did have now I don't have so I don't know it's just midlaunch or something um for anyone who doesn't know what this is uh notebook LM just go notebook just Google notebook LM you'll find it um and you're uh and if you're on a Chromebook
Clare Willemse: It's in your No.
Chris Betcher: it's actually like a built-in app you can't remove now I Um, so, uh, what you do is you load it up with resources and then you can interrogate those resources with you can prompt them, ask some questions and so on.

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Chris Betcher: But because you're always tapping into the source of truth, um, which is your documents, then it it doesn't hallucinate.
Clare Willemse: Heat.
Chris Betcher: I mean, I won't say it doesn't hallucinate. It hallucinates way way way less than than some other AIs do. Um, but you can do things like create mind maps, create audio overviews, and the uses for this are just endless. Like, in terms of I'm one of these people that tend to try out things in my personal life and then figure out how it would fit in an educational context. I know other people do it differently, but that's kind of how I do it. So, I I think of use cases like, you know, um, I ride a motorbike. What if I took all the

documents about the road rules and motorcycle handbooks and everything else and uploaded them into one? And then I can start asking questions about road rules, especially because I've just moved to the ACT and like how is how is the ACT rules different to the New South Wales rules. So upload all of those documents in and then start asking it those sorts of questions.

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Chris Betcher: Um, another use case that I'm not necessarily proud of, but I I've had some pretty testy email exchanges and text exchanges with my sister over the years. Um, and I I thought I uploaded them all into Notebook LM and started asking questions about what's the problem. So, like there's lots of really interesting use cases you can do. Um oh it's pretty impressive actually.
Julian Ridden: Chris, we use tools for good and we use tools for evil. I'm gonna let you think about that for a sec. That's awesome.
Paul Meldrum: I would have liked to see in the mind map on that one.
Clare Willemse: Who was right? Who All right.
Chris Betcher: Um but yeah, like tons of things and in fact if I have it open uh I don't have it open at the moment but um yeah if you haven't checked this out it's it's amazing and the audio overviews I mean another use case my partner is uh we've moved to CRA she's trying to apply for public service jobs there's very specific things you need to do to apply for public service jobs so we downloaded all of the handbooks for what you need to do and said create an audio overview and the next time we drove back to Sydney we listened to like a you know a 30-minute podcast on how to apply for a public

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Chris Betcher: service job. I mean, those are the sorts of use cases that I think I like doing in my personal life and then figuring out, oh, I can see real use cases with this and how you use it inside a school.
Paul Meldrum: And I'd go even further, Chris, if particularly if I was in a secondary school. Um, this is a core application that the kids should be using once they around developing their own learning experience and learning how to learn.
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Paul Meldrum: It is outstanding and it even now you as I said you know you've got different audio overviews you got different video overviews you can customize those plus the reports so it has just grown really you know you can
Clare Willemse: Yeah. Okay.
Paul Meldrum: just see it developing but the not many people are aware of it is a killer app it's a killer learning Yeah.

Clare Willemse: No. And you'd be pleased to hear.
Chris Betcher: Yeah, the Sorry, Clay.
Clare Willemse: We're um I was going to say for school scenario, we've actually um had a meeting with it and we've asked for permission to trial this with year 11 and year 12 as an amazing study tool for the HSC.

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Clare Willemse: So we're going to start doing that um very soon with the year 11s going to year 12. Yeah. In the next few weeks.
Paul Meldrum: Absolutely.
Clare Willemse: So yeah. And then we've also tried it as a well-being tool for staff like building one for us to learn how to use it. But, you know, like when teachers have got a behavior issue and they don't know what to chronicle it under or like you know that kind of thing like all that's like schoolbased sort of handbook questions for new staff.
Paul Meldrum: H. The good thing is you can share those notebooks too.
Clare Willemse: We're trying to build something like that for them.
Chris Betcher: Yeah, within your domain.
Clare Willemse: Yeah. Yes.
Chris Betcher: I'm still frustrated that you can't share it generally like publicly, but um that would be really good because once you create a notebook, and I'll just use my one about skateboarding, right? Um so I just found a whole bunch of documents about the history of skateboarding because I'm interested in it, right? And you can come up to this share button up here and share that out.

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Chris Betcher: Now, right now the sharing is only within your domain. So you can see what most people are grayed out. But you can share either the full notebook or just the chat only.
Clare Willemse: I don't know.
Chris Betcher: So to create like a custom chat that you know you want people to interact with, you can come and define the chat here with specific context and then take just the chat only and then share that within your domain and create a custom chatbot that only talks about the things you you know stays within the guard rails.
Paul Meldrum: Yep.
Chris Betcher: That's powerful.
Paul Meldrum: There's one other little use case that you might This is probably a side thing. Um I had a um a video file that I wanted the transcript from and I didn't want to pay for anything.

Chris Betcher: Yep.
Paul Meldrum: Grabbed the audio out of it.
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Paul Meldrum: Dropped it into here. It transcribes it really well.
Clare Willemse: Oh, that's good.
Chris Betcher: Um, who was Tony Alva? Right. So you can ask Tommy, it even ignores my typos, right?

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Chris Betcher: So you can ask it a question, but because it's using your um source material that when it comes up, it'll it'll come in here and it'll put these little numbers next to things. So when you click on it, it'll go to the source and show you whereabouts in the actual source material that content came from. So you're never left wondering where did the AI come up with this idea from. You can go and check it.
Paul Meldrum: And don't forget to click add note if you want to save that chat.
Chris Betcher: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Really powerful once you start digging into it. Um. Yeah. Cool.
Paul Meldrum: You could do a whole session just on notebook LM.
Clare Willemse: Yeah, sure.
Chris Betcher: Oh, 100% 100%. Yeah. Uh, all right. Um, and then we had this question. How can Google help with a to-do list? And um, yeah.
Clare Willemse: Oh, yeah.
Chris Betcher: Has it got you there?
Clare Willemse: Only this. Yeah, I think there's a slide that I put there, but a lot of people don't realize now that um Google tasks is now linked with your Google calendar.

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Clare Willemse: And um we found that you know the good old um in a doc now you can press shift and two to get that menu and you can um assign people directly. um you know we select had to comment and then assign in a comment to people but you can actually um have your picture and then it saves it as a task and um so if you go to your Google calendar and you click on that little button that I've put the arrow on there's a list of all your tasks there and I was showing this without even meaning to I was um we're in a middle leader meeting the other day and I got asked how to do something so I tagged myself and they're like how did you do that how did you put your picture in there and then when I showed them they're like This is blowing my mind and say something something I just take for granted now. We've been working like that for a while, but people might not realize. I just wanted to um yeah, share the wonderful world.

01:02:30

Clare Willemse: And there's all these really great building blocks in Docs, too, that can really help for your to-do list for your um like I I love the simple decision log actually. So, when I have a meeting with my um my head of digital learning at my school, I just put a list of all the stuff I've been working on and assign myself or show him that and link it to what I'm up to and is it in progress? Have I completed it? It's like a Yeah, it's really cool.
Chris Betcher: The other thing too is for anyone in a school environment uh and this is a Google workspace plus feature. So but most schools are using plus now. So uh if you create a um uh a checklist inside a Google doc then next as you hover over the checklist boxes a little option will come up. Let's see if I can go go to a doc and show you what I mean. Uh share this tab instead. Um I'm going to go into here and just actually I think I've got one here already.

01:03:26

Chris Betcher: Okay. So here was a list of things that needed to get done. Right. Um and you can see if I hover over the little icon like so. Oh, that one's done. Not there. Right. I can assign a task. So inside a Google Doc, I can assign a task to a specific person and by a specific date and then assign it. Now, um it needs to be done within your domain, but when you assign a task to someone, it will appear on their calendar, it will appear in their task list, and if they cross it off after they've done it in their calendar or on their task list, it comes and crosses it off in the Google doc as well. So, everything's linked right across the three tool sets.
Clare Willemse: Yeah, it's really good.
Chris Betcher: Um, and I a lot of power in doing that sort of stuff.
Clare Willemse: Yeah, particularly if you have like and then you have your notes from the meet and you link. Yeah, they're all linked as well.

01:04:14

Paul Meldrum: I was just going to say on that original slide, your first slide, Claire, I think where you had the um um sites and sheets and one thing that's missing there that is is is the connectors in the middle
Clare Willemse: Oh yeah.
Paul Meldrum: and it's the connectors such as this. There's the connectors such as the chips, the smart chips, the all the shortcuts, the at shortcut that allows you to connect between those various products are so powerful and so quick.

Chris Betcher: indeed.
Clare Willemse: It's amazing. Yeah.
Chris Betcher: Uh we're getting near the end so I'm just going to jump forward and I think this might be our last question actually. Um what is nano banana in Gemini? How can I use it?
Clare Willemse: It's all over.
Chris Betcher: Um, one of the things about Gemini, right from the beginning, it was designed to be what's called a multimodal um, generative AI tool.
Clare Willemse: Um, yeah. Online at the moment.
Chris Betcher: In other words, uh, you can give it text or images or videos and have it have it generate all of these things.

01:05:12

Chris Betcher: So, it's not specifically just a text tool or just an image tool. Um, if you think back a couple of years to when AI was emerging, you know, you needed separate tools for separate jobs. Um, with multimodal tools, you don't need to do that because they can kind of cover all the ground. Um, the image generation tool inside Gemini uses a technique called I think it's called the diffusion modeling. Um, don't ask me how it works, but it that's what it's called. Uh, and it was really good at actually it wasn't great, but it's become really good at generating images. So, you can say, make me a picture of a, you know, cat wearing a pink tutu, you know, standing on a surfboard, and it'll do that sort of stuff for you. It's really good at imagining the things you you can tell it. Um, Nano Banana is kind of the latest iteration of that image generation model, but one of the things it's especially good at is editing existing images. So, you can give it an image and ask for a change.

01:06:02

Chris Betcher: And I do have a couple of examples here. So, the photo on the left is that's my partner and we went to Japan recently and we went to N. And this is in Nara Deer Park. And she was standing there with a a deer. And uh with a little bit of magic from um Nano Banana um it turns into she's standing in the African savannah with a cheetah in her hands. Right now the way I did this because I rarely jump in one step. So you can see it started out with that first photo and I said, "Turn the deer into a cheetah." Great. Turn the background into a savannah. Great. Dress the woman in a safari suit. Make the girl into cheetah stand on the sandy dirt rather than the whatever it's standing on. change the hat into a pith helmet, right? And then that's what I ended up with. So, you could probably have gone there in one leap, but I don't know when I was playing with it, I did it in multiple leaps.

01:06:51

Chris Betcher: So, I thought I'll share with you what happened. Uh, and that's what you end up with. You notice it puts a little Gemini star in the lower right hand corner of each image that it it is AI generated that you can crop out. Um, uh, so I don't know what sort of proof that is. Um it is getting very hard to believe your eyes these days and really there's a whole thing you can now go into not now but always go into about um you know can we believe what we see and and what is fake and what's real and all that. That's a whole can of worms that you can now open really easily. Um another photo on holidays just standing in front of Mount Fuji who said turn it into a Simpsons version. Great. Turn it into uh Lord of the Rings and that's Mount Doom in the background. So, that kind of fun stuff you can do. Um, and then this one I thought was interesting. I I had this photo of her and I I said she was talking about maybe dying her hair blonde and I went, "Okay, imagine her with a blonde hair."

01:07:47

Clare Willemse: Very different.
Chris Betcher: And then I was like, "Imagine her with a 1960s beehive."
Julian Ridden: Remember my comment earlier about use of good and evil, Chris?
Chris Betcher: And then I was like, "Give her really really long hair." So, I did that. And Well, it gets worse.
Julian Ridden: Again, just think carefully when you're messing with a woman's hair. It's dangerous.
Chris Betcher: It gets worse or better depending on your point of view. And then I said remove all the hair. I said make her bald and it did that.
Kelly Hollis: Looks like a scarf.
Chris Betcher: Pointing out that like the AI doesn't.
Paul Meldrum: Sh. I kind of
Chris Betcher: And then when I Well, my next prompt was just remove all the hair and it did that.
Julian Ridden: And she's proudly wearing her hair as a scarf. I'm not sure how to take that.
Kelly Hollis: Yeah.
Clare Willemse: I've had enough now.
Chris Betcher: So, it does not always get it right, but it's a lot of fun to play with. But, um, I think Julian, you were saying before you actually had actual educational examples of this.

01:08:41

Chris Betcher: You want you want to tell?

Julian Ridden: Yeah. Um, do we have time to do a very quick show and tell of the educational example?
Chris Betcher: Yeah, sure. Do you want to share screen?
Julian Ridden: Yeah, I'll share now.
Chris Betcher: Uh, sure. I will stop sharing. Over to you, Oh,
Julian Ridden: All right. So, hopefully everybody can see my my screen. So, we'll talk about this next time. So, the tool I built this in is a tool called Google AI Studio, which I've fallen in love with. It allows you to build custom apps. Um, so we'll talk about that next time. Brilliant tool. So what I wanted to do was, uh, for those who don't know, I used to be a history teacher. I always used to try and get students to think about themselves in the context.
Clare Willemse: All
Julian Ridden: So what I did was using Nano Banana and Google Gemini, I created this app called the World War I poster generator. So you can go through and choose from Australian or British posters.

01:09:26

Clare Willemse: right.
Julian Ridden: Um, let's go to a British poster. There's a very famous poster called Daddy, What Did You Do? where, you know, a dad's sitting there and, you know, in his couch smoking his pipe and the kids are looking up to him, you know, making him feel guilty. So, what the students can do is I can click to upload, find a picture of themselves, which I'm going to grab right now, and go create my poster. So, what it's now doing is using Nano Banana to take the original poster, the photo of the student. In fact, the live version, we've actually made it a live camera, so they can't upload pictures of somebody else. So there's actually an updated version, but then it uses nano banana.
Clare Willemse: Nothing.
Julian Ridden: It then stylizes it and now we have daddy what did you do? Also more importantly, we then turn it into a reflective task. So on the right hand side, oh the other cool thing is when you're using Nano Banana via what's called an API call, notice that there is no star in the corner.

01:10:24

Julian Ridden: So they can do this and download it without having that star saying it's artificial. So, what they then have is a quick explanation about that poster and for them to reflect on it, to think about it. So, we're using the make you put yourself in the picture as a way of contextualizing it to making it feel more personal to the student, but then turning into a reflection. So, in this case, it's asking what was your initial emotional reaction when

you put yourself in here? Oh, I feel guilty. Um, and it's going to okay, great. Why do you feel guilty? And again, so we've now actually rolled this out to a couple of our history classes in schools. But again, you know, great honest, helpful, insightful reaction. Uh can you go through a and share some thoughts on this? Now, the only other thing I'm going to see if I can very quickly find so bear with me is something else that as you're using these tools, you need to think about. Um, in my case, I actually need to make sure I thought about things that I had not expected because the other thing we want to do is to make this a part of a task is to actually say, well, once you've done a couple of posters, create your own poster.

01:11:32

Julian Ridden: I want you to create a propaganda poster of what you And by the way, it's still the same process. They describe it. They then choose their photo and then they have to reflect on their poster, which is really powerful. But when you do things like this, and I'm sorry, I'm just very quickly because I know we've all got places to be. Um, I'm just going to try and find this. Uh, I had to get my own staff to try and break it because the thing is it's great when you go through and fantastic. I found it. All right. So, I'm just going to bring this in. So, I actually went to my IT staff and I said, "Okay, I've made this fantastic tool. In fact, I used the tool to create a poster. you know, join need you to run tests and um you know, let me know if you get errors and can you generate inappropriate content because I thought I put guard rails on it. Turns out not good enough.

01:12:24

Julian Ridden: They started doing things from Command and Conquer um which is a PC game. I went, "No, we don't want students doing Command and Conquer." So, I added a new guard rail uh to make sure it had to be history. One of the other guys who uses a piece of software called Laser Fish was able to make things that didn't relate to the subject matter. Okay, I made more specific guardrails and because this was the Monday after the immigration protests, he was able to make this poster, which by the way, I did not guard rail because there were issues around immigration back in
Clare Willemse: No.
Julian Ridden: World War I. And that's why we had a very high degree of of solidarity and and and and pride in in country. So, you know, as long as I could explain the context, this wasn't an issue. I'm just going to scroll down to my favorite picture because he just took one of the other team members and said, "Jared likes balls." But yet, the image still kept my guard rails, which was nothing inappropriate.

01:13:19

Julian Ridden: So, we now have a whole bunch of soldiers on the beach playing with basketballs. And I'm like, okay. So, again, while I I didn't want to go into a lecture there, these tools are amazing, but especially as you start thinking about how you create your own, which I'd love to talk about in a future session because this is amazing.
Clare Willemse: Huh?
Julian Ridden: Um, it also means that you have to think about how can this be used for good or if I gave it to Chris, how could he use it for evil and you do it. But yeah, so this is how we're actually using Nano Banana to do exactly what Chris was saying. In this case, taking historical posters, taking the student's face. It literally adapts it, but it keeps the original accuracy of the original poster and the accuracy of the students face to create this truly authentic piece. So yeah, that that's that quick show and tell of nano banana use.
Chris Betcher: I did build something with um I did build something similar the other day in AI Studio which is uh it was it was you can take a photograph of any object around you and then it'll create a billboard

01:14:05

Clare Willemse: I love that.
Chris Betcher: or a bus stop advertising or a you know time square neon sign. that it'll place your object into all sorts of advertising contexts, which I thought was interesting. The fact that it can do it is amazing.
Julian Ridden: In fact, it was that video on YouTube, Chris, that prompted me to create this tool. I was actually watching that video and I thought, "Oh, what if I context to post it?"
Chris Betcher: Yeah.
Julian Ridden: So, yeah, I know the video talking about that. That's what led me down the rabbit hole.
Chris Betcher: Yep. Easy to do. It's a very deep rabbit hole. Um, right. Uh, we are definitely at time, so I'll just wrap this up. Um, there was was that a question?
Clare Willemse: Oh, we can do that next time.
Chris Betcher: Oh, this is a whole thing in itself. We kind of talked about this before where you can use that canvas tool inside um classroom inside the Gemini and then spit out the JavaScript code or whatever code you like and uh and then drop it into a Google site and sort of run an app on a site.

01:15:09

Chris Betcher: Um but it's not just it's not just that. I mean even I had a I had a thing I had to do recently where I had a Google I had a list of names in a Google doc no a Google

sheet and I wanted to create a set of slides where every name in the sheet was at the top of the slide so everyone had a slide to fill in and I didn't I thought oh there's no tool inside slides to do that and I thought I wonder if Gemini can write the um the appcript code for that sure can so I did it did it threw an error the first time and all I did was go back and say fix the error and it did and it now it works great. So like you build all sorts of cool stuff.
Paul Meldrum: Chris, does this say um you might I don't know you play have you played with Opal at all?
Chris Betcher: Um I have not.
Paul Meldrum: It's um it's a beta in in Google. to Google um AI.

01:16:02

Paul Meldrum: It's like N8N um which is a a workflow for multiple AI tools.
Chris Betcher: Oh, okay. It's always something new to learn. Um, we sort of got questions as we went, but I think we've sort of checked those off mostly as we've gone along, so we're not going to do that. Um, did any We're bit over time, so we might come back to that in a future episode. Just talk about what's working for you. I think we again we've touched on a lot of that as we've gone through as well. I love the fact that today's been um very much lots of people contributing ideas and thoughts. Um, so just in terms of staying up to date, uh, we've got a few things coming up. On 23rd of October, we're going to do a deep dive into artificial intelligence with Gemini. And I have invited Julian and Ryan, who were in the call earlier, to come and join us for that because they seem to know a lot of really nerdy stuff about Gemini. So, uh, please do.

01:16:59

Chris Betcher: And AI in general. Um, in December, we're doing an end of year wrap-up. Just some quick tips and updates to finish the year up. Yes, nerdy. Um, and uh, in January we're going to do like a back to school thing. We haven't got the exact details yet, but we're going to do something there as well.
Clare Willemse: Yeah, we'd like to do that one in person at Google if we can.
Chris Betcher: And yeah, we're trying we're trying to organize um to for Google to host that.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: So, if you want to come along to Sydney Google office, um, please do. Uh, hopefully we'll get that happening. Um, one of you go
Clare Willemse: Yeah, just so yeah, follow along. Um, and yeah, come along to go on to our GG Sydney website and check you get getting our emails and they're not in your junk mail, but if you're here today, obviously you did and share the spread the word, share the love. Um, and yeah, we've got Chris has put together a little um GG logo you can add to your own little credentials that's on the website as well.

01:18:00

Chris Betcher: Yeah. Yeah. So, if you want to add to your email signature or however you want to use it, that's fine. Um, you can get them from that link there. Uh, we'll share the slides later on to everybody. Um, the website is ge.com.
Clare Willemse: Let's see.
Chris Betcher: Uh, but I'm just going to give a free plug here to I've just moved to CRA recently, so I'm also starting the Camber GG and I'll eventually leave it to the lovely Claire and Kelly to sort of carry on with at some point, but you're stuck with me for the moment. Um, but yeah, so if anyone's if anyone's watching this and you're in the CRA or Capital Area uh, and you want to get involved in a GEG there, it's just geekcra.com. So, head over there as well. Um got a whole bunch of we're on all the platforms. So you can search for us on on pretty much all of them except X because none of us like Elon. So um we haven't we're not on uh there you go and thank you very much.
Clare Willemse: can't bother.
Chris Betcher: That wraps us up. Sorry we've got Thanks for coming.
Clare Willemse: Thank you. Thanks for coming.
Julian Ridden: Thanks everyone. Was awesome.
Chris Betcher: No worries.
Clare Willemse: Yeah.
Chris Betcher: Thanks everyone.
Clare Willemse: Thank you.
Chris Betcher: Yeah, it was great today. I've really enjoyed it. I'm just gonna stop the recording.
Paul Meldrum: and thanks for the presentation and preparation indeed.
Chris Betcher: And uh for those that are
Clare Willemse: It was good to see you, Paul. I miss
Paul Meldrum: I need to see hear about what you've been doing out there at Santa

Transcription ended after 01:19:20

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