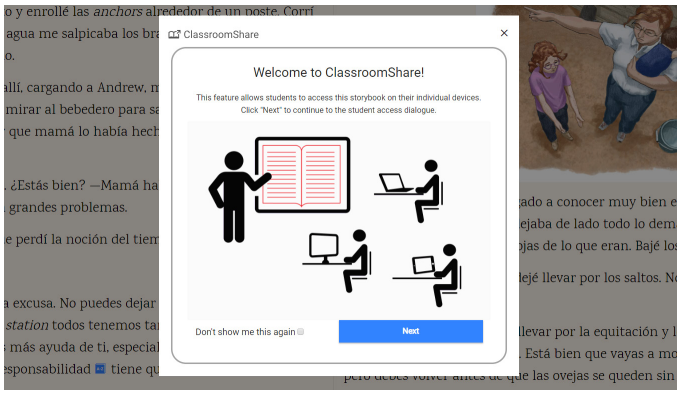
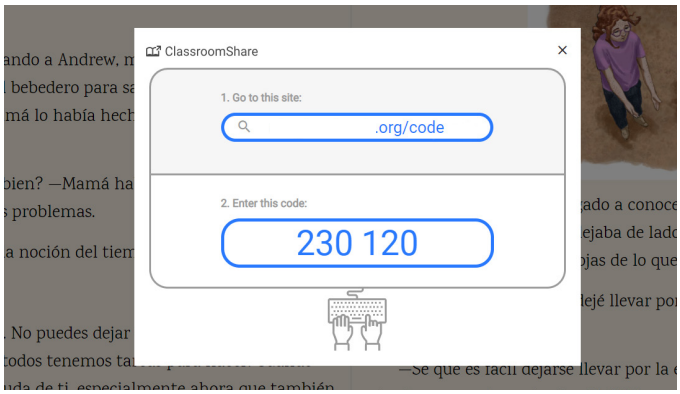
ClassroomShare: a UX case study





When we think of casting media from one screen to another, it's usually from a small screen, like a mobile device or tablet, to another larger screen. But what if you're an educator in a K12 classroom who needs to share content from your screen onto multiple smaller, student-facing devices?

This feature, ClassroomShare, was part of a larger web app that displayed multimedia engineering storybooks. The intention behind this feature was for educators to be able to

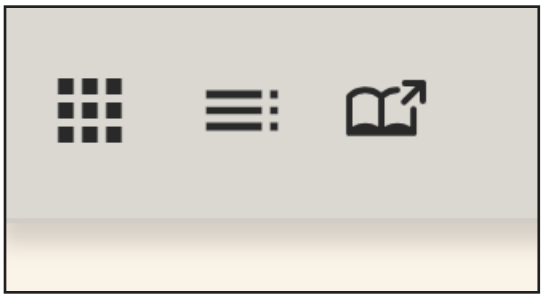
1. customize unique student experiences by locking in display and multimedia options
2. generate codes that would allow students to access these books on their devices with the selected options.

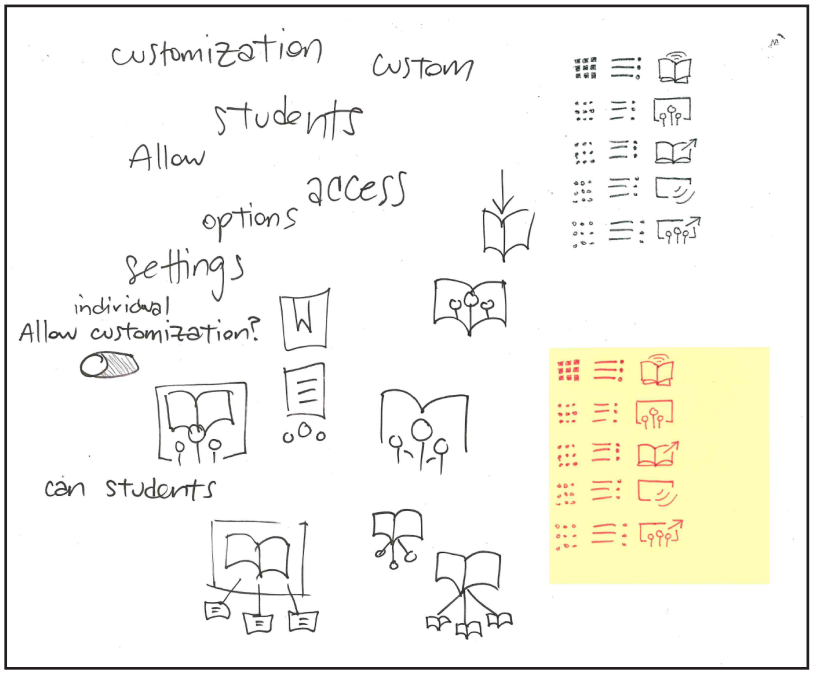
I worked on this project with a team of app and curriculum developers, and this "reverse-casting" feature was in a prototyping phase when I joined the team. My role was to advocate for the student and teachers as users while using UX and pedagogical best practices to inform design decisions.

Iconography

We needed an icon to represent this new feature using simple and intuitive visual language. The challenge was to get the idea of casting across without replicating other designs too heavily.

Below is the icon we chose. To the right are some of the earlier designs I made that we iterated through.





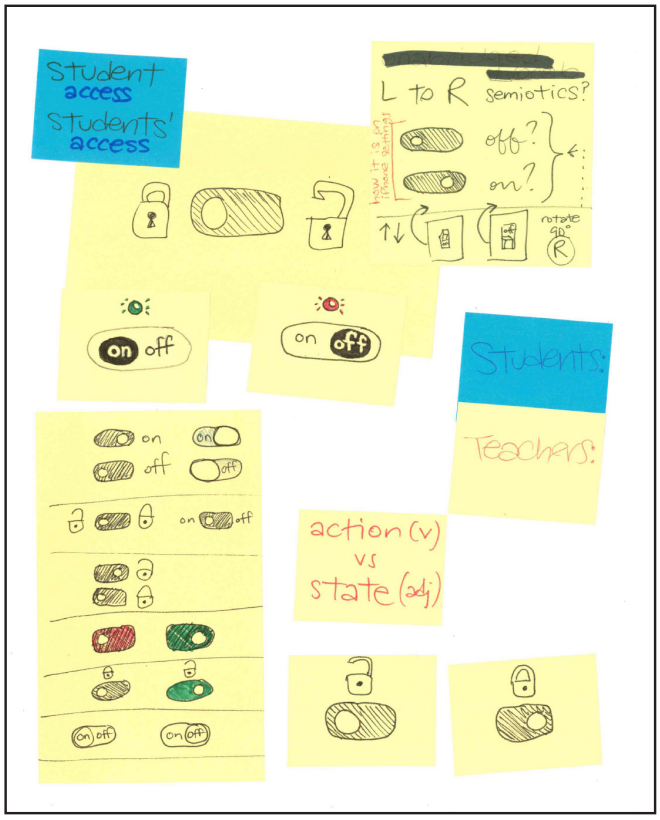
Microcopy and UI

The tricky part about designing this feature's modal window was that it addressed two types of users: the teacher and the student. The student-facing part was straightforward.

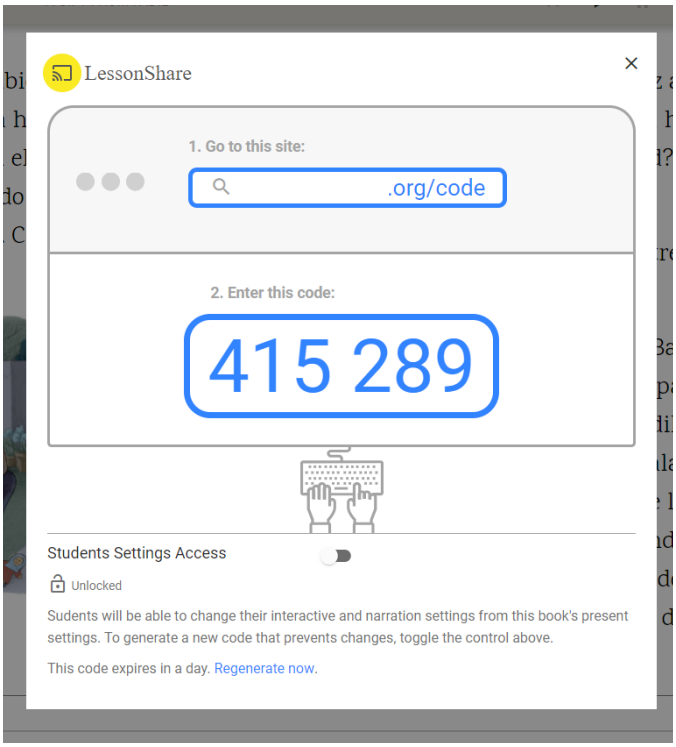
The teacher-facing part asked whether students should be able to edit settings on their own devices or not; in either case, students would inherit settings from the teacher's device.

I rewrote the teacher-facing microcopy to be as simple as possible, and used information architecture best practices to make it easy to parse.

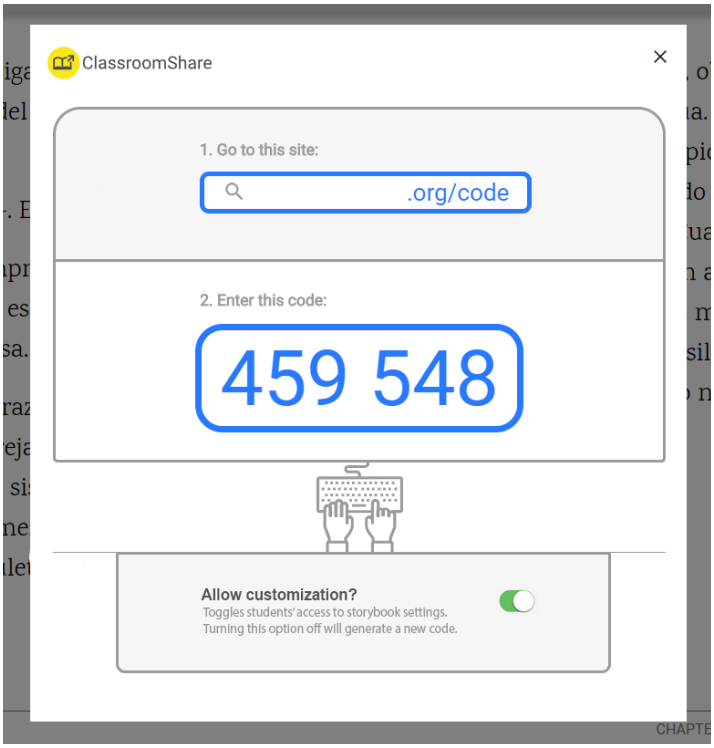
I also did a small redesign to the toggle button and its initial state to allow for left-to-right parsing of the option and a green background for the "on" or "customization allowed" state.



Before



After

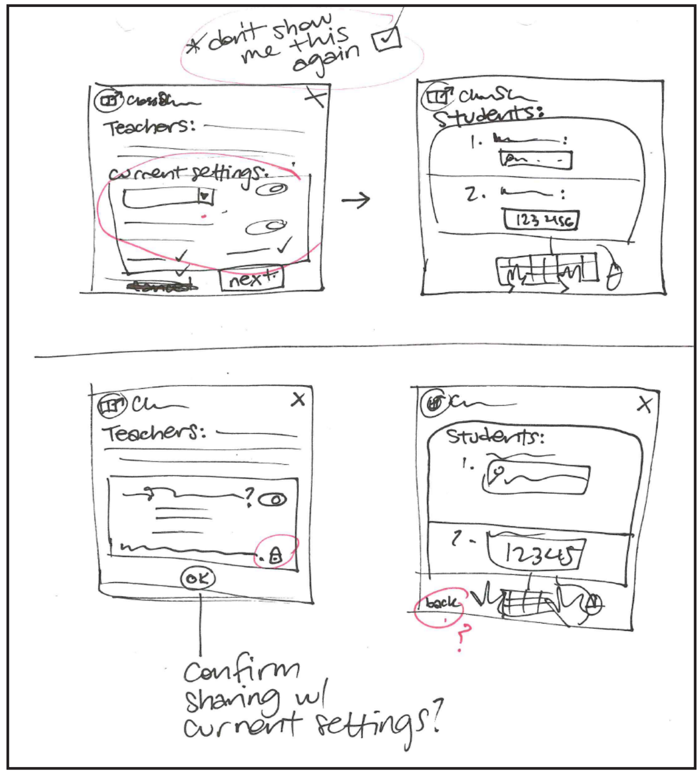


User Flow and Scope: Iterating

In a pivotal moment, we came to a radical decision about the scope of this feature. After reviewing feedback from an initial pilot of this app, and thinking about the demands of classroom management on the teacher-user, we decided to remove the option for teachers to lock students' storybook settings on their devices.

In making this design decision, we also considered the time it would take for teachers to coordinate entry of multiple codes, and the impact it might have on students who were singled out and asked to enter a different code than the rest of their classmates. In the majority of use cases we came up with, it didn't reflect an elegant user flow.

Instead, we opted to split the teacher- and student-facing information across two windows. I designed an educative animation that would easily explain this novel feature to first time users, with an option to skip the screen next time it was used.



Final Design