

Title of Session: Next Vista for Learning - Free Google Tools

Moderator: Rushton Hurley

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Room: Next Vista Group

MidgeF: Hey, my buddy Rushton and everyone.

RushtonH: Folks - Midge has made a great video that will go on our site soon.

RushtonH: Midge, could you give a quick description of it?

BJB2: Welcome to this month's Next Vista discussion.

MidgeF: Sure, it's a history video about the Forefather's monument in Plymouth, MA

RushtonH: Folks, please start by telling us where you are, geographically speaking, and how you learned about this session.

BJB2: I'd love to hear more, Midge! Perhaps after intros?

FredK: I am a literacy tutor in SE Oklahoma and have used Next Vista for math presentations

MidgeF: I'm an author, consultant and genealogist living in Massachusetts and I met Rushton at FETC in Orlando

CristineG: Georgia and I was in the last session

CynthiaMA: Hi, I am in sunny San Diego, and work in Higher education. I have never used Next Vista

BJB2: I teach remedial communication in Pennsylvania and am on Tapped In helpdesk

HeatherAJ: I'm in Apple Valley, ca and I found this discussion on the calendar.

MidgeF: I am an Avery descendant

MichaelM: Hi. Michael Misovec and I manage A K12 Teacher Wiki

HeatherAJ: I am currently a student at APU working on my Master's in Tech Education and a 6th grade teacher.

RushtonH: My name is Rushton Hurley, and I teach Japanese language and video production. I also run a nonprofit called Next Vista for Learning (<http://nextvista.org>), which has a free, online library of video resources by and for teachers everywhere. Please give the site a look when you can and share what you see with others! I'm in Santa Clara, California.

HolleighT: I am in NH and I am a SAHM with 4 kids studying for my Masters degree in Biz Ed and Technology. I need to visit a one hour interactive session for a Module assignment. I will have to write up a review after.

DavidWe: I'm David Weksler (when I'm not cooking) I'm a HelpDesk volunteer here and lead a math education discussion - I'm in New Jersey, close to New York City

RushtonH: For practice with this session, I'll ask a quick question - if you can send quick replies (yes, no, perhaps), that would make the flow easier for me. Is everyone ready?

CynthiaMA: yes

HeatherAJ: yes

CristineG: yes

HolleighT: yes

MidgeF: yes

FredK: yes

RushtonH: In past sessions I've covered how to make videos, but today I'll focus on an exceptional tool for a critical component of making a video (or doing any involved project) - the planning.

RushtonH: Often students think that a video starts with turning the camera on. For many of the truly bad pieces they create, that's exactly what they do.

RushtonH: More often (don't ask for statistics on this front, and I won't make them up), when a good video happens, it's because the people making it crafted an idea carefully, covering three components for each scene: what is heard and/or read, what is seen, and how shots are built.

RushtonH: Out of curiosity, how many of you already are making videos?

CynthiaMA: Not me

HeatherAJ: Not yet

CristineG: Not I said the duck

MidgeF: I am. I have made several in graduate school

HolleighT: Only for inclusion in my ePortfolio (and of course, videos of my kids!)

RushtonH: I'll start with an example.

RushtonH: Imagine a student group's video focused on an interview of a retired teacher, Pat, who volunteers at the school. They decide to start with footage of Pat helping someone in the library, switch to pictures of Pat earlier in life with voice-over telling about that time, and then finish with mixes of face-to-face interview footage and more footage of those Pat helps.

RushtonH: One early element of the storyboard (the plan for the video) might have a student's voice introducing Pat with the camera over the shoulder of a student being helped.

RushtonH: All of this planning can be done with paper and writing utensils, of course. However, what if the students are working from home, are in different periods, are part of an online class, or are in different schools?

RushtonH: Last November I was fortunate to be one of the four dozen or so teachers in northern California chosen to participate in the first Google Teacher Academy. I'm thinking in terms of highlighting some of the tools we worked with that day in several of these sessions. The first will be Google Docs, a free word-processing program that is based online, rather than on your hard drive.

RushtonH: Have any of you used Google Docs before?

CristineG: no

CynthiaMA: Yes, I just learned about it. It's great!

HeatherAJ: No

FredK: no

HolleighT: No

MidgeF: I think I used Writely which was before that.

MichaelM: Very little. I have used Google gadgets

RushtonH: Writely is what Google bought to create its Docs & Spreadsheets feature.

BJB2: nope. I've used another similar tool...maybe it was Writely

RushtonH: Today I'll talk about how Google Docs works and point you to a number of graphics of the interface. At some point past this session, I hope you'll get a (free) Google account and play with the program yourself. If you need an invite, just let me know (rh@nextvista.org).

RushtonH: Docs has some obvious strengths - it's free, and being based online means you can get to it from any internet-connected computer. I'll highlight some less obvious but powerful features over the session.

RushtonH: First, how you get to it. When in Gmail (Google's free web-based mail service), there is a string of links in the upper left with a light blue background. One of them is "Docs & Spreadsheets". Once one clicks on that link, it will move to the list of active files (older files are another click away).

RushtonH: (I'll direct you to a number of pictures of the interface over the course of the session. Typically I'll wait thirty seconds or so for everyone to see the picture and return to the discussion before continuing. Let me know if I'm going too fast.)

RushtonH: (Also note that the pictures of the screen are just pictures; the links you see won't be active.)

RushtonH: The main page: [http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs1\(active_files\).jpg](http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs1(active_files).jpg)

BJB2 . o O (remember to hold down the ctrl key)

RushtonH: Please try viewing this picture (above). Let me know when you're back to the discussion by typing, "back" or similar.

MidgeF: OK I'm back

CristineG: looks like my gmail acct.

CynthiaMA: back

MichaelM: Back

BJB2 checks to make sure everyone got the url?

HeatherAJ: back

MidgeF: yes BJ

HolleighT: back

FredK: back

RushtonH: These are two documents I put together before Texas' big ed-tech conference in Austin a few weeks ago. It was quite nice to be able to pull them up and make changes whenever I wanted!

RushtonH: Note that on the right it shows who last edited the document. We'll soon get to one of the greatest pieces of the Docs system, which is its collaboration capability. But first, let's take a look at what a document looks like.

RushtonH: An open document:
[http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs2\(open_document\).jpg](http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs2(open_document).jpg)

RushtonH: Let me know when you're back, please.

HolleighT: back

CynthiaMA: back

MidgeF: back

HeatherAJ: back

StephaniK1: back

CristineG: back

RushtonH: If things look compacted a bit, it's because the browser is reducing a larger picture to your screen. You might be able to switch it to regular size by clicking on it.

FredK: back

RushtonH: You'll see a whole set of options around the page, and we'll hone in on some of them over the next few minutes. First, notice the "collaborate" tab in the upper right. Clicking on that (when it's the real page) reveals the following.

RushtonH: Collaborate: [http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs3\(collaborate\).jpg](http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs3(collaborate).jpg)

RushtonH: Do tell when you return, por favor.

CristineG: back

CynthiaMA: back

MidgeF: back

HolleighT: back

BJB2: very cool, Rushton

StephaniK1: back

HeatherAJ: back

RushtonH: This gives you the opportunity, via e-mail addresses, to invite people to be able to edit the document (as collaborators) or to see it (as viewers). By default, it's set up for collaboration.

FredK: back

RushtonH: Here is where we answer the earlier question about student planning. Rather mysteriously, people can work on the same document at the same time from different computers. This feature generated quite a bit of discussion at the Google program.

StephaniK1: back

RushtonH: While it seems that you can overload the system (one teacher later tried having thirty or so kids in a class edit a document at once), I was happy to chalk it's apparent success all up to benevolent magical pixies.

RushtonH: At any rate, imagine starting a document, inviting people to collaborate, and then finding new content each time you come back. For a video, you can post a graphic file with comments about how it would set the stage for a scene, hash out some text, or cut and paste content to change the order of what appears in the movie.

RushtonH: Any questions or comments so far?

HolleighT: Is it FIFO?

RushtonH: I believe so; it saves automatically, regularly.

StephaniK1: how does it know what are the changes in a doc if people are working simultaneously?

RushtonH: Pixies.

StephaniK1: What is FIFO?

BJB2: . o O (FIFO? Please explain for we less techie folks)

HolleighT: First in first out, like accounting- you can only have one person truly editing at a time.

BJB2: thanks

RushtonH: Actually, I think it has a sophisticated function for tracking differences from moment to moment.

MichaelM: Can you restore a previous version?

RushtonH: Yes you can go back to a previous revision - a nice feature we'll talk about more!

RushtonH: Also note that there is quite a bit to choose from on the basic editing front.

BJB2 wonders what the advantage is to this program over something like a wiki?

RushtonH: Editing tools: [http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs4\(edit_options\).jpg](http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs4(edit_options).jpg)

HeatherAJ: Are there some functions only the moderator can do?

RushtonH: You can set collaborators to be only viewers.

RushtonH: Everyone back?

MidgeF: back

CristineG: back

CynthiaMA: back

HolleighT: back

HeatherAJ: back

MichaelM: back

FredK: back

RushtonH: You can see the undo, redo, cut-copy-paste, bold-italics-underline, font-size-color-highlighting, hyperlink, numbered and bulleted lists, indentions, quote format, left-center-right, and a remove formatting tool. To its right is a set of HTML style possibilities and a change button (handles empty lines and bookmarks).

RushtonH: Once you are ready for the document to live in another format, you have options on that front, too.

StephaniK1: back

RushtonH: File exports: [http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs5\(file_options\).jpg](http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs5(file_options).jpg)

MidgeF: back

CristineG: I like that! This would help me with my online students

StephaniK1: back

HolleighT: ok

MichaelM: That was my next?

RushtonH: This is GREAT for online settings.

CristineG: Absolutely, I'm dancing

RushtonH: There is the HTML option, RTF, Word, OpenOffice, and even PDF! Fan of Adobe though I am, it's kind of nice to be able to do a PDF file for free.

HolleighT: Nice tool for group projects in a DE setting.

MidgeF: I think I just read something about how Microsoft feels Office is threatened by this online tool

MidgeF: You can make PDF's with a free tool I know about.

HolleighT: How does it handle graphics?

CynthiaMA: Aha

RushtonH: There are some good ones - which one do you like?

StephaniK1: jinx lol...

MidgeF: PrimoPDF

StephaniK1: so would each student need a google acct?

RushtonH: Graphics can do, too!

RushtonH: There are also a variety of items you can add to a document.

RushtonH: (You will need a Google account, I believe. I'll help on that front if you need.)

RushtonH: Insert options:

[http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs6\(insert_options\).jpg](http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs6(insert_options).jpg)

MidgeF: You don't need an invitation anymore.

CristineG: back - is special character like from another language

MidgeF: back

RushtonH: yes

StephaniK1: back

FredK: back

HeatherAJ: back

RushtonH: This gets you the image insert, as in the example I described earlier. The link could be to a video on YouTube that has some characteristic the students find interesting. Being able to mark something as a comment allows for a student to suggest a change without making it in the current iteration of the file.

CynthiaMA: back

ChantelS joined the room.

RushtonH: Hi Chantel, welcome!

HolleighT: ok what about advanced editing (like columns, headers, double spacing, margins, etc)?

RushtonH: You also have options for tables, bookmarks, separators (page breaks or horizontal lines), and special characters. The separators could sit between ideas for different scenes, and the bookmarks could work as a list of scenes at the top. In the Docs world, a bookmark links to another part of the document (helpful for longer documents). The special characters will be useful for diacritical marks for Spanish, French, and other languages.

RushtonH: That's a good question. I think a lot of that gets handled in the HTML coding you can apply.

MichaelM: Can I add it into a teacher Wiki (<http://helpingstudents.org/JSPWiki/>) as an attachment or would it be a link.

RushtonH: You can publish the doc as an html page, and then link to it from your wiki.

HolleighT: Do you need to understand HTML to use these functions?

MichaelM: Very Cool

RushtonH: I don't think so, though obviously it wouldn't hurt. There are only so many options, so trying out a few would probably give you 95% of what you need to know.

RushtonH: And then there are the revision possibilities!

MichaelM: You can attach the html file and just link to it by typing it in

DavidWe: Most people who make up web pages don't know HTML - lots of tools hide it from you

RushtonH: A good move! Thanks, Michael.

RushtonH: Revision options:

[http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs7\(revisions_options\).jpg](http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs7(revisions_options).jpg)

MichaelM: Welcome.

HolleighT: Could a teacher track how much work each individual collaborator is putting in? In other words- is there a detailed report of edits?

CristineG: back

MidgeF: I think I noticed an RSS feed for revisions?

RushtonH: I don't know - good question. Other teachers I know using it are often splitting their students up into small groups to manage how they can track individual efforts.

RushtonH: Is everyone back?

HeatherAJ: back

MichaelM: I'm back

HolleighT: yes

FredK: back

MidgeF: yes

StephaniK1: back

RushtonH: This page gives you the option to see what was added by each collaborator in chronological order. This will typically include some highlighting showing what changed from revision to revision. The 'Older' and 'Newer' buttons allow you to cycle among them, as well. This can give students the ability to reference older forms they might choose to return to as their ideas of the video changes.

CynthiaMA: back

RushtonH: Finally, you don't have to start a document from scratch. While pasting material into a new document is one possibility, you can also upload existing documents from other formats.

CynthiaMA: What a great function

RushtonH: Uploading: [http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs8\(upload_options\).jpg](http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/GDocs8(upload_options).jpg)

CristineG: that's great

RushtonH: My experiences have been a bit hit-and-miss when uploading Word documents with graphics, but for most of what I do, I don't notice much difference. You can add .doc, .rtf., odt. (OpenDocument), and .sdx (StarOffice) files. Out of curiosity I tried uploading a PDF file from a URL, but that didn't work. Also, note that the file cannot be more than 500KB.

CristineG: back

MidgeF: back

FredK: back

HeatherAJ: back

HolleighT: back

RushtonH: So, as your students look at creating videos describing a variety of academic topics, profiling people who help others, or telling about their communities (the not-particularly subtle plug for Next Vista's collections), using Docs is one interesting way to have them build their plans.

RushtonH: I know of a 'tour' of Docs & Spreadsheets, by the way, though I haven't given it a look. If one of you does, please let me know what you think. It's at <http://www.google.com/google-d-s/intl/en/tour1.html>.

StephaniK1: back

RushtonH: What questions do you have?

MidgeF: It's gone

RushtonH: Oops.

CristineG: I don't have any at this point, but is sure sounds wonderful and something that I can use with my DE courses.

HolleighT: So are you actually suggesting that we upload sections of our video productions, or just the scripting ideas at this point?

MidgeF: Pixies got it!

RushtonH: The scripting ideas.

HolleighT: ok, thanks.

RushtonH: For video projects, I'd of course suggest you submit them to Next Vista to help students and teachers around the world! 8^)

MidgeF: Well, at least I'm covered here (grin)

FredK: good idea for Next Vista

MichaelM: Is there a directory of videos that I can link to organized by subject or grade or topic

CristineG: Fred, are you making a rap?

RushtonH: Yes, got to NextVista.org and click on "Light Bulbs".

RushtonH chuckles

MichaelM: Thanks Rushton

RushtonH: Fred is the literacy rap-daddy of Oklahoma.

HolleighT: Can we submit our American Idol audition tapes?

FredK: not there yet

RushtonH: If they help someone learn something, yes.

RushtonH: Other than how not to sing.

MichaelM: lol

HolleighT: ha ha ha, you don't know me!

KatyD: Hi sorry I guess I'm late

RushtonH: I'm assuming an angelic voice. My singing is not for people I like.

MichaelM: I was lol if I were to send in my own

RushtonH: Hi Katy, and welcome back, Chantel!

MidgeF: I didn't think they let people from NH sing.

HolleighT: No they typically have us run the show instead!

RushtonH: By the way, if you missed any of the first part, you can let me know by e-mail (rh@nextvista.org) and I'll send you a full transcript.

RushtonH: Same goes for earlier sessions on turning photos into videos and the like.

MidgeF: In graduate school we used Inspiration or a block of boxes to plan video.

KatyD: please I'll appreciate

HolleighT: So have you had a lot of successful collaborative video project submissions?

RushtonH: Cmap is another good tool (like inspiration), and it's freeware!

CynthiaMA: Where can you find it?

RushtonH: I'd search on download.com, though I don't remember off the top of my head.

FredK: urls?

CristineG: mindmapper is great and you can get a free trial

RushtonH: Katy, make sure to send an e-mail to the address above, and I'll make sure you get the transcript.

KatyD: ok

CristineG: mindmapper.com

KatyD: I'm from jujuy Argentina

MidgeF: <http://cmap.ihmc.us/>

RushtonH: If you haven't done so, please take a look at the freely-accessible videos on Next Vista's site (<http://nextvista.org>), and sign up for the newsletter, too (<http://nextvista.org/newsletter/>).

DavidWe: Bienvenidos, Katy!

ChantelS: I would also like a full transcript...thank you

CynthiaMA: Transcript for me, too please

FredK: I have used them for math presentations

RushtonH: Chantel - happy to do so! Just make sure you get me an e-mail (rh@nextvista.org). If you've been here the whole time, you'll get one from Tapped In, of course.

DavidWe . o O (The Tapped In archive has transcripts of past discussions - www.tappedin.org/transcripts)

KatyD: thanks

DavidWe . o O (this one will be there in time)

HeatherAJ: I'm looking at one of the math presentations and they're great! This is an excellent way to help students.

FredK: I agree

MidgeF: In mine, you get to hear my voice. I hate making narrations

RushtonH: I also have a Word file with a number of links to all sorts of video resources - e-mail me and I'll attach it to a reply. Let me know you were at the Tapped In session when you do, please.

KatyD: that sounds great

RushtonH: Heather, thanks for the plug for the math videos. Duane Habecker did a marvelous job of putting together several dozen a couple of summers ago.

MidgeF: I wish Google Tools included a presentation tool. People would dump PowerPoint in an instant.

HolleighT: Rush, I would like that word doc as my security settings are not letting me get into your posted videos...

HolleighT: I love PowerPoint!

RushtonH: You can put your e-mail address in the discussion, or send it to me in a private message if you wish.

MidgeF: Remember Office 2007 is quite different

HeatherAJ: Yep! I can imagine recording lessons for students on home study or just as a review of the lesson taught in class.

RushtonH: Videos are particularly strong for students with limited language and/or learning disabilities.

MichaelM: Do people need Broadband or can they lower the stream rate?

ChantelS: what grade level do you gear this discussion to?

RushtonH: They do need broadband, though you can download using the link to the left of the 'screen' on the video's page.

RushtonH: For grade level, it's wide open.

KatyD: I used videos to teach EFL

MichaelM: Thanks

StephaniK1: I did my first lesson today using video... I had 1/2 the class on laptops watching/listening to a video w/ headphones and 1/2 the class w/ me for small group instruction... like all things techy it was a bit hairy at first, but I see it's potential!!!

RushtonH: I think a lot of the videos on the Next Vista site are best for middle and high school, though some extend beyond those years in both directions.

FredK: I plan tutor training with videos

HolleighT: We have a new computer and we are using IE7, I've had tons of problems since switching, even with Blackboard.

KatyD: they are a great help students like a lot

RushtonH: Holleigh, I'd recommend downloading Firefox. I prefer it to IE.

HolleighT: I have imported video clips into PowerPoint before but playback was problematic.

HolleighT: Yeah I used Firefox before, I might have to go back...

CristineG: IE7 is causing my computer to have big problems.

KatyD: wow you guys have lots of resources to teach

RushtonH: Video in PowerPoint is dicey. Once you get a good feel for video editing, though, it will replace a number of things you'd do with presentation software. Not everything, of course.

MidgeF: Not everyone has all those resources some schools are struggling a lot

CynthiaMA: Such creativity - this really supports diverse learning styles

MichaelM: This will be a great addition to add links for teacher wikis and colleges that may use blackboard

RushtonH: We have a particularly good group today! I hope to get everyone back for the next one. If I have your e-mail address, I'll make sure you know about it.

KatyD: well here is quite difficult too public schools don't have even video recorders

RushtonH: You can make good videos with no camera at all, actually.

BJB2: before we run out of time, the next Next Vista discussion will be on April 5

RushtonH waits for gasps

CynthiaMA: gasp!

HeatherAJ: really?

StephaniK1: what are teacher wikis

MichaelM: It is a wiki designed for schools and teachers

MidgeF: Now I know how fast I must sound...

HolleighT: How do you make videos without cameras?

MichaelM: <http://helpingstudents.org/JSPWiki/>

RushtonH: Downloading pictures from copyright-friendly sites like morguefile.com (not the macabre thing you might think) and adding them to a simple editor like iMovie or Windows Movie Maker is a lot of fun. You can add your own audio, titles and transitions.

MichaelM: Good question

HolleighT: Ah but I like to use my own models...

RushtonH: Lots of ways to get to top of mountain, grasshopper.

KatyD: Thanks for the in put and the wonderful ideas

ChantelS: I can't imagine my little ones doing any of this. Plus we are blocked from doing any of this in our school so it makes it that much harder.

MidgeF: Guess you watched Y+TV in the 70s

MichaelM: Thank you Rushton. Great Stuff !!

RushtonH: Great group! Thank you for coming. I'll get the e-mail addresses and send out resources.

CynthiaMA: Thanks Rushton! Have a great evening everyone!

HeatherAJ: Thank you for the great ideas!

ChantelS: I use windows moviemaker at home...it is pretty simple!

StephaniK1: Chantel - are you able to get to google documents?

MidgeF: Thanks Rushton.

RushtonH: Most welcome, Midge - thanks for coming!

MichaelM waves bye to all

HolleighT: This was my first time on Tapped In and I really enjoyed it. Thanks for letting me participate!

FredK: You had a great tutoring session tonight, Rushton

CristineG: Rushton, thanks and I hope Japan was great. Thanks for your help with my video questions. I'm starting on the project next week.

RushtonH: Take care, Michael

RushtonH: Cristine - that's great! Let me know how it goes; I'd love to see what you do.

KatyD: Thanks Rushton and to all

CristineG: I will!

RushtonH: Take care!

BJB2: Thanks, Rushton!

RushtonH bows