Sp

Adobe Spark

Creativity and Digitial Storytelling with Adobe Spark

Professional Development - Educator Guide

spark.adobe.com

Adobe

Contents

1: Welcome

Adobe Spark is a FREE 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.

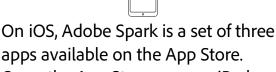- Spark Post is used to create graphics.

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 Chromebook devices. For the most part, Spark looks and behaves the same regardless of platform. But there are minor differences between the desktop and mobile user interfaces so pay attention as you follow these steps.*

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:

Getting Started

1. From the My Projects page, click the **blue + circle** on the top of the screen. Click on the **Start from Scratch** option on the top right, and then select **Graphic**.

2. You'll be prompted to **Pick a template or start from scratch**. For now click **Start from scratch**.

3. Next, you'll be asked for the image size. Click on any option (don't worry, you can change it later) and click **Next**.

4. Now for Photos. If you have access to your own you can click **Upload** to use those. Or type something in the **Search free photos** box to find Creative Commons images from the public internet.

5. Pick a few (4 works well) images and then click **Next**.

6. Congratulations, you just created a graphic.

Adding Text

7. The text on it says **double click to edit text**, so do that, double click on the text and type in your own text and then click **Done**.

8. Feel free to drag and move the text to reposition it as needed.

Pick a Design

9. The options on the right change based on what you click on. Click on the text and you'll see options for fonts and colors and so on. Click on any image to see options for filters, rotation, and more. Click outside of the graphic to see options for design, layout, and resizing.

10. Click outside of the graphic and then click **DESIGN**. Scroll through the designs and click to see what they look like until you find one you like for your graphic.

Formatting Text

11. Spark Post gives you lots of control over text formatting. Click on the text in your Post and you'll see options to adjust color, font, spacing, alignment, opacity, and shape.

12. Experiment with this options, or click on the **STYLE** and use the circle dial to display style suggestions, keep turning the wheel and Adobe Spark will generate all sorts of formatting options.

13. *Optional*: For a really interesting cutout effect, use the Shape option, select a shape, and click the selected shape repeatedly.

14. Want to add content to your graphic? Click the **grey +** button the top right to add text, images, and icons.

Resizing

15. 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. Just click outside of the graphic and then select the **RESIZE** option and pick the size you need.

All Done

16. Now that your masterpiece is complete, it's time to share it with the world. Click **Share** and you'll be presented with options to publish your image to social media, as well as to download or save it locally.

Optional

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 **grey +** button on the top right and select **Text** 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:

Getting Started

1. From the My Projects page, click the **blue + circle** on the top of the screen. Click on the **Start from Scratch** option on the top right, and then select **Web page.**

2. The first thing you need to do is give you story a title. Click 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 the **+** and then click **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.

Adding Text

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 on **Text**, and then type the first line of your story. Click **+** 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.

> ➢ *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.*

Adding Images

7. Next, add a photo. Scroll down and click the **+** button at the bottom of the Page, and when the popup menu is displayed click **Photo**. Search for a photo as you did before and click it to insert it into your page. Once the photo is in your Page, click 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 **+**, and then click **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 **Save**.
Optional: Beneath the Photo Grid you can provide a caption for the entire grid.

Additional Layout Options

9. Another way to add photos is to use Glideshow which creates a very professional and beautiful display. Scroll down and click **+** and then click **Glideshow**. Select 3 or 4 images, and then click **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 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 **+** and then click **Video**, and when prompted, paste the video URL. The video will be inserted into your Page story.

12. Another interesting layout option is a side-by-side view, image on one side and text on the other. Scroll down and click **+** and then click **Split layout**. You'll see two boxes side-by-side. In the left box click **Add an image** to do just that. In the right box click **+** to add text, a photo, and more. *Optional*: Add additional Split layout sections, Spark will automatically stagger the image to create a beautiful display.

Formatting

13. 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. Click 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. Click 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.

All Done

14. To truly see the complete masterpiece, Click **Preview** on the top right of the screen. 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.

15. Now that your masterpiece is complete, it's time to share it with the world. Click **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 **button**, and the 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.

- Spark Page can also be used for presentations (instead of your regular not-so-favorite presentation tool). Just click on **Present** at the top of the Spark Page screen to open your Page in presentation mode. You're the arrow keys on your keyboard to move up and down. Cool, huh?

5: Adobe Spark Video Walkthrough

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

Getting Started

1. From the My Projects page, click the **blue + circle** on the top of the screen. Click on the **Start from Scratch** option on the top right, and then select **Video.**

2. The first thing you need to do is give you story a title. Click in to the text area and type your title, then click **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 on **Start from scratch**.

Working with Slides

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 where you select, add, delete, or move them. Click on the … icon on the top right of a slide to access slide options.

5. The first slide is waiting for content. Click 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 **Text** and then type the story title on the opening slide.

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

Adding Icons

7. You now have a new slide that has been selected ready to use. Click the + in the middle and this time select **Icon**.

8. 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.

Adding Photos

9. Next, we'll add a photo. Once again, click the **+** at the bottom left of the screen to add another slide.

10. This time click **+** 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.

Using Layouts

11. 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.

12. Select **Split Screen** to be able to place two items (two photos, a photo and text, an icon and a photo, etc.) on your slide.

13. *Optional*: Create another slide, and select the **Caption** layout to be able to add a text caption below your icon or image.

Using Video Clips

14. *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 **Save**.

Adding Narration

15. 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.

16. 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.

17. Repeat the previous step for each slide that needs narration (you can skip narration for slides that don't need it).

18. At any time, click the **play button** at the bottom of the screen (it's to the left of the list of slides) to play your entire video.

Formatting

19. 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 on **Themes** at the top of the screen.

20. Click on any theme to apply it, the story is reformatted as each theme is selected.

21. Click each slide to see how it is formatted, or click the **play button** on the bottom left to see the movie with its new theme.

Background Music

22. 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).

All Done

23. Now it's time to watch your completed creation. Click the **play button** on the bottom left to see your debut movie.

24. Now that your masterpiece is complete, it's time to share it with the world. Click **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.

Optional

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 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.