

How to Use Dropbox in the Classroom

Setting Up the Folders

Every student in my class created a Dropbox using their Gagle account (or when that had issues whatever email was easiest). In their Dropbox, they created a folder that would be shared with me. I gave them VERY specific rules on how to name their folder.

Naming standards are going to be extremely important to you for organizational purposes. Given a class of 30-40 students, you are going to have 30-40 folders show up in your Dropbox (for each class!), and you want them all to be easily recognizable by Name, by Class, and by Period. Dropbox organized folders alphabetically... so I created the following naming standard for shared student folders:

className_period_lastName_firstName












So for example, let's say I am a student in my 6th period ECS class – I would share a folder called

ECS_6_Chipps_Jake

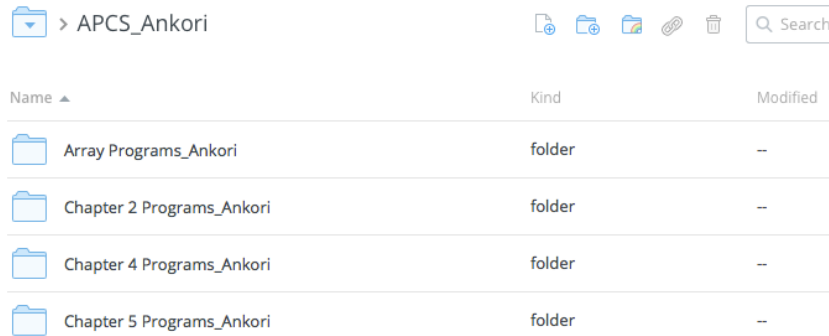
In this way, when your students share folders with you, all the folders will be organized alphabetically by class, then by period, then by last name, then by first name. In that way, you can move all the students in period 6 into a single folder easily by highlighting all of the student folders and moving them into one of your own. As an example, here is an organizational device I created for my AP classes. I created a folder called APCS 2013-2014:



And in this folder, I have every student's shared folder in alphabetical order by last name:

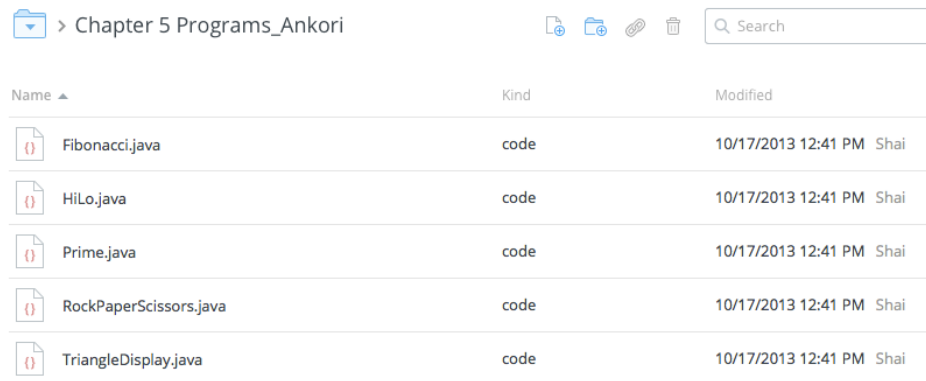
Name	Kind	Modified
 APCS_Abenoja	shared folder	--
 APCS_Abraham	shared folder	--
 APCS_Alfarah	shared folder	--
 APCS_Ankori	shared folder	--
 APCS_Aragon	shared folder	--
 APCS_Asidilla	shared folder	--
 APCS_Bandek	shared folder	--
 APCS_Batmazyan	shared folder	--
 APCS_Bautista	shared folder	--
 APCS_Binissa	shared folder	--
 APCS_Bissett	shared folder	--

In each of these folders, the students created more folders for each unit we tackled:



Name	Kind	Modified
Array Programs_Ankori	folder	--
Chapter 2 Programs_Ankori	folder	--
Chapter 4 Programs_Ankori	folder	--
Chapter 5 Programs_Ankori	folder	--

And in each of these folders are the files they had to turn in:



Name	Kind	Modified
Fibonacci.java	code	10/17/2013 12:41 PM Shai
HiLo.java	code	10/17/2013 12:41 PM Shai
Prime.java	code	10/17/2013 12:41 PM Shai
RockPaperScissors.java	code	10/17/2013 12:41 PM Shai
TriangleDisplay.java	code	10/17/2013 12:41 PM Shai

Not only do I see the file name and what kind of file it is, but also I can see when it was last modified. Furthermore, on the website, I can open the file:



```
HiLo.java
import javax.swing.JOptionPane;
public class HiLo
{
    public static void main(String[] args)
    {
        int guess = 1;
        int userChoice;
        boolean tryAgain = false;
        boolean win = false;
        do
        {
            JOptionPane.showMessageDialog(null, "Lets play High Low!");
            int compChoice = (int)(Math.random()*100+1);
            while (guess <= 5)
            {
                userChoice = Integer.parseInt(JOptionPane.showInputDialog(null, "Guess a number between 1 and 100!"));
                if (userChoice > compChoice)
                {
                    JOptionPane.showMessageDialog(null, "You guessed " + userChoice + ". Too high, try again! You have " +
                        (5-guess) + " guesses left.");
                    guess++;
                }
                else if (userChoice < compChoice)
                {
                    JOptionPane.showMessageDialog(null, "You guessed " + userChoice + ". Too low, try again! You have " +
                        (5-guess) + " guesses left.");
                    guess++;
                }
                else
                {
                    JOptionPane.showMessageDialog(null, "You guessed " + userChoice + " and won!");
                    win = true;
                    guess = 6;
                }
            }
        }
        if (win)
        {
            String userTry = JOptionPane.showInputDialog(null, "Play again?");
            if (userTry.equalsIgnoreCase("yes"))
            {
                r
            }
        }
    }
}
```

Commenting on Student Work

The genius part of Dropbox is that if you download the Dropbox folder on every one of your computers, then whatever you add to the folder on one computer will show up on every other computer. As an example, if I add a file to my Dropbox folder at home, I can access it immediately at school. If I edit the file at school, it is also edited on my computer at home.

Here's the rub: I have two Dropbox accounts—a personal account and a teaching account. If you download the Dropbox folder to your hard drive, you can only have one account attached to that folder. And yet, if you want to comment on student work, it is best to do so with your teaching account as the hard drive folder. So on my school laptop, my teaching account is attached to the hard drive Dropbox folder.

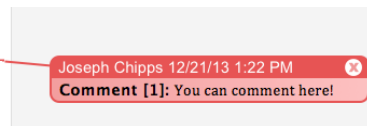
I do not use Dropbox to give students their grades. The other user can alter any file added to a shared folder. Giving grades in Dropbox would be too dangerous since students would be able to alter the grade or write something inappropriate. I use Dropbox to comment on student work as well as read student work for grading. I then give them a printed rubric with their grade in person.

Commenting on a Word File

Open the word document, and highlight the text that you want to comment. Then go to "Insert" and choose "New Comment."

Commenting on a Word File

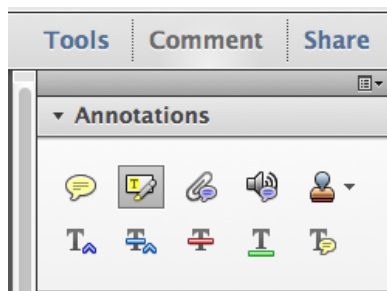
Open the word document, and highlight the text that you want to comment. Then go to "Insert" and choose "New Comment."



The owner of the computer comes up as the commenter, and there is a timestamp of when the comment occurred. When you add a comment on a student's Word file and save the file, the comment will appear on the student's computer. You can now comment on students' papers and outlines without paper!

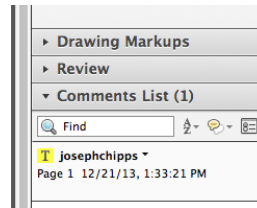
Commenting on PDFs

Open the PDF, and choose "Comment" – you can't miss it!!!



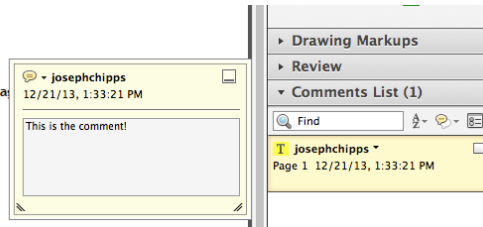
Selecting text to show students or colleagues exactly what is commented is important. To do this, choose the pen over the T, as shown above. Then highlight whatever text you want to comment:

- APRIL FOOL'S MONDAY EXAM
1. Read everything carefully before doing anything.
 2. Put your name in the upper right-hand corner of this page.
 3. Circle the word NAME in sentence two.
 4. Draw five small squares in the upper left-hand corner.
 5. Put an "X" in each square.
 6. Put a circle around each square.



When you highlight text, a comment will appear in the comment list on the right. You have not yet commented, though. To comment, double click the highlighted text, and a comment screen will appear:

- APRIL FOOL'S MONDAY EXAM
1. Read everything carefully before doing anything.
 2. Put your name in the upper right-hand corner of this page.
 3. Circle the word NAME in sentence two.
 4. Draw five small squares in the upper left-hand corner.
 5. Put an "X" in each square.
 6. Put a circle around each square.
 7. Sign your name under the title of this paper.



If you save the PDF, the shared user will see the comments. You have now commented on a student or colleague's PDF!

Adding a Comment in an External File

Sometimes I give students tasks where they do not create Word docs or PDFs. What happens if your student had to create an image or a sound file or a video? Adding a comment in an external file suits the purpose just fine! I always use Microsoft Word because Word has the ability to store all changes to the document so you can worry less about students altering your words and causing trouble. I also make sure to tell my students that Word docs have a revision history so they know ahead of time not to try anything...

You can see changes in the Review pane.