



Adobe Spark

Creativity and Digital Storytelling with Adobe Spark

Professional Development - Educator Guide

spark.adobe.com



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1: Welcome

Adobe Spark is a FREE web and iOS tool that you, and your students, can use to tell stories, write papers, create images and videos, share ideas, and more, in minutes, no design expertise required. Spark creates content in three formats, three ways to share your ideas:

- Spark Video is used to create videos.
- Spark Page is used to create magazine-style web stories.
- Spark Post is used to create graphics.

To help you get started with Adobe Spark, this document contains a step-by-step tutorial for each of the three Spark formats; Page, Post, and Video. You can use these tutorials to help you with this hands-on PD session, and you can take the document home after the PD session for later review and use.

2: Getting Started

Adobe Spark is available in two ways:



Adobe Spark can be used in your favorite web browser (Chrome, Safari, Firefox, and Microsoft Edge are all good options) on Windows, Mac OSX, and Chromebooks. All you need to do is visit spark.adobe.com.



On iOS, Adobe Spark is a set of three apps available on the App Store. Open the App Store on your iPad or iPhone and search for “Adobe Spark”; you’ll want to download Adobe Spark Page, Adobe Spark Post, and Adobe Spark Video.

➤ *Note: The instructions in this Educator Guide apply to Adobe Spark running on both desktop and iOS devices. For the most part, Spark looks and behaves the same regardless of platform. But, when there are minor differences between the desktop and iOS user interfaces, these are noted in the instructions using the above icons.*

The Adobe Spark web and mobile apps can be used interchangeably. You can start work on one platform, edit on another, and go back and forth between platforms and devices as needed. Adobe Spark automatically saves and synchronizes content across all of your devices.

As previously noted, Adobe Spark is free to use, but it does require a login. The login is important because Spark needs to know who owns what content, and because this is how Spark can properly sync content across devices. There are several ways you can log in:

- If you already have an Adobe ID, you may want to use it to login to Adobe Spark. You may also create a new Adobe ID for free using the link on the Adobe Spark login screen.
- Alternatively, enter your Facebook login after you click on the Facebook link.
- Or you can use your Google login, simply click on the Google link to enter your Google or Gmail credentials.

For the most part, there is no difference between login types. The one exception is that if you are an existing Adobe Creative Cloud subscriber, you'll want to log in to Adobe Spark with your Adobe ID, as that way you'll have access to your Creative Cloud assets from within Spark.

➤ *Note: Always use the same login otherwise when you come back again you may not see your content!*

Once you login to Adobe Spark you can start creating content. There are three step-by-step walkthroughs below, one for each of the Adobe Spark formats. You can try the three formats in the order that they appear below, or in any order that best suits you.

➤ *Note: There is no Save button in Adobe Spark as your work is continuously and automatically saved for you.*

3: Adobe Spark Post Walkthrough

Here are step-by-step instructions to creating a Spark Post:

1: To get started:



From the My Projects page, click the **yellow + circle** on the top right to display the **What would you like to create?** screen, then click the **green + circle** to create a new Post.



Open the Adobe Spark Post app, and tap on the **green + circle** to create a new Post. You'll be asked to pick a starting background, select the first option, **Solid color**, select one of the shown colors, and tap **Next**, and then tap **Done**.

2: Next you need to type the text to be displayed on your graphic. Be creative, type something inspiring or silly or meaningful or ... have fun with it:



You'll be prompted for **What do you want to say?** Type your text and click **Continue**.



Double-tab on the words **Double Tap To Edit Text**. Type your text and click **Done**.

3: You can reposition your text by simply dragging it around your Post as needed. Adobe Spark Post will display guidelines to help you center your text, if that's what you are trying to do.

4: The Spark Post needs a background image:





Click anywhere on the image background, when the menu pops up click on **Photo**.



Tap the photo icon at the top of the screen (it's the one with mountains and the sun above them).

5: Select the **Find Photos** (or **Search free photos**) option to find Creative Commons images from the public internet. Enter a search term to display available images, and then select one to place it on your Post as the background image.

- 6: Spark Post comes with themes that you can use to quickly style and format your creation. Click or tap on **Theme** to see the available themes, then click or tap on each theme until you find one you like.
- 7: Palettes are color combinations that are applied to both photos and text. Click or tap on **Palette** to see the palette options. Click or tap on any palette to recolor your Post, and you can click or tap multiple times on each palette to cycle through its color combinations.
- 8: Spark Post gives you lots of control over text formatting. Click or tap on the text in your Post and you'll see options to adjust color, font, spacing, alignment, opacity, and shape. Experiment with this options, or click on the circle dial to display style suggestions, keep turning the wheel and Adobe Spark will generate all sorts of formatting options.
Optional: For a really interesting cutout effect, use the Shape option, select a shape, and click or tap the selected shape repeatedly.
- 9: Spark Post graphics are designed to be used online and on all social media platforms. Each social media platform has different requirements for image shape and size, and modifying images for each platform can be tedious and time consuming. Fortunately, Adobe Spark can do all the resizing for you:

 Click Resize at the top of the screen to display a list of available sizes. Click any of the displayed options to resize your Post.	 Tap the resize icon at the top of the screen (it's the one with two overlapping rectangles) to display the available sizes. Tap on a size and then tap ✓.
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- 10: Now that your masterpiece is complete, it's time to share it with the world. Click or tap **Share** and you'll be presented with options to publish your image to social media, as well as to download or save it locally.

Congratulations, you've created your first Adobe Spark Post!

Feeling ambitious? Here are some more things to try:

- Your Post contained a single block of text. You can use the **Add text** option to add additional blocks of text to your Post. Each block of text can be moved and formatted independently, and Post themes apply special formatting when multiple text blocks are used.
- Spark Post is not an image editor, but it does provide basic resize and scale functionality allowing you to tweak your background image as needed.
- If you like a design but want to tweak it, simply duplicate it by clicking or tapping on it on the Projects screen. Then make the changes you need; both variations will be saved.

4: Adobe Spark Page Walkthrough

Here are step-by-step instructions to creating a Spark Page:

1: To get started:



From the My Projects page, click the **yellow + circle** on the top right to display the **What would you like to create?** screen, then click the **blue + circle** to create a new Page.



Open the Adobe Spark Page app, and tap on the **blue + circle** to create a new Page.

- 2: The first thing you need to do is give your story a title. Click or tap on **Add a title** and type your title. You may also provide a subtitle by clicking or tapping on **Add a Subtitle**.
- 3: Notice the + at the bottom of the Page, in Spark Page content is added by clicking to tapping that +. The first thing you'll add is a background image for your Spark Page, so click or tap the + and then click or tap **Photo** to display the available photo sources. Notice that you can use images from a variety of sources, including images on your computer or device.
- 4: For starters, let's use a freely available Creative Commons image from the public internet. Select the **Find Photos** option, and enter a search term to display available images, and then select one to place it as your Page title image.
- 5: Scroll down until the content insertion popup is displayed. You'll see that Spark Page stories can contain photos, text, buttons that link to other sites and pages, and embedded videos. Start with some text, click or tap on **Text**, and then type the first line of your story. Click or tap + a couple more times and add some additional text sections.

- 6: Now let's format the text. In Spark Page, you can indicate what the text is, a header (H1 or H2), quote, or list. You can also bold and italicize specific words, and can embed links or force alignment. To display the text formatting options:



Click on the text to display the inline popup menu.



Tap on the text and the formatting options will be displayed at the top of the screen.

In Spark Page, you cannot specify colors and fonts. This is deliberate, and really important in the classroom. Because teachers want their students to focus on the content, and not spend hours tweaking colors and sizes, Adobe Spark Page does not allow exact text formatting. So, how can you and your students format text? We'll come back to that in a few moments when we look at themes.

- 7: Next, add a photo. Scroll down and click or tap the + button at the bottom of the Page, and when the popup menu is displayed click or tap **Photo**. Search for a photo as you did before and click or tap it to insert it into your page. Once the photo is in your Page, click or tap on the photo and you'll be able to control how it is displayed; **inline** right in the text, it can **fill screen**, as a **window** (a really nice effect, try it!), or **full width**, and the latter three options also allow you to provide a **caption**. Experiment with these options to see the different ways you can display photos.
- 8: Photos can also be displayed in a grid. Scroll down and click or tap +, and then click or tap **Photo Grid**. You can use the same search or a different one, and click on 3 or 4 results. Note how they are displayed in a grid. Each photo in the grid has buttons that can be used to move images or make them bigger and smaller. Pick one of your images and make it bigger. Then click or tap **Save**.
Optional: Beneath the Photo Grid you can provide a caption for the entire grid.
- 9: Another way to add photos is to use Glideshow which creates a very professional and beautiful display. Scroll down and click or tap + and then click or tap **Glideshow**. Select 3 or 4 images, and then click or tap **Save**.

- 10: Scroll your Page up and down and notice that the images are full screen and that content can be added on top of each image. Click or tap the + in the box on top of the image, and add text or a photo to each Glideshow image. Optional: The box on top of the Glideshow images can be moved, try dragging it to the right for one Glideshow image and to the center for another.
- 11: Optional: You can also add video to your Spark Page, both in the Page itself, or above a Glideshow image. Videos in a Spark Page must already be hosted online. To try this feature, search for a video on YouTube. When you find one you want to use, copy its URL. Then in Spark Page click or tap + and then click or tap **Video**, and when prompted, paste the video URL. The video will be inserted into your Page story.
- 12: Now for formatting. As previously explained, Spark Page deliberately does not allow students to explicitly define exact fonts and colors and sizes, teachers tell us that too many tools allow their students to spend all their time on formatting and not enough on actual content. To address this concern, Spark limits explicit formatting, instead using themes that guarantee gorgeous results that students will be proud of. To display available themes:



Click **Themes** on the top right of the screen.



Tap on the text theme icon (it's the one with a magic wand).

Click or tap on any theme to apply it, the story is reformatted as each theme is selected. Scroll up and down through your Spark Page to see the colors, fonts, and transitions that were applied by the theme.

13: To truly see the complete masterpiece, you need to use the Preview feature:



Click **Preview** on the top right of the screen.



Tap on the Preview icon (it's the one with play arrow in a square).

Scroll up and down to see your Spark Page in action. Scroll all the way to the bottom, you'll see that Adobe Spark automatically included credits for any Creative Commons images that you used. When done, close the preview to return to the editor.

14: Now that your masterpiece is complete, it's time to share it with the world. Click or tap **Share** and you'll be presented with options to publish your story. Once your story has been published you'll be given a URL that you can use to read your story in any web browser.

Congratulations, you've created your first Adobe Spark Page!

Feeling ambitious? Here are some more things to try:

- You can include links in your Adobe Spark Page story. There are two ways to do this. To add a button that links to other sites and pages, click to tap + and then click or tap **button**, and then provide the link when prompted. To add links right inside of your text, select some text, display the text formatting options, click the link option (it looks like a linked chain), and provide the URL when prompted. Try both of these options.
- Create an image with Adobe Spark Post, save the JPEG, and use it as a photo in your Spark Page.
- You can do the same thing with an Adobe Spark Video, too.

5: Adobe Spark Video Walkthrough

Here are step-by-step instructions to creating a Spark Video:

1: To get started:



From the My Projects page, click the **yellow + circle** on the top right to display the **What would you like to create?** screen, then click the **red + circle** to create a new Video.



Open the Adobe Spark Video app, and tap on the **red + circle** to create a new Page. If this is the first time the app is used you may see an introductory video, click **Done** when you are finished viewing it.

2: The first thing you need to do is give your story a title. Click or tap in to the text area and type your title, then click or tap **Next**.

3: Spark Video includes templates to help you structure your story. Feel free to browse through the templates and select one, or you can skip this step and just click or tap on **Start from scratch**.

4: Spark Video stories are made up of a series of slides comprised of either photos, text, video clip or icons. Spark weaves them together to create a video. The slides are shown at the bottom of the screen, and this is where you select, add, delete, or move them.



Click on the ... icon on the top right of a slide to access slide options.



Tap on **v** on the top of a slide to access slide options.

5: The first slide is waiting for content. Click or tap on the + in the middle of the screen, you'll see that you can add a video clip, text, a photo, or an icon, to the slide. Click or tap **Text** and then type the story title on the opening slide.

6: Now click or tap the + at the bottom left of the screen to add another slide.

7: The new slide is automatically selected. Click or tap the + in the middle and this time select **Icon**. Adobe Spark provides access to hundreds of thousands of icons, type a word to search for, and then select one to add it to the slide.

- 8: Next, we'll add a photo. Once again, click or tap the + at the bottom left of the screen to add another slide. This time click or tap + and select **Photo**. You can use a local phone, retrieve photos from a variety of locations (including Creative Cloud), or search for Creative Commons images using the **Find photos** options. Find a photo, and select it to add it to the slide.
- 9: The slides we created thus far each contained a single item. Spark Video slides can also contain two items side-by-side, or an item with text beneath it. To try this, click on **Layout** at the top of the screen. Select **Two things** to be able to place two items (two photos, a photo and text, an icon and a photo, etc.) on your slide.
Optional: Create another slide, and select the **Thing + caption** layout to be able to add a text caption below your icon or image.
- 10: Optional: Spark Video supports adding video clips to slides. To use this feature, you'll need an MP4 video file saved on your computer or device. You can use your own video (perhaps one taken with a mobile phone) or download a video from one of the many online free stock video sites. If you do have a video clip that you want to use, add a slide and click + and then **Video**. You'll be prompted for the location of the video, select a video and you'll be placed in the Spark Video **Add Video** screen. Move the scrub line at the bottom of the editor to locate part of the video clip to use, and then use the right circle to drag to the desired duration. Then click or tap **Save**.
- 11: Now that you have a few slides, you need to record the narration. Click on each slide at the bottom of the screen, starting with the first (the title slide). For each slide, click and hold, or tap and hold, on the **red microphone button**. While the **red microphone button** is pressed speak loudly and clearly, and when you are done talking release the button. You can press the play button to the left of the microphone button to hear your slide narration. If you want to rerecord, just press the **red microphone button** again and record over your previous recording. Repeat the previous step for each slide that needs narration (you can skip narration for slides that don't need it).
- 12: At any time, click or tap the **play button** at the bottom of the screen (it's to the left of the list of slides) to play your entire video.

- 13: Now for formatting. Like Spark Page, Spark Video uses themes to format your stories. A Spark Video theme combines colors, fonts, backgrounds, and even professionally designed animations and transitions to make the video look great. To display available themes, simply click or tap on **Themes** at the top of the screen. Click or tap on any theme to apply it, the story is reformatted as each theme is selected. Click or tap each slide to see how it is formatted, or click or tap the **play button** on the bottom left to see the movie with its new theme.
- 14: The final step is background music. Click on **Music** at the top of the screen to display the large music collection that is licensed for you and your students to use. You can also use your own music (but you will need to determine any licensing requirements).
- 15: Now it's time to watch your completed creation. Click or tap the **play button** on the bottom left to see your debut movie.
- 16: Now that your masterpiece is complete, it's time to share it with the world. Click or tap **Share** and you'll be presented with options to publish your story. Once your story has been published you'll be given a URL that you can share with others, and you'll also have the option of downloading the video as an MP4 file.

Congratulations, you've created your first Adobe Spark Video!

Feeling ambitious? Here are some more things to try:

1. Create an Spark Video, publish it, save the story link, and use that in a Spark Page.
2. Create an image with Adobe Spark Post, save the JPEG, and use it as a photo in your Spark Video.

6: Where To Go From Here

We hope you've enjoyed using Adobe Spark and are beginning to see the myriad of ways this fun and free tool can be used in your classroom.

To learn more about Adobe Spark:

- Visit spark.adobe.com to read the Spark blog and to sign up for the Spark Insider newsletter.
- There are lots of Adobe Spark education links and resources available at spark.adobe.com/edu.
- The [Adobe Education Exchange](https://edex.adobe.com) is a free worldwide community of educators sharing and collaborating around creativity in the classroom. You'll find invaluable contacts and resources there, and Adobe Spark specific resources can be found at edex.adobe.com/spark.
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).
- And don't forget our [Adobe Spark Guide for Schools and Educators](#).