EMORY COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

CLOSE READING & ANNOTATION TOOLS

GOOGLE DOCS

The following charts detail online tools which help classes foster active and collaborative annotation of various documents, articles, ebooks, and PDF files.

Collaborative annotation tools offer teachers the ability to make reading and textual analysis a communal activity. Most options are free and easy to use. Individual or small group workshops on using these tools are available through Emory College Online.

This very popular word processing platform from Google allows you to create a blank document or upload a document from your personal computer and allow multiple users to annotate a single document.

Cost

Free

Tutorials

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vy1_95FhxJE

Pros

- Widely used
- Easily saves and converts documents from one file type to another
- Allows users to collaborate even if they do not have a Google account

Cons

- Users not using a Google account will remain anonymous
- Only allows for textual commenting
- No student analytics option for tracking participation

Possible Uses

Great entryway technology for any classroom requiring collaborative work on a single document

PERUSALL

Perusall is a free collaborative annotation service which claims to transform reading from a "solitary experience" to an "engaging and collective one." Teachers are able to create online courses independently of or integrated with an LMS Canvas. From there teachers can upload texts as files from their computers, or they can have students purchase e-copies directly from the publisher. Teachers can make assignments from specific chapters/sections and have students read, comment, and ask questions collaboratively.

HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis is an free online tool and web browser extension that allows you to annotate and save webpages both individually and collaboratively. The creators describe the technology as creating a "conversation layer over the entire web" between you and whatever community of learners you are a part of. The company also prides itself on offering "free, open, [and] neutral" tools for online learning.

Cost

Free

Tutorials

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72c622KD7Ow
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODE6v4YOo0E&t=255s

Cost

Free

Tutorials

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n--Og_NKAgw
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aY9yj2uoMiU

Pros

- Completely free to use (no upgraded version)
- Allows students to work collaboratively or individually
- Students can communicate to each other by responding to or emphasizing their classmate's questions
- Students can annotate images and text
- Program comes equipped with student analytics function that tracks what participants contribute to the assignment

Pros

- Sleek/almost invisible toolbar
- Allows you to tag and categorize annotations online
- Allows users to comment with text, images, or short videos (by embed link only)
- Gives users the ability to keep annotations private or make them public as to engage with the greater scholarly community

Cons

- App is not currently integrated in Emory's Canvas account
- There are extra steps to gain "Instructor Access"
- Layout is pretty simplistic

Cons

- Compared to Insert Learning, the layout is a little less intuitive
- No student analytics option for tracking participation

Possible Uses

- Great for courses that stick close to a single text book
- Great for courses where collaborative reading/editing is a part of the learning objective
- Great for courses where there is no central textbook but is done exclusively through PDFs.

Possible Uses

- Great for classes where students primarily read online content

KAMI

Kami allows teachers to share files with others to collaboratively annotate documents with text, images, voice memos, and short videos. This technology also comes with a web browser extension that makes opening the Kami editor seamless.

INSERT LEARNING

Insert Learning allows teachers to collect individual websites online and turn them into trackable online assignments for students in their courses. Using a free account with Insert Learning (also also by downloading their Chrome web browser extension) teachers can highlight, annotate, or insert questions into any website..

Cost

Basic Version: Free
Pro Version: $99+
Pricing Range Available Here

Tutorials

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nqIv8wzd0A
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMxHs34QNHU

Cost

Free

Tutorials

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n--Og_NKAgw
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aY9yj2uoMiU

Pros

- App is not currently integrated in Emory's Canvas account
- Fully integrated with Google Classroom
- Basic version has most of the same elements of Perusall
- There is an attached OCR converter to make PDFs readable

Pros

- Completely free (no upgraded version)
- You can add textual information as well as short video recordings
- Toolbar is easy to understand/navigate
- Fully integrated into Google Classroom

Cons

- Most advanced settings cost $99/year/teacher
- Marketed for k-12 students

Cons

- Simplistic layout
- Caters to K-12 students
- No student analytics option for tracking participation

Possible Uses

- Great for teachers who use Google Drive/Google Classroom
- Great for group writing assignments
- Great for peer review or workshop circles

Possible Uses

Great for teachers who often assign longform journalism or texts which are primarily accessible online